

# Who works in the NHS?

## LEARNING OUTCOMES



- To know the correct titles for a range of health professionals
- To know which health professional to consult for a given condition
- To understand what happens when you consult a specific health professional

## RESOURCES

- Copies of Resources 1–2
- Audio equipment 12–16
- Copies of audio scripts (Activity 3 Support)

## RELATED TOPICS

What does the NHS do? (Theme 9, Topic 2)

### HEALTH SKILLS

The NHS in the UK depends on the services of an enormous range of professional staff, each with a specific job title and area of responsibility.

This topic helps learners recognise the range of jobs in the NHS and understand the different job titles and roles.

### FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

In order to access the services of different health professionals, learners need to be able to:

- recognise, understand and use the appropriate title for each specialist service
- identify a health problem and match it to the relevant health professional
- listen and understand information about a range of jobs in the health service.

#### Functional Skills/Core Curriculum

Activities in this topic will contribute to learning in the following curriculum areas:

- recognise and understand relevant specialist key words **English** E3.8 (**E**Rw/E3.1a)
- use effective pronunciation and stress to be understood **English** E3.2 (**E**Sc/E3.1a)
- listen for relevant detail in explanations and narratives **English** E3.2 (**E**Lr/E3.2a).

- Ask learners about their experiences of using different health services in the UK and about different health professionals they have had contact with (e.g. physiotherapist, midwife).
- Display any job titles they mention and discuss what each job involves.
- Discuss situations when it is important to know job titles, for example when a doctor refers you for treatment or when you want to make an appointment with a particular health professional.

Which NHS services have you used?

Which health professionals work in these services?

### ACTIVITY 1 12

#### Become familiar with some commonly used job titles

- Hand out Resource 1. Ask learners what they think is happening in each picture. Display key words.
- Ask learners to pencil in the title of the person doing each job on Resource 1 if they know it. Don't worry about spelling at this point, or how many titles learners do or don't know.  
Note: learners may come up with alternative job titles. Confirm that some jobs may have different names (e.g. 'health visitor'/'public health nurse'; 'chiropodist'/'podiatrist'; 'GP'/'family doctor').
- Hand out Resource 2 and ask learners to underline any titles they don't recognise. Ask them to match the job titles to the pictures on Resource 1 as far as they can.
- Play the audio clip of seven health professionals giving their job title and a brief description of their work. Complete the matching exercise and allow time for learners to finalise the titles on Resource 1.
- Encourage learners to practise saying the words, copying the stressed syllable (the part of the word which is said more strongly): 'pharmacist', 'chemist'. Confirm the pronunciation of 'ph' and 'ch' in certain – especially medical – words.
- Discuss the results of the matching exercise.

When would you need to see each of these health professionals?

What would you expect them to do?

#### TIP

Point out common endings such as *-ist* ('dentist', 'podiatrist') and roots of words to help learners decode other words in those fields (e.g. 'optician', 'optical', 'optometrist').

#### Support

- Focus on one picture at a time for the matching exercise, starting with the more familiar terms such as 'nurse' and 'dentist'.
- Discuss each new word and elicit ideas about its meaning from the spelling and from word association. Refer learners to the glossary or a dictionary.
- Play the audio clips one at a time and more than once, pausing the audio to discuss the meaning of unfamiliar words or expressions.
- Display each job title for discussion and cluster key words around it as they come up, for example 'fillings' and 'check-up' with dentist; 'glasses' and 'contact lenses' with optician.

#### ESOL

- If there are two or more ESOL learners who speak the same language, allow them to discuss the job titles with each other in their own language to ensure understanding.
- Some job titles in the UK will not be mirrored in other countries. Provide a range of examples of what each job involves for those to whom the title is entirely new.

## ACTIVITY 2 13

### Match health problems to health professionals

- Play the audio clips of four people describing their medical problems.
- Ask learners to match the problems to four of the ten job titles.
- Discuss learners' own experiences of access to particular health professionals: was it easy, did they have to wait long, etc.

