



Royal College of  
General Practitioners



*A career as a...*

# WHAT IS GENERAL PRACTICE?

General practice provides continuing, comprehensive and coordinated person-centred health care to patients in their communities.

*“Being a GP is a job like no other – we are often the first people our patients regularly turn to for help, often at the most difficult times of their lives, and we build trusting relationships with them over time. That privilege is almost unique in medicine.”*

**Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard**  
RCGP Chair

**GPs and GP-led multi-disciplinary teams manage the widest range of health problems;** addressing the physical, social and psychological aspects of patients’ wellbeing throughout their lives.

GPs have a key role in deciding how health and social services should be coordinated to deliver safe, effective and accessible care to patients in their communities.

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Every day across the UK, more than **1 million** consultations take place in general practice.

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*“As a child, our GP was the central point in all our family care. This level of care has carried on throughout my life and [the GP] is always our first point of care.”*

**Patient**

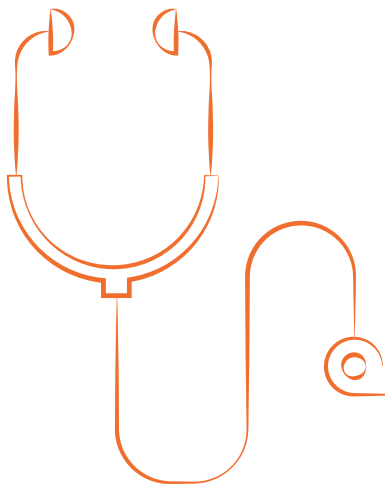
## What is a GP?

### **GPs are expert medical generalists**

who provide the first point of contact with the NHS for most people in their communities. GPs contribute hugely to keeping the nation healthy.

GPs deal with complexity and uncertainty on a daily basis. They become experts on their patients by building relationships, understanding their needs and treating them throughout their lives.

GPs make a significant positive impact to the individuals, families and communities they serve.



# DESIGN A CAREER TO SUIT YOU

**Embark on a flexible, diverse and fulfilling career.**

*"I chose general practice for many reasons, of which the most important for me is autonomy. It is the medical specialty which most enables a doctor to carve out a career unique to their individual wishes."*

**Dr Shiv Chande**  
GP Trainee

*"To me, general practice means choice. Choice in all aspects of my career. It means the possibility of pursuing any number of my current interests while equipping me with a broad medical basis. In no other specialty can you consider an extended role in palliative care or paediatrics, conduct research and all whilst maintaining a broad practicing base."*

**Dr Maya Connolly**  
Foundation Doctor



*As a GP you can...*

- **Develop a portfolio career** and lead work in areas of geriatrics to neurology, carry out 'in-reach' to hospitals and 'outreach' to patients' homes. Combine clinical practice with other interests such as politics, research and medical education.
- **Develop an extended role** by providing an additional specialist service in your community or further afield in a wide range of clinical areas from cardiology, dermatology and minor surgery, to mental and sexual health.
- **Develop autonomy** by moving between different roles and locations throughout your career. Build flexible working patterns around the needs of your patients as well as your personal life.

# BECOME AN EXPERT MEDICAL GENERALIST

Diagnose a wide range of complex conditions, both quickly and compassionately as an expert medical generalist.

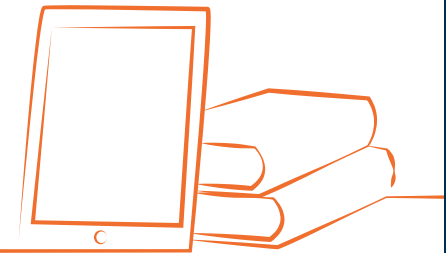
*"You are guaranteed to learn something new every day, be that a rare condition, treatment or something about a patient whom you may have known for a long time. Uniquely, in a time of more protocols and paperwork than ever, you can treat multiple generations of the same family, ensuring a more meaningful type of medicine for both the doctor and patients."*

