



**ASPIRING  
ALLIES** 



# THERE'S MORE TO A CAREER IN HEALTHCARE THAN YOU THINK...

**14X** More to be precise.

In healthcare, having a positive, life-changing impact on people who need it most isn't just in the hands of doctors and nurses, but a wider team of multi-skilled and passionate professionals. Introducing the Allied Health Professionals:

**TAKE OUR QUIZ**  
Find your future career





## WHAT IS AN ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONAL?

There are 14 different allied health professional (AHP) roles that have their own particular focus, encompassing the physical, emotional and psychological elements of wellbeing.

They are involved at all stages of their patients' care – including assessment, diagnosis and treatment – with the aim of increasing their quality of life from birth right up to end-of-life.

AHPs work across a range of specific environments as part of a team of healthcare staff to provide a holistic approach to health and wellbeing.



## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF WORKING AS AN AHP?

In addition to working alongside and supporting patients to live the fullest lives possible, there are many other benefits too:

- Rewarding and valued role in healthcare
- Excellent pay with clear route for progression
- Ability to step into a role straight after qualifying
- Opportunities to work in varied settings and with a range of patients
- Opportunities to specialise and step into leadership, education or advanced practice

**" LOVE THE FIELD YOU'RE IN BECAUSE THAT'S SO IMPORTANT IN ENJOYING YOUR ROLE AND FUTURE CAREER**

**UME HABIBA, OT STUDENT**





## ART THERAPY

Art therapy is a form of psychotherapy used to help service users to explore a range of issues such as emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties, learning or physical disabilities.

For example, as an art therapist, you could be working with people who have speech and language difficulties or with individuals that are recovering from an addiction. People of all ages, regardless of artistic experience, use art therapy as a form of communication and expression.



## DRAMA THERAPIST

A drama therapist uses role play, movement and storytelling as a medium for psychological therapy to help people explore and solve personal and social problems. Drama therapists are enabled to explore a range of different issues and needs from autism and dementia to physical or sexual abuse and mental illness to develop psychological, emotional and social changes.



**" DEVELOPING A THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PATIENT IS ESSENTIAL, IT ALLOWS YOU TO WORK TOGETHER COLLABORATIVELY AND FOR THEM TO ASK FOR THE SUPPORT THEY NEED**

**KATHRYN BRADNEY, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST**



## MUSIC THERAPIST

Music is used creatively to help service users to address social, emotional or physical difficulties

For example, you could be working alongside individuals with brain injuries, Alzheimer's, mother's in labour, children who have experienced emotional trauma, those affected by substance abuse and chronic pain.

Music therapy is used to facilitate service users to communicate via a shared musical experience and music making. Music therapists support service users and instil positive changes in their behaviour, communication and wellbeing.



**" I LOVE TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE AND PLAY MUSIC WITH OTHERS, AND I LIKE TO FEEL THAT WHAT I AM DOING FOR A LIVING IS WORTHWHILE AND THAT I AM BEING OF SERVICE TO OTHERS  
SEB MUNDAY, MUSIC THERAPIST**



## PODIATRIST

Podiatrists aim to increase people's independence by helping them improve their mobility.

The role involves diagnosing, preventing and treating problems that affect the feet, ankles and lower legs.

Some examples include infections, defects and injuries, along with foot and nail conditions.

**" I GET TO HELP PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS AND DIFFERENT WALKS OF LIFE, AND I LIKE THAT KIND OF VARIETY  
JAMES FOREST, PODIATRIST**





## PROSTHETISTS AND ORTHOTISTS

Prosthetists use technology to create and provide prostheses to replace limbs to help regain mobility and function.

Orthotists provide support, aids and advice to correct problems or deformities in nerves, bones and muscles.

Prosthetists and Orthotists work to transform the lives of service users to improve their ability to move freely.

The aim is to treat service users with limb loss due to a wide range of conditions including diabetes, poor circulation, infection, trauma, cerebral palsy, and malignancies/tumours. They help people of all ages from children to adults and elderly.



## OSTEOPATH

Osteopaths assess, detect and treat individuals with several health problems by moving, stretching and massaging muscles and joints.

Osteopathy focuses on providing physical manipulation on bones, ligaments, muscles and connective tissues to improve wellbeing of an individual. Osteopaths work with several age groups (new-borns to older adults).



**" I PARTICULARLY LOVE LEARNING HOW WE CAN MAKE SUCH A DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN SO MANY WAYS WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ACQUIRED THROUGH STUDY**

**CHARLOTTE LLOYD, DIETITIAN**



## DIETITIAN

Dietitians interpret the science of nutrition to improve health and treat diseases/conditions by educating and giving practical, personalised advice to clients, patients, carers and colleagues

Dietitians are involved with diagnosing, assessing and treating dietary as well as nutritional issues. Dietitians aim to promote health awareness and prevent diseases in individuals.

Examples of individuals who dietitians work with include those with eating disorders, allergies, diabetes, digestive problems, oncology, along with people who may want to enhance their sports performance.

**" MY ONE KEY BIT OF ADVICE TO THOSE THINKING ABOUT STUDYING TO BE A DIETITIAN? BE WILLING TO TRY NEW THINGS, THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX! DIETETICS PROVIDES MANY TRANSFERABLE SKILLS AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK COLLABORATIVELY**

**VANESSA MAYNARD, DIETITIAN**



## SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST

A speech and language therapist (SALT) provides support for children and adults experiencing difficulty with speech, language, voice, communication, eating, drinking and swallowing.

Help service users with a variety of conditions such as, developmental speech and language difficulties, neurological conditions, hearing difficulties, stammering, , swallowing difficulties, voice problems and mental health issues.



