Healthcare Science Career of the Week

MEDICAL MAVERICKS
INSPIRATION IN. ASPIRATIONS OUT

Digital Software Developer

Area of HCS: Information and Technology
Pay Scale: £25k - £70k

Did you know...?

- The government made a commitment in 2015 in a "Five Year Forward Plan" to have completely paperless records across the whole NHS by 2020. And they are giving the NHS £4 billion to do this!

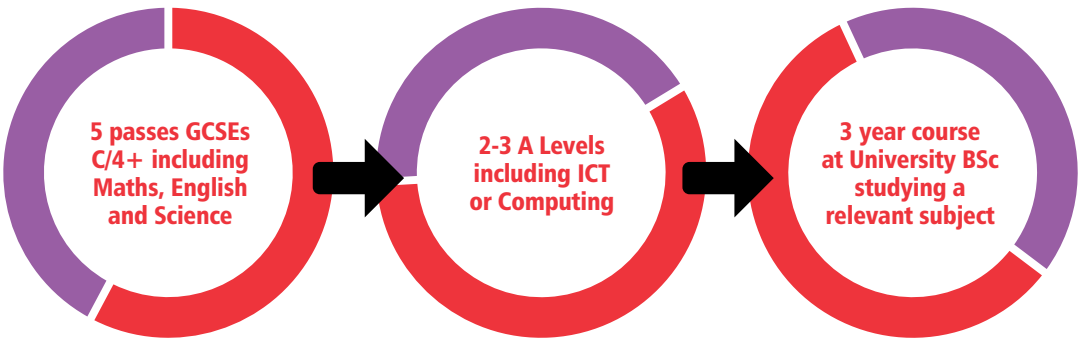
Did you know...?

- NHS Digital is the trade name for an organisation called the Health and Social Care Information Centre (not as catchy is it?). These lads and ladies, over 2000 of them, are working hard to bring the NHS into the digital age.

As a Digital Software Developer in the NHS you get to play a key role in making a real difference to people's lives. We live in the technological era where we all have access to the internet, computers and smart phones, these are all tools we can use to help us live healthy lives and that is where a developer comes in. You could create digital support tools for people with mental health issues to substance misuse, smoking cessation to healthy eating. You could be creating e-learning platforms or doing front-end web development, or developing applications to assist the NHS. Part of your role will also involve working with external commercial companies and programmes to ensure they work with NHS systems.

You will work in a multi-disciplinary team that will involve clinical colleagues as well as other technological experts. Super important in this job is teamwork and the ability to collaborate, you could be working on national projects! Equally you could have a small program that is your responsibility from start to end: from development and testing, to implementation, to maintenance and updates. This a job with continual learning built in, the pace at which the digital world moves is incredibly rapid. It will be your responsibility to keep on top of the latest research and developments by attending seminars, conferences, workshops and training.

What to do to get into this career...



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Top Tip

- The NHS contains a lot of sensitive data about people, so make sure you are red-hot on encryption and security!

What is a "relevant degree"???

You could study any of the following at university to get into this career:

- **Software development**
- **Information Technology**
- **Computing**
- **Informatics**
- **Internet software development**
- **Software engineering**
- **Computer science**

Healthcare Science Career of the Week

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Genomic Counsellor

Area of HCS: Life Sciences
Pay Scale: £26k - £80k

AMAZING FACT |

- People share 7% of their genetic material with the bacteria *E.coli*, 21% with worms, 90% with mice and 98% with chimpanzees.

