

PODIATRIST/ CHIROPODIST

WHAT DOES A PODIATRIST/ CHIROPODIST DO?

Podiatrists/Chiropractors diagnose and treat abnormalities of the foot, and offer advice on preventing foot problems. They treat people of all ages including:

- children with lower limb pain, or having problems walking
- diabetes sufferers with circulation problems
- sportspeople with injuries to a leg or foot
- dancers whose rehearsals and performances have injured their feet
- people needing minor surgery e.g. nail surgery or laser treatment
- patients wanting advice on footwear or foot health

Podiatrists/Chiropractors will:

- assess and treat foot care ailments, ranging from verrucas to deformities
- analyse how a person walks or runs and correct the anatomical relationship between the different segments of the foot
- monitor and manage foot problems/ deformities caused by disease e.g. rheumatoid arthritis
- advise and treat patients at high risk of foot problems and amputation e.g. those with diabetes
- undertake nail surgery using local anaesthetic

SKILLS REQUIRED

Applicants for Podiatry/ Chiropractic courses and jobs will need to demonstrate that they have:

- a caring and understanding nature
- a keen interest and ability in science
- strong communication skills
- the ability to work under pressure and deal calmly with all types of people
- practical skills to carry out delicate treatments
- the ability to organise and prioritise their workload
- the ability to work on their own and in consultation with others

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

- A Podiatry/ Chiropractic degree that has been approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). See the HCPC website for a list of approved courses: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/>
- Registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- Some Universities may prefer applicants to have undertaken some work shadowing before applying for a place on a degree course. This means spending some time with a Podiatrist/ Chiropractor to learn about the role and what it involves.
- Applicants will need to pass a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- Some, if not all, posts will require a driving licence.
- Check entry requirements and course content with individual course providers.

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

There is one HCPC-approved course in the West Midlands.

BSc (Hons) Podiatry: Birmingham Metropolitan College (<http://www.bmetc.ac.uk/>)

Length of study: 3 years full-time

Entry requirements - qualifications: Applicants should have an Access to HE Diploma in a Science subject plus a minimum of 5 GCSEs at A*-C (or equivalent), including English and Mathematics. Mature applicants holding recent but alternative qualifications will be considered on an individual basis.

Entry requirements - work experience: None specified.

NB Please check entry requirements with individual course providers.

NHS FINANCIAL SUPPORT WHILST STUDYING

Candidates can apply for NHS funding for an approved course. Where this is available, tuition fees will be met in full and successful applicants will receive a non-means tested bursary to help towards living expenses. For details, check with individual universities and the NHS Business Services Authority:

<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx>.

EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

Podiatrists/ Chiropodists work in a variety of settings including: hospital departments/ clinics; health centres; GP surgeries; schools. They may also visit patients' in their homes. Self-employment is a popular option after some post-registration clinical experience. This could include working for a private podiatry clinic, in a GP surgery, making home visits or doing locum work.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Podiatrists/ Chiropodists working for the NHS usually work 37.5 hours a week over five days. Those who are self-employed, or in private practice, may work outside of these hours to fit in with their patients' availability.

SALARY

Podiatrists/ Chiropodists earn £21,692 to £40,964 per year in the NHS. Those working in private practice may earn more than this.

NB These figures are only a guideline: see NHS pay scales, and job advertisements, for up-to-date information

LABOUR MARKET DATA

In February 2016, there were 13,127 Podiatrists/ Chiropodists registered with the HCPC.

PROFILE OF CURRENT WORKFORCE (Figures are for the whole healthcare sector)

Full-time: 54%; Part-time: 31%; Self-employed: 15%

INFORMATION SOURCES

- British Chiropody and Podiatry Association: <http://www.bcha-uk.org/>
- Careers in Podiatry: <http://careersinpodiatry.com/scope-of-podiatry/>
- Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC): <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/>
- Health Learning and Skills Advice Line: 08000 150 850
- Institute of Chiropodists and Podiatrists: <http://www.iocp.org.uk/>
- National Careers Service: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/>
- NHS Business Authority: <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students>
- NHS Careers: <http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/>
- Prospects: <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/>
- Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists: <http://www.scpod.org/>
- UCAS: <https://www.ucas.com/>

VIDEO LINKS

- <http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/explore-by-career/allied-health-professions/careers-in-the-allied-health-professions/chiropodistpodiatrist/>
- <http://www.scpod.org/news/what-is-podiatry/>

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