

**Close
the**

gap

Powering NHS Workforce Plans with Indeed





While the NHS is the biggest employer in Europe and the biggest employer of skilled professionals in the world,¹ the organisation faces significant challenges due to staffing shortages² and recruitment competition from the private sector.³

However, the NHS Workforce Plan has been introduced with clear long-term goals and immediate actions to address these challenges at local, regional, and national levels.

The aim is to ensure both patients and staff get what they need while also improving care—initiating the biggest recruitment drive in NHS history and creating an ongoing plan to keep things running smoothly.

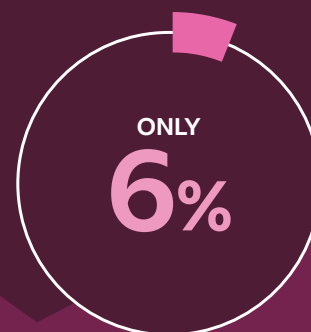
In particular, the NHS must focus on attracting young people for non-clinical roles, as only 6% of the

“We want to help the NHS showcase its true strengths as an employer, attract a wide range of skills and reach people all from walks of life. This guide holds the insights and strategies that can transform NHS recruitment and close the gap between candidates and opportunities.”

– Bill Richards, Managing Director UK at Indeed

workforce is under 25,⁴ largely due to a higher proportion of jobs requiring professional qualifications compared to other sectors.

But here, there are opportunities available to anyone interested in working in healthcare. The fact is that if you have transferable skills and a desire to contribute to the public good, anyone can work for the NHS. The problem? People don't seem to realise it.



of the NHS workforce is under 25.⁵



While the plan proposes making national recruitment methods more modern and flexible for both job seekers and recruiters, it also highlights the importance of making NHS jobs attractive to people across all generations.

Implementing a workforce plan that stands the test of time and keeps recruitment costs low is a hard thing to do in any sector, particularly so in the NHS. Present pressures—felt by patients and staff—can make future needs feel less important. But, Indeed is here to help you navigate these challenges while ensuring you drive value from your efforts.

With tips for strategic employer branding, you'll learn how to boost your compelling story that attracts staff who share the NHS values and behaviours and believe in its purpose. Discover how to find the right people with the right skill sets, expand your reach, meet candidates where they are, and communicate with them in ways that really resonate with them.

We'll also show you how to drive more value from your recruitment process in 5 simple steps, sharing the key areas where data and automation can be brought into the NHS recruitment process—from initial job descriptions to onboarding. So get ready to close the gap and win over the next generation of talent for non-clinical roles.

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SECTION 1

The Great Misconception: Boosting NHS Employer Brand

3 ways to ways to strengthen your employer brand

Nationally, the NHS has a well-recognised brand and values—and its ‘We are the NHS’ campaigns have effectively boosted applications and general interest in health careers.

However, staffing challenges are still significant, with increased demand for services alongside a surge in staff departures and retirements. There is an urgent need for individual NHS organisations to amplify their employer brand and attract local talent with transferable skills—but, people are not always aware of the breadth of roles and opportunities available.

Alongside the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan⁶ and targeted programmes of work, Indeed is

“We aim to showcase the flexibility and autonomy NHS staff have, along with the growth opportunities available. We’ll introduce initiatives to welcome newcomers and support their journey to a rewarding career. This is key to drawing in the 204,000–230,000 new support workers needed over the next 15 years.”

– Bill Richards, Managing Director UK at Indeed

committed to supporting local NHS organisations to reinforce their reputation and unique employee value proposition.

The NHS must also ensure its employment offer is attractive to people across all generations,

including those who have yet to join the workforce. Here, we’ll explore how you can do that—putting your USPs front and centre, making private sector tactics work for you and optimising your communications channels.



of individuals aged 16 to 24 leave jobs due to limited growth prospects.⁹

1. Retell your organisation's story

A stand-out employer brand is becoming increasingly more important with 76% of people researching a company's Employer Branding in 2023, a 52% increase compared to 2022.⁷ Therefore, the NHS needs to shine a light on its unique selling points such as:

Community Impact

97% of people we surveyed believe they can have jobs where they feel a clear sense of purpose.⁸ Drive home that this possibility is a reality within the NHS—providing a rewarding work experience that directly impacts and improves people's lives and contributes to the public good.

