

Pharmacy Support Worker

Pharmacy support workers work either in a community or retail pharmacy or in a hospital or clinical pharmacy.

The Work

Community or Retail

You could be:

- dealing with enquiries from customers, face to face and on the phone
- advising on use of medicines, medical devices and selling over the counter medicines
- taking in and handing out prescriptions
- packaging and labelling prescribed items
- checking stocks and ordering supplies
- referring customers to the pharmacist if need be
- keeping records of customers and stock
- handling payments.

Hospital or Clinical

You could be:

- delivering medicines to other departments or wards
- checking stock, ordering and storing supplies
- keeping records as required.

Pay

Within the NHS Agenda for Change scales, pharmacy support workers' salaries are usually on Band 2, £26,658 to £28,947 a year. The current pay scales are from April 2025.

Many dispensing or pharmacy assistants work outside the NHS. Starting pay is often based on the National Minimum Wage (NMW) or the National Living Wage (NLW).

As of 1 April 2026 the National Minimum Wage is £8.00 an hour for workers under 18, £10.85 an hour for workers aged 18 to 20. The National Living Wage for those aged 21 and over is £12.71 an hour. This could rise up to £14.50 an hour.

Conditions

- In community and retail pharmacy you work in shops, where hours are regular and may include weekends or evenings.
- In hospitals and clinics you work in laboratories or dispensaries or in health centres and may have to work shifts.

- Pharmacy support workers usually wear a white lab coat or uniform.

Getting In

- A good general education is necessary including National 4 English and Maths.
- Many employers will put you through the training and qualification.
- You might get in through a Modern Apprenticeship in Pharmacy Services at SCQF Level 6.
- Previous experience in a hospital or community pharmacy would be an advantage.

Jobs are available with the NHS, private healthcare providers, retail pharmacy chains and pharmaceutical companies.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- interested in science
- numerate and good at calculations
- accurate when keeping records
- able to explain information clearly
- a good organiser
- discreet in dealing with confidential information
- patient and empathetic when dealing with members of the public.

You should have:

- excellent attention to detail
- good communication skills for dealing with a wide range of people
- good customer care skills
- the ability to follow instructions and procedures.

Training

- In line with the General Pharmaceutical Council's rules, you must work towards a SVQ in Pharmacy Services at SCQF Level 6, which has to commence within 3 months of starting a job.
- If working in a hospital setting, you would also complete the Mandatory Induction Standards for healthcare support workers.

Getting On

- You will be required to keep your skills and knowledge up to date by undertaking continuous professional development (CPD) courses throughout your career.
- You may be able to apply for a pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician post.
- As a pharmacy technician you could work in quality control in a hospital.
- In larger retail pharmacies, you could specialise in marketing or sales.
- There is a graded promotion scheme in the National Health Service (NHS).

Contacts

General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)

Tel: 0203 713 8000

Email: info@pharmacyregulation.org

Website: www.pharmacyregulation.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheGPhC

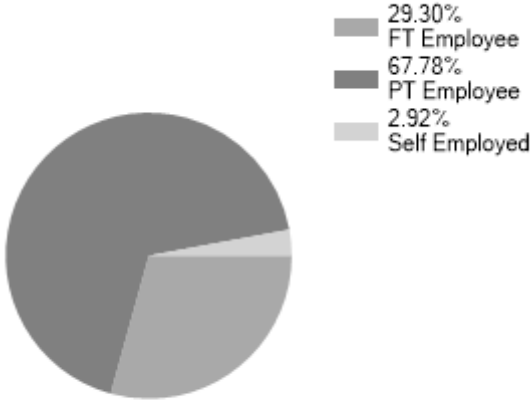
NHS Scotland Careers

Website: www.careers.nhs.scot

Website (2): jobs.scot.nhs.uk

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

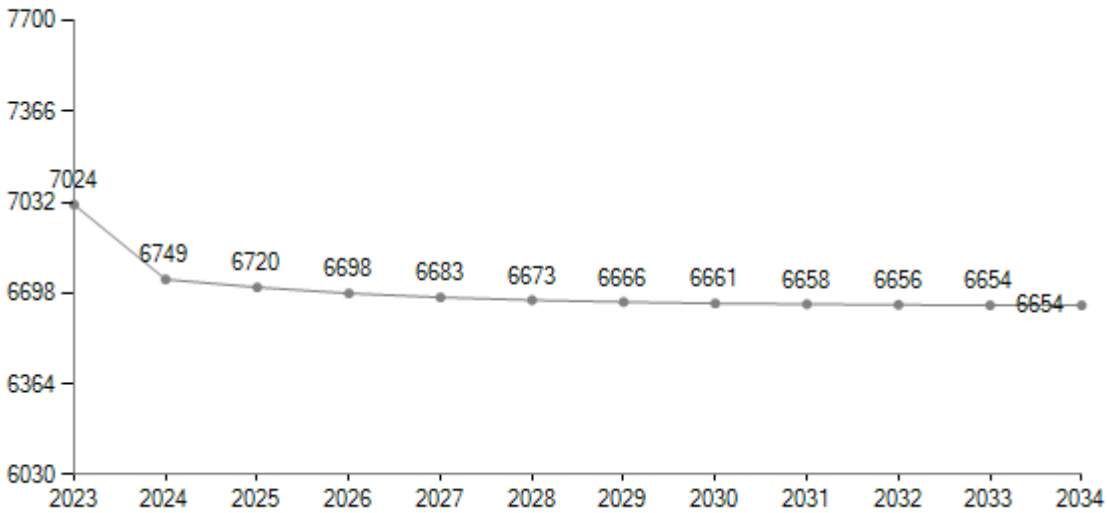


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)