



PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING PRACTITIONER

WHAT DOES A PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING PRACTITIONER DO?

Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners work within the 'Improving Access to Psychological Therapies' (IAPT) service, providing high volume, low intensity interventions for clients with mild to moderate depression, based on a cognitive behavioural model.

IAPT is an NHS programme focusing on developing new and improved services for treating people with depression and anxiety disorders.

Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners undertake patient-centred interviews, identifying areas where the person wishes to see change, make an assessment of risk to self and others, provide assisted self-help, liaise with other agencies and provide information about services. They work under supervision and refer on those clients, who require it, for high intensity therapy.

They will generally spend less time in sessions or contacts than their high-intensity colleagues, with an average session time of 20-30 minutes, but they can be shorter. However, the number of low-intensity sessions per patient is not limited and some Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners may have ongoing contact with patients to assist in chronic disease management and relapse-prevention.

SKILLS REQUIRED

Applicants for Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner trainee posts will need to demonstrate that they have:

- a non-judgemental outlook
- a willingness to work with all kinds of people
- excellent observation and listening skills
- patience, tolerance and sensitivity
- an understanding of their own attitudes and responses
- a belief that all clients are able to make positive changes
- an appreciation of confidentiality issues

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

- Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner training is commissioned by the NHS in local universities. It consists of 1 day per week of academic work and 4 days of supervised practice.
- Applicants need to apply for Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner trainee posts within the IAPT service: recruitment and selection is undertaken jointly by the service and the academic course provider. If successful, the applicant gains both a post and access to the training. Posts are advertised on the NHS Jobs website (<http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>) and locally within newspapers and local job sites, as well as with charities such as Mind, Rethink and Turning Point.
- Access to Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner roles is open to:
 - graduates and those who can demonstrate that they can perform academically at a graduate level. These trainees are trained to a postgraduate certificate level.
 - people from local communities, with a wide range of life experiences. These trainees are trained to a graduate level but via a different academic qualification.
- It is essential to have experience of working (paid or unpaid) with people with mental health difficulties in a mental health service or community setting. Experience of working with a culturally diverse population is often an advantage.
- In the first 2 years of recruitment to Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner roles, successful applicants were already employed in a diverse range of job roles including teaching, police, assistant psychologists, education, and healthcare support workers. The highest proportion of successful applicants were assistant psychologists or in healthcare support roles.
- Applicants will need to pass a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

UNDERGRADUATE/ POSTGRADUATE COURSES

The training is part-time (1 day per week) and, as mentioned above, cannot be accessed directly as the training is provided to those who have successfully applied for Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner trainee posts.

EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners work within the IAPT service across the country, which may be within primary care trusts, specialist mental health trusts, as well as, the third and private sectors.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners work with individual clients face-to-face, by telephone or via other media.

SALARY

Trainee Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners' starting pay is currently £19,217. After qualification, their salary increases to £21,909 to £35,225.

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

LABOUR MARKET DATA

In recent years, the NHS, government departments and private companies have been investigating low intensity, therapy-based solutions as alternatives to drug-based treatments. The focus on improving mental health, public health, and tackling obesity, are improving the employment prospects for therapists. There is likely to be an increase in cross disciplinary and community based opportunities for therapists in the future.

INFORMATION SOURCES

- Adult Improving Access to Psychological Therapies Programme: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/adults/iapt/workforce/>
- British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies: <http://www.babcp.com/>
- British Psychological Society: <http://www.bps.org.uk/>
- National Careers Service: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/>
- NHS Careers: <http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/>
- Prospects: <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/>
- UCAS: <https://www.ucas.com/>

VIDEO CLIPS

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9WObDlghRE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWYImPOTI7U>

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