

Midwife

- Midwives care for and support pregnant women, their partners and new babies, before, during and after the birth.
- They monitor the health of the mother, counsel her on health issues and explain the options for delivery of the baby.
- The job also involves reassuring parents, running antenatal and parenting classes, taking care of the mother and baby during labour and birth, and giving advice on breast feeding.
- Some midwives give pre-conception advice.



Midwives in the NHS work a 37.5-hour week. Shift work, evenings, nights, weekends and bank holiday work may be required. Midwives work in hospital maternity units or GP surgeries, health centres, clinics, and in patients' homes. NHS midwives start on £17,105. Midwife consultants can earn up to £46,675. Midwives should:

- get on well with people from different backgrounds
- be able to explain things to people who have no medical knowledge
- stay calm and alert at stressful times
- be able to work on their own initiative
- be flexible and adaptable.

The NHS is the largest employer of midwives. Other employers are private hospitals and clinics and the armed forces. There may be opportunities for self-employment.

To qualify as a midwife, people either take a diploma or a degree in midwifery, or train first as a registered nurse, and then take a further 18-month course. They need at least five GCSEs/S grades (A-C/1-3).

Prospects for promotion are good and midwives can move up the career structure.