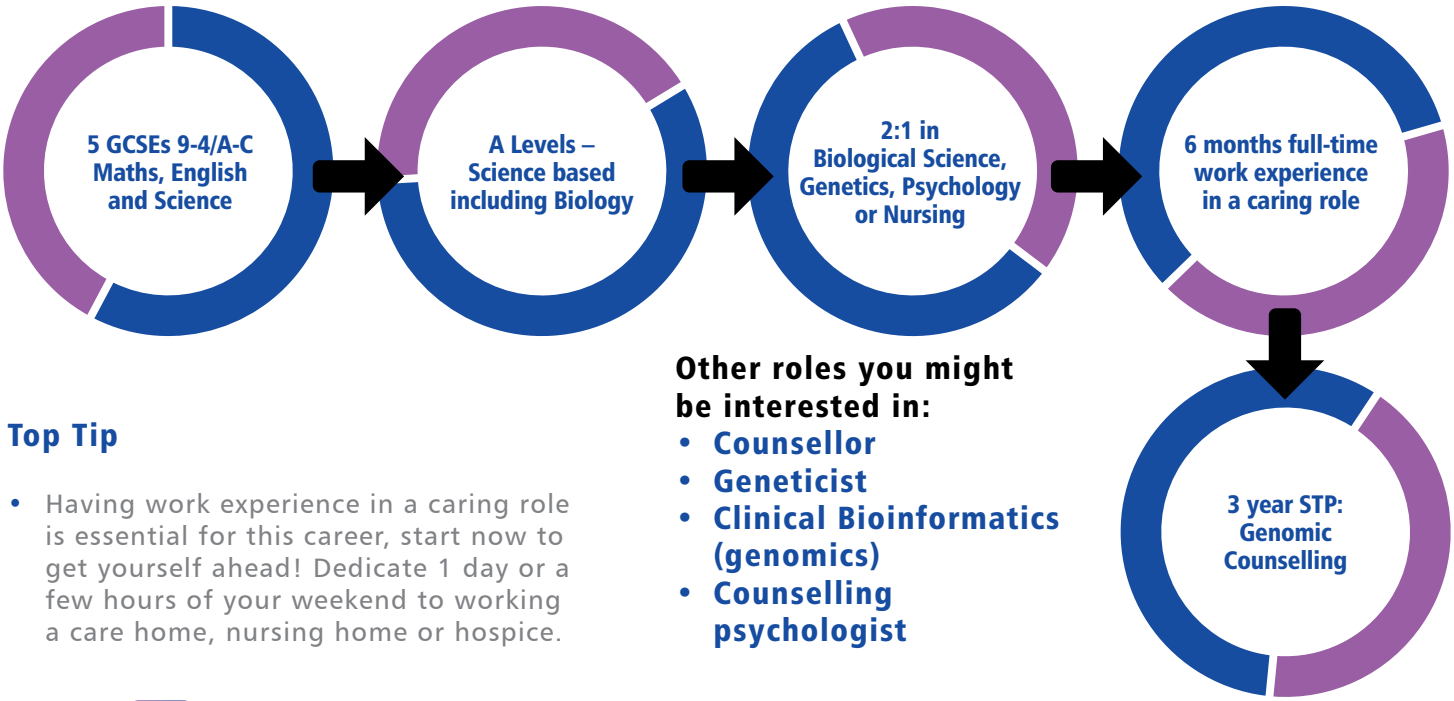
Genetic testing is being used more and more often in the NHS, and this presents lots of ethical, psychological and social challengers. Genomic counsellors (also called genetic counsellors) examine genes and how they interact to help diagnose disease, determine prognosis, risk and select therapeutic options. They provide support, information and advice to inform patients so they can make the best decisions for them, their future and their families.

Examples of situations a genomic counsellor would work in:

- A child is born with several abnormalities thought to be genetic
- There is a family history of genetic disease or cancer
- Someone has been diagnosed with onset neurodegenerative disease
- Potential parents have decided to undergo genetic testing for carrier status

As a genomic counsellor you would work closely with patients and their families in specialist Regional Genetics Centre, as not all hospitals provide genetic testing. Your day-to-day role might be in a clinical setting but could also involve home visits too. This is actually a very caring role as you need to help people make often complex and difficult decisions about their health based on the information you have received from their genetic tests.

What do I need to do to get into this career?



Top Tip

- Having work experience in a caring role is essential for this career, start now to get yourself ahead! Dedicate 1 day or a few hours of your weekend to working a care home, nursing home or hospice.

Other roles you might be interested in:

- **Counsellor**
- **Geneticist**
- **Clinical Bioinformatics (genomics)**
- **Counselling psychologist**

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AMAZING FACT 2:

- If all 46 chromosomes from one human body cell were combined and arranged lengthways, the total length would be 1.8 meters. That's one cell!!! Just one!!