#### Support

- Play the audio clips one by one. Ask questions to promote discussion, such as 'What part of this woman's body hurts?' 'What did she do?' 'What help does she need?' 'Why does this man's sister need help?' 'Who will come to see her?' 'What will the person do?'
- Ask learners to listen for key words or expressions that give a clue to the service needed. For example, 'pulled a muscle in my shoulder'; 'it still hurts'; 'can't lift my arm properly'; 'lost a filling'; 'bad toothache'.

#### ESOL

Provide additional examples of vocabulary and expressions for learners to guess the jobs. For example, 'I could do with some glasses' (optician); 'I need some painkillers' (pharmacist).

*Can you get an appointment with any health professional?*

*Do you first need to see your GP?*

## ACTIVITY 3 14-16

### Learn more about the jobs of different health professionals

- Play the three conversations with patients and discuss what the patients want in each one.
- Play the conversations again. In pairs or small groups, ask learners to pick out for each one a) the job title of the health professional; b) details of what the person does.
- Take feedback and compare results.
- Discuss in which of the conversations the patient is referred to another NHS health professional. If necessary, play the second conversation again.
- Which health professionals have you or your family seen? How easy was it to arrange to see them?
- Ask about learners' experiences of being referred to other NHS health professionals, and how easy it was to arrange to see them.
- Encourage learners to share information about other NHS health professionals they know of. Display job titles and key words/expressions for talking about what they do, and what happens on a visit (e.g. optician: 'test your sight', 'check your eyes are healthy', 'short-sighted', 'prescribe glasses', 'help you choose frames', 'reading glasses', 'bi-focal lenses', 'contact lenses', etc.).
- Suggest that learners choose one of the health professionals on Resource 1 or one of the health professionals they have talked about. In small groups, encourage them to take turns to explain to each other what their chosen health professional does, but without saying the job title. The others in the group guess what the title is.

*If you don't know which health professional you need to see, how can you find out?*

### Support

- Play the audio clips one by one and repeat as necessary, pausing to clarify words and expressions such as 'urine sample', 'overweight' and 'suffer from violence'.
- After learners have listened and gathered some information, provide the audio scripts for them to check.

### ESOL

The conversations contain quite a lot of words and expressions that may be new to learners. Support them by discussing the scenario for each of the conversations and introducing some key words in advance (e.g. 'blood test'; 'heavy'; 'upset').

### Action

- Give learners a week – or until the next session – to collect a list of health-related job titles encountered by family and friends or on radio and TV.
- Ask them to prepare an explanation of what one chosen health professional does.
- Compile a comprehensive list in a feedback session and encourage learners to practise explaining their chosen job to each other in pairs.

*What can you find out about the jobs of other health professionals in the NHS?*

# Who works in the NHS?

## RESOURCE 1

🎧 12



1 \_\_\_\_\_



2 \_\_\_\_\_



3 \_\_\_\_\_



4 \_\_\_\_\_



5 \_\_\_\_\_



6 \_\_\_\_\_



7 \_\_\_\_\_



8 \_\_\_\_\_



9 \_\_\_\_\_



10 \_\_\_\_\_

# Who works in the NHS?

RESOURCE 2

 12

GP

dentist

optician

chiropodist  
or podiatrist

physiotherapist

pharmacist  
or chemist

nurse

health visitor

counsellor

dietitian

## ACTIVITY 1 / Resource 1

- 1 dentist
- 2 optician
- 3 counsellor
- 4 chiropodist or podiatrist
- 5 dietitian
- 6 physiotherapist
- 7 health visitor
- 8 nurse
- 9 pharmacist
- 10 GP

## ACTIVITY 2

Extract 1 – physiotherapist

Extract 2 – dentist

Extract 3 – counsellor

Extract 4 – health visitor

## ACTIVITY 3

### Conversation 1

Job title: practice nurse

Reason for referral: blood test

Details: looks after cuts or bruises; changes dressings; takes blood and urine samples; gives general advice on health

### Conversation 2

Job title: dietitian

Reason for referral: overweight

Details: talks about the problem, checks weight and general health; helps plan diet (what food, how much and how often); advises people who are overweight, who don't eat enough or who have diet-related illnesses or allergies

## Conversation 3

Job title: counsellor

Reason for referral: feels upset, keeps crying

Details: listens to people who are unhappy at work, who have trouble with their families, who are lonely, who have upsets in their lives, who suffer from violence or who are in shock; helps people change what they do and how they think and feel

## AUDIO SCRIPTS

### ACTIVITY 1



I'm a GP – a general practitioner, or family doctor. People come to me for advice and treatment.

