**General resources**  
Royal College of Nursing  
[http://www.rcn.org.uk/nursing](http://www.rcn.org.uk/nursing)  
The Royal College of Nursing’s website hosts a useful careers section, with information on qualifications and case studies detailing what a typical day as a nurse consists of. There’s also information on working in the UK as a foreign student, and working abroad.

Propects  
[http://www.prospects.ac.uk/adult_nurse_job_description.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/adult_nurse_job_description.htm)  
An overview of a role as an Adult Nurse, with links to profiles of similar roles.

NHS Careers  
[https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing)  
A comprehensive look at the sector from by far the biggest employer of nurses, featuring information on entry requirements and training, potential career paths and case studies. The website also links to NHS Jobs ([https://www.jobs.nhs.uk](https://www.jobs.nhs.uk)) which is where you’ll be able to search for employment opportunities within the NHS.

**Post qualification options**  
There are many options available to you if you wish to develop your career as a nurse after you qualify, including working in a specialist role, often in primary and community care settings. Many of these opportunities require further training and some post-qualification experience. Some of the most common options are listed below, although further information can be found on the Royal College of Nursing’s website or via NHS Careers (both are listed above).

**Health visitor**  
Training as a health visitor involves taking a shortened degree or postgraduate course, which will lead to you becoming a registered specialist community public health nurse. This role involves working closely in a community to promote good health and prevent illness, often through educational programmes and home visits. You will usually need around two years’ experience as a qualified midwife or nurse (in any branch,) before you can begin an approved health visitor training programme and work as a health visitor. There is currently a recruitment drive, in order to recruit 4,200 more health visitors by 2015.

Courses are run on a one-year full-time or two years part-time basis, and are fully funded through the NHS. You can find your nearest course provider through the NHS website - [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/public-health/health-visitor](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/public-health/health-visitor)

**District nurse**  
District nursing is another option for community nurses, with training courses usually lasting a minimum of one academic year (or part-time equivalent). Being a district nurse involves visiting people not able to fully care for themselves, such as the terminally ill and elderly, and assessing their situation and providing extra care where required.

District nurse training programmes are known as specialist practitioner programmes and are considered to be at a degree level, so this isn’t a route to be undertaken without careful consideration. Sponsorship opportunities are available, though these aren’t given to everyone, so you’ll need to keep an eye out in places such as the NHS Jobs website.

For further information on district nursing, see [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/district-nurse](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/district-nurse)

**Practice nursing**  
Practice nurses operate within GP practices and have a broad portfolio of responsibilities as part of the primary healthcare team. Tasks could include vaccinations, obtaining blood samples, and sexual health screenings to name but a few. With the NHS careers website saying that “Current NHS policy is increasing the shift of care from hospital to general practice” it is to be expected that opportunities as a practice nurse will increase in the next few years.

Entry is usually after at least two years’ post-qualification experience as a nurse, with most practice nursing training done whilst in post and funded by the employing practice. However, there can be competition for jobs, and so any short courses in relevant subjects such as diabetes or asthma management can enhance your CV. These are often available through local universities.

More information on practice nursing can be found at [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/practice-nurse](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/practice-nurse)
All about medical sales:

resources/nursing/general-practice-nurse and
www.practicenursing.co.uk, which includes an online forum where practice nurses share their experiences and advice.

Career development within Acute Settings

For nurses working in acute care settings there are also many ways of developing your career or branching into new areas. Two particular avenues open to nurses include developing particular clinical specialisms or developing into management roles.

Nurse consultants

First established in 1999, the Nurse Consultant role was created for highly trained specialist nurses to combine clinical work (which still makes up a minimum of 50% of their time) with education, training and development of other staff or particular services. Nurse Consultants specialise in a particular area of healthcare, and as such, each role can be different in nature and responsibilities. Nurse Consultants are among the highest paid nurses in the NHS and as such is unlikely to be a position you can consider until a few years after completing university.

Research careers in nursing

If you enjoy the theoretical aspects of the course and have an interest in developing the knowledge base for the nursing profession, then you could consider combining your clinical career with research. It is common for academic researchers to develop their knowledge and research skills through postgraduate study, normally by completing Masters and then a PhD. Further study can be taken up at any stage during your career, and you may be able to access funding support from your employing Trust or from funding bodies such as the MRC.

Nurse Researchers working in higher education settings are also often involved in lecturing, so an academic career is also open to those who wish to teach nursing students.

For more information on careers in research and teaching, it can be useful to speak to the lecturers in your department to find out how and why they went down that route.

Working outside the NHS

Below are just some of the environments in which you might consider working as a nurse:

- Voluntary organisations/charities
- Local authority nursing/residential homes
- Industry settings (e.g. involved in pharmaceutical clinical trials work)
- Prison Service
- Armed forces
- Leisure and tourism industry (working in holiday reports or for cruise companies)
- Private nursing organisations

Many of these organisations will look for qualified nurses who have some post-qualification experience so you may need to build up your experience in a mainstream setting before making a move into a new area. However, being aware of what specific skills are looked for in these roles can help you to plan ahead and build your CV whilst you are still working in the NHS.

Resources for working outside the NHS

All about medical sales: www.practicenursing.co.uk/resources/nursing/general-practice-nurse

Resources for existing Nurse Advisors and Nurse Consultants, along with specific advice for Nurses seeking their first position within the Medical, Healthcare and Pharmaceutical industries. They also run an e-learning course “Getting started in Medical Sales.”

The Institute of Clinical Research briefing

http://www.icr-global.org/careers/downloads

Useful downloadable material for any nurses interested in a career in an industrial setting.

Explore Health Careers

http://explorehealthcareers.org/en/Field/6/Nursing

A very comprehensive resource, providing careers information and job descriptions for over thirty roles related to the Nursing sector. A US-based site, so some of the references to qualifications won’t be relevant.

Carnival UK careers

http://www.carnivalukcareers.co.uk/medical.html

Information about a medical careers at sea. The website also features a jobs board; search under the “Ship – medical” option.

Travel Nursing

www.travelnursing.com

An online jobs board for those seeking to apply for a job as a travelling nurse. Many of the roles posted do ask for a year’s experience in a hospital setting.

Working abroad

As a registered nurse you may want to use your skills abroad, either for work for a healthcare service in another country or to work in an international development or aid organisation.

GoinGlobal:

http://www.careers.lon.ac.uk/blog/development

To develop your experience you could try Projects Abroad www.projects-abroad.org, which offers internships to healthcare students with a range of projects across the world.

Further Information

Careers Tagged

www.careerstagged.co.uk

Careers Tagged is an online careers library. Type a keyword (such as ‘Job site’) and you’ll find information sheets, jobsites, blogs, professional organisations and much more. Narrow your search by typing a second keyword (such as ‘France’). All material is vetted and checked by careers staff, to ensure it is useful and relevant. Use the tag NURSING, HEALTHCARE and HEALTH to search for relevant resources.

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