**" I APPLIED FOR A MASTER'S DEGREE IN SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY WHICH OPENED MY EYES TO THE AMAZING, FULFILLING, VARIED CAREER PATH WHICH WOULD OPEN SO MANY DOORS FOR ME**

**ELLEN BACCINO, SALT**



## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

OT's support individuals' to restore their independence and to overcome barriers that prevent them from doing activities (occupations) that are important to them.

OT's assess and treat individuals of all ages ranging from children, adults and elderly people experiencing difficulties during their daily routines due to mental and physical health conditions. OT's work with the individual to develop goals based on what is meaningful for them and plan interventions to prevent further deterioration of difficulties they experience.

**" CHOOSING OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY HAS PROVEN TO BE ONE OF THE BEST AND MOST REWARDING DECISIONS I HAVE EVER MADE**

**SAMIRA BACHA, OT**



## PHYSIOTHERAPIST

A physiotherapist is a professional who aims to restore and improve movement and function when a person experiences injury, illness or disability to help them regain independence. Physiotherapists work with a variety of age groups who experience a range of health conditions affecting: the brain, heart, lungs, bones, joints and soft tissues. The focus is to facilitate a person's recovery through injury prevention, physical rehabilitation together with health and fitness.



**" I WANT TO EXTEND THE SCOPE OF WHAT PHYSIOTHERAPISTS CAN DO FROM A LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE**

**MARTIN WELTON, PHYSIO**



## THERAPEUTIC RADIOGRAPHY

A therapeutic radiographer is a professional that uses radiotherapy to diagnose and care for cancer service users. Their main area of expertise is helping people who have cancer by using highly advanced technology to target and destroy cancer cells with radiation. Therapeutic radiographers are usually based in a hospital working with the oncology team and wider support services.

**" IF I CAN PUT A SMILE ON A PERSON'S FACE WHEN THEY ARE FACING ONE OF THEIR DARKEST MOMENTS THEN THAT IS SOMETHING I CONSIDER AN ACHIEVEMENT AND I PRIDE MYSELF ON BEING ABLE TO DO THIS DAILY**

**CHARLOTTE MARTIN, THERAPEUTIC RADIOGRAPHER**



## DIAGNOSTIC RADIOGRAPHY

A diagnostic radiographer uses the latest technology such as MRI, X-rays, CT scans and ultrasounds to look inside the patient's body to help diagnose and understand the cause of their illness. They will then use this information to design treatment plans and advise and support recommendations.



**" THE PROFESSION IS EXACTLY WHAT I EXPECTED TO BE, FAST PACED, NEW TECHNOLOGY BEING ADVANCED, POSITIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO AN INDIVIDUAL'S QUALITY OF LIFE AND BEING ABLE TO EXPLORE DIFFERENT AVENUES IN THE PROFESSION SUCH AS CT, ULTRASOUND, MRI**

**IMRAN ULHAQ, DIAGNOSTIC RADIOGRAPHER**



## ORTHOPTIST

Orthoptists diagnose and treat problems affecting how eye structures develop and how the brain controls eye movements. Issues can involve the muscles around the eye, the nerves connecting the eye and the brain or the cells that make vision develop.

Orthoptists focus on improving and treating eye disorders and visual impairments such as double vision, reduced vision and squint. They also investigate neurological conditions like multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease. Orthoptists work with a variety of age groups ranging from children to elderly.

**" I BELIEVE THAT DETERMINED ATTITUDE; WILLINGNESS TO LEARN AND MAKING INFORMED CHOICES ARE WHAT HELP TO BUILD A SUCCESSFUL CAREER**

**RHIANA DIN, ORTHOPTIST**



## PARAMEDIC

A paramedic provides advance levels of care in times of medical emergencies and traumatic situations. Most paramedics work in ambulances, specialist mobile units and emergency response vehicles but can work in other settings and roles.

With additional training, a paramedic can also work with an air ambulance crew. The paramedics are usually on standby located at a local ambulance station and large hospitals.



**" HEALTHCARE IS AN EVER-EVOLVING WORLD, AS IS THE ROLE OF A PARAMEDIC**

**CHRIS HARVEY, PARAMEDIC**



## ***HOW DO I STUDY TO BECOME AN AHP AND HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?***

The requirements for each profession differ but generally most Allied Health Professionals completed an undergraduate University degree specific to their profession. There are new and developing routes in such as apprenticeships

### ***UNIVERSITY:***

Undergraduate degrees: Usually taking 3/4 years or Postgraduate degrees/Masters: Usually taking 2 years.

See here for approved courses: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/approved-programmes/>

### ***APPRENTICESHIP:***

Apprenticeships for AHPs are still fairly new but more and more are being developed.

Apprenticeships are currently available for Podiatry, Paramedics, Prosthetics and Orthotics, Occupational Therapy, Operating Department Practice, Physiotherapy and Dietetics.

See more information here: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/apprenticeships>

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## ***I DON'T PLAN ON GOING TO UNIVERSITY OR WANT TO COMPLETE AN APPRENTICESHIP, WHAT ARE MY OTHER OPTIONS?***

As well as registered AHP roles, there are also a range of assistant roles available within healthcare, such as Occupational Therapy Assistant, a Dietetic Assistant Practitioner or Technical Instructor. Training to become a registered AHP could be something to pursue in the future should you enter the profession as an assistant.

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## ***DO I NEED TO DO A PLACEMENT AS PART OF THE ALLIED PROFESSIONAL COURSES?***

All AHP courses require clinical placements during the course. Generally a minimum of 800 – 1000 clinical hours spread over the years are required.

Clinical placement provides hand-on practical experience for students, which increase the confidence of practicing after qualification as an AHP. Each course will provide more details on what a placement will look like for your profession of interest.