I'm a dentist. I look after people's teeth.

I'm an optician. I check people's eyesight and give them the correct glasses or contact lenses.

I'm a podiatrist. I look after people's feet.

I'm a physiotherapist. I help people to exercise and move properly again after they've been ill or injured.

I'm a pharmacist. Some people call me a chemist. People come to me with prescriptions to get their medicine or to obtain general health advice.

I'm a nurse. I look after people when they're ill or injured. I work in a general practice, but some nurses work in a hospital or visit people in their homes.

I'm a health visitor. I give health support to families in the community.

I'm a counsellor. I listen to people's problems and try to help.

I'm a dietitian. I advise people on what to eat.

## ACTIVITY 2



### Extract 1

I was lifting a box and I pulled a muscle in my shoulder. It happened about a month ago, but it still hurts and I can't lift my arm properly. I really need to see someone about it.

### Extract 2

I lost a filling the other day and now I've got really bad toothache. I must get it sorted out.

### Extract 3

I feel very sad and depressed all the time. I wish I could talk to someone about my problems.

### Extract 4

My sister had a new baby last week. She's out of hospital now. The midwife visited her for the first few days and everything was OK. But now the baby's not feeding properly and she thinks she may be doing something wrong. She needs some more support – someone to call in and check that she and the baby are OK.

## ACTIVITY 3



### Conversation 1

**Receptionist:** Good morning.

**Patient:** Hello, I'm here for my blood test. Can I see the doctor, please?

**Receptionist:** Actually, you can see the practice nurse. She'll do your test for you.

**Patient:** Don't I need to see the doctor, then?

**Receptionist:** Not for a simple blood test. The nurse can do that for you.

**Patient:** Oh ...

**Receptionist:** The practice nurse does a lot of things – she looks after cuts or bruises, changes dressings, takes blood and urine samples and can give general advice on your health. And if you see the nurse for your blood test, it'll be quicker than if you see the doctor.

**Patient:** Oh ... that's good. I want to get this over with!



## Conversation 2

**Mother:** My daughter's very overweight, doctor. I don't know what to do.

**Doctor:** Well ... yes, she is rather heavy for her height ... I'm going to refer you to a dietitian.

**Mother:** Oh ... what will the dietitian do?

**Doctor:** The dietitian I'm sending her to works at the hospital. He'll talk to your daughter about what she eats. He'll check her weight and general health and then together you'll plan her diet.

**Mother:** What does that mean?

**Doctor:** You and your daughter will agree what food she can and can't eat, how much she can eat and how often. A few weeks later, the dietitian will see her again to check her weight and fitness and to see if the diet is suiting her. If not, he'll change it until it's right for her.

**Mother:** I see. Can anyone see the dietitian?

**Doctor:** No. First you have to do what you've done and see your GP. I will decide with you if you have a health problem that needs the dietitian's help. In fact, the dietitian does lots of other things as well as helping people to lose weight – like advising people who don't eat enough food, or who have diet-related illnesses or allergies.

**Mother:** Oh ... well ... I'm glad we came to see you. Thank you, doctor.



## Conversation 3

**Counsellor:** Hello. What can I do for you?

**Patient:** Well ... I've been feeling very upset lately. I keep crying even when nothing seems to be wrong. My boyfriend said I should see a counsellor ...

**Counsellor:** So you've come to see me.

**Patient:** Yes. My doctor sent me ... I know you're a counsellor, but I don't really know what you can do for me.

**Counsellor:** Well ... I see lots of people who are upset. They talk to me and I listen. I see people who are unhappy at work or who have trouble with their families ... people who are lonely or who have big upsets in their lives ... and people who suffer from violence or who are in shock. I can't change the facts. But I can help people change what they do and how they think and feel.

Now ... tell me about yourself. Where do you live?