Dr Devon Kennard  
GP Trainee



*As a GP you can...*

- **Combine practical and scholarly aspects** of delivering highly effective personalised care to individuals, their families and your community.
- **Lead multi-disciplinary teams** in managing the widest range of health problems; providing both systematic and opportunistic health promotion, making accurate diagnoses and risk assessments; dealing with multi-morbidity; coordinating long-term care; and addressing the physical, social and psychological aspects of patients' wellbeing throughout their lives.
- **Adapt to new ways of providing patient care** as an expert medical generalist. You'll never stop learning, as you continue to develop your vast range of clinical knowledge, skills and experiences long after completing your training.



# THRIVE AS A MEMBER OF TEAM GP

Work with multi-disciplinary teams, in a range of practice and community settings, delivering continuing and comprehensive person-centred care.

*"This job is variety in all its glory. A panoply of people giving me a fleeting glimpse into their lives. The computer screen gives me the monochrome version, I get the technicolour glory. The joy of a birth or the sadness of death. They are mothers, husbands, carers, friends and neighbours. I am their listener and advocate. We work together as a team piecing together a jigsaw."*

Dr Manpreet Bains  
GP



*As a GP you can...*

- **Face the challenges of modern healthcare** as part of a multi-disciplinary team to deliver cost-effective care in your community and to satisfy patient needs throughout all stages of their lives.
- **Be empowered to lead projects** for which you have the passion, knowledge, and skill for and join a profession where teamwork, problem solving and creativity are required on a daily basis.
- **Inspire the next generation of doctors** and healthcare professionals as a teacher. As a GP you will have a unique skill set enabling you to take on roles in medical education as part of a portfolio career.
- **Work collaboratively** to share best practice and carry out quality improvement to benefit the wider community.



# SHAPE THE FUTURE OF PRIMARY CARE

Lead enhancements in healthcare,  
both locally and nationally,  
to improve patient care.

*“My leadership time is supported by my practice and allows me to consider innovation in the respect of the clinical services and their delivery both within and outside the practice.”*

**Dr Mike Holmes**  
GP Partner & Federation Director

*“There are so many questions in general practice that need to be answered through clinical research led by GPs. Our research has led to changes in guidelines, so what we do really does make a difference.”*

**Dr Clare Taylor**  
Academic GP



*As a GP you can...*

- **Pioneer new ways of working** in an ever-changing healthcare landscape. Tackle new medical challenges with additional clinical skills and innovative ways of providing patient care.
- **Strategically develop how health and social services can be coordinated** to deliver safe, effective and accessible care to patients in your communities.
- **Take on new and exciting roles** both clinically and as a leader. As care increasingly moves into the community, you'll design and manage services for your patients.
- **Be at the forefront as technology evolves**, playing a greater role in the interaction and care of patients.
- **Take on academic roles** to provide the evidence future general practice will need, allowing you to work with outstanding research institutions and make significant contributions to the care of patients around the world.

# DELIVER EXTENSIVE PERSON-CENTRED CARE

Provide highly effective personalised care to individuals, their families and populations in primary care and community settings.

*"It's an honour and a privilege to have patients lay their lives in front of me and ask for my help. I see a glimpse into their world and they open the door for me to see more as we develop a relationship that is born on trust and understanding. There's nothing quite like it. Put simply, it's the best job in the world."*

Dr Sophia Le Mare  
GP Principal



*As a GP you can...*

- **Become an advocate for your patients**, ensuring they receive the best possible care. You'll empower them to manage their own health and make informed decisions about their care and treatment.
- **Apply evidence and compassion** when making clinical decisions. You'll manage uncertainty and develop a detailed knowledge of the people and diversity in your local community.
- **See patients in a variety of settings** throughout your career. From your morning surgery and out-of-hours services to hospital environments, sporting events, remote and rural locations and the privilege of seeing a patient in their own home.





# BECOMING A GP

Having successfully **graduated from medical school and completed 2 years as a foundation doctor**, the following steps are required to qualify as a GP in the UK.

Gain entry to the General Medical Council's (GMC) GP register

Undertake a **minimum of 3 years** (full time equivalent) specialty training on a GMC approved training programme.

## Apply for General Practice Specialty Training (GPST)

All GPST (ST1) programmes in the UK are recruited to via a national process managed by the GP National Recruitment Office (GPNRO).

- **Recruitment** to GPST will take place 3 times a year:
  - Twice for August commencement (Round 1 & Round 1 Re-advert)
  - Once for February commencement (Round 2)
- **Submitted applications will be assessed** using a standard, national and consistent staged process. The competency-based selection process allows applicants to demonstrate their abilities and suitability for GP training – applications are assessed by the demonstration of competences as outlined in the GP ST1 Person Specification.

## Gain entry to General Practice Specialty Training (GPST)

Entry is highly competitive – for more information on competition ratios and the number of available vacancies in each region visit [gprecruitment.hee.nhs.uk](http://gprecruitment.hee.nhs.uk).

- The **short-listing** method, known as the Multi-Specialty Recruitment Assessment (MSRA), involves undertaking a computer-based assessment.
- **Eligible applicants** are invited to book a place at a selection centre of their choice, subject to availability. Applicants will be considered for appointment across the whole of the UK based on their performance and rank.
- Doctors who have qualified overseas or trained in other specialties may shorten their training programme depending on their eligibility, registration status and experience. For more information visit [rcgp.org.uk/discovergp](http://rcgp.org.uk/discovergp).

## Complete General Practice Specialty Training (GPST)

Training usually consists of 18 months in hospital posts and 18 months in general practice. It also includes taking the MRCGP assessments.

- **The MRCGP comprises 3 separate components:**
  - Applied Knowledge Test (AKT)
  - Clinical Skills Assessment (CSA)
  - Workplace Based Assessment (WPBA)
- **Satisfactory completion of the MRCGP** is a prerequisite for getting a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT).
- For more information on the training programme visit [rcgp.org.uk/training-exams](http://rcgp.org.uk/training-exams).

## Qualify and receive a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT)

Gain entry to the GMC GP Register which allows you to enter independent practice in the UK.



# HOW THE RCGP SUPPORTS YOU

Becoming a GP is incredibly enriching and rewarding. It is a career with great purpose and is intellectually and medically challenging, diverse and fulfilling. The RCGP is here to help you explore and discover the endless opportunities that a career in general practice can offer.

The Royal College of General Practitioners is the professional membership body of general practitioners with a global network of over 52,000 members. As a medical student and foundation doctor wishing to find out more about a career in general practice you can become a member of the College for free.



As a member of the RCGP you are:



## Always **learning**

From medical school and specialty training, through to continuing professional development after you qualify, we provide high-quality educational resources developed by GPs.



## Part of a **community**

Connecting our members who have similar needs and interests as part of a network that provides peer-to-peer support and advice, wherever you are in your career and wherever you are in the world.



## Taking care of your **wellbeing**

Sharing tips and tools and providing resources and events to help you find a balance in your personal and professional life.



## Leading the **conversation**

Giving a collective voice to our members, lobbying government and supporting campaigns, communicating a realistic view of the challenges and opportunities faced in general practice.



## Shaping the **future**

Inspiring tomorrow's GPs in schools and universities, nurturing future leaders of the profession and encouraging research and innovation to improve the working lives of GPs and their patients.

Find out more about how the RCGP can support you and how you can get involved at [rcgp.org.uk/membership](https://rcgp.org.uk/membership).

Find out more about how we can support you towards a career in general practice and how you can become a member of the RCGP at **[rcgp.org.uk/discovergp](https://rcgp.org.uk/discovergp)**.

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