Mobility & Opportunities

The Plan sets out a commitment to boost training numbers through investment.¹⁰ Some think they lack qualifications for roles, but there is a wide range of opportunities available—with 350 career paths that extend beyond medicine.¹¹ From admin staff to domestic assistants, many folks have skills from other fields that make them perfect for the NHS—the key is making sure they are aware of the career path opportunities available.

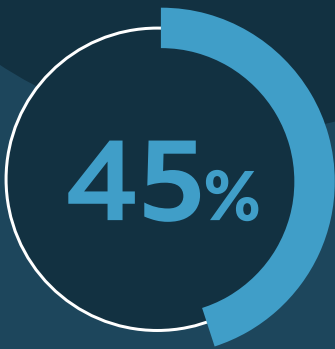
Work/Life Balance

Work/life balance is more important than ever according to our recent survey which found that the so-called 'war for talent' hinges on the flexibility employers provide.¹² The NHS People Promise recognises this,

endeavouring "to work together to improve the experience of working in the NHS for everyone".¹³ And, that ambition to embrace flexible working needs to take centre stage in your comms. From working locations to hours, emphasising the right to request flexible work from day one¹⁴ is a USP that can significantly ramp up job applications.

Well-being at work

Thriving employees fuel success, yet only 23% feel they are thriving.¹⁶ Many private companies promote


 45%

of people say their expectations around work well-being have risen in the past year.¹⁵



cultures of well-being—a strategy the NHS should adopt to stay in the race for the best talent. With a Health and Well-being program backed by the Department of Health and Social Care, you can leverage this in your employer branding. Shout about the NHS People Plan¹⁷, emphasising the commitment to 'looking after our people' and the local initiatives you have put in place to make your organisation a great place to work.

2. Level the talent playing field

It's no secret that the private sector is quick to snap up fresh talent, especially among Gen Z and millennials. But, what sets them apart in successful recruitment? Let's explore this and apply these strategies to the NHS.

Break down diversity barriers

Private companies often boast about their diverse culture, understanding its impact on employee loyalty and meaningful contributions. Similarly, the NHS needs a workforce mirroring local communities and represents the patient population to build trust. The NHS workforce is more diverse than at

any other point in history, with nearly 25% of staff coming from an ethnic minority background.¹⁸ Therefore, the NHS could do more to showcase its compassionate and inclusive culture. Highlighting diversity will improve the NHS's image and connect with local talent, making it an attractive place to work, especially for those starting in non-clinical roles.

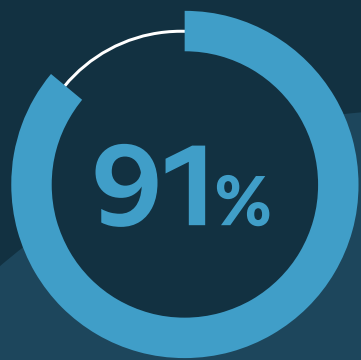
Put your energy into early careers

The Long Term Workforce Plan highlights demographic shifts that offer unique recruitment opportunities in healthcare. With a unique surge in the 18-year-old population, there's a limited window to engage school leavers. The NHS is competing with employers from high street retailers to Amazon distribution warehouses—and some of these businesses really understand the employee experience and know how to attract early career applicants. What they lack, however, are career development and learning opportunities. Apprenticeships in the NHS (as outlined in the plan²⁰) will open doors for folks from all walks of life. This makes the NHS a more welcoming and diverse

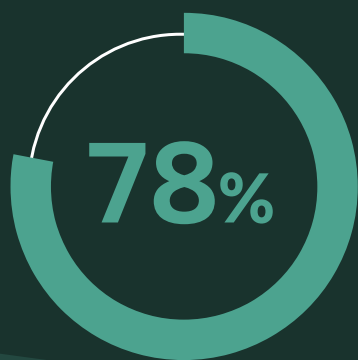
place to be. Plus, studies suggest apprentices are more likely to stay with an organisation compared to those in traditional training programs.²¹

Crafting engaging candidate experiences

Recruitment has evolved into a marketing initiative—whereby the path to hiring needs to be filled with engaging and helpful experiences, from 'apply now' to 'accept offer'. This means removing barriers from each touchpoint, crafting clear job


 91%

of employed adults consider consistent learning opportunities at work to be somewhat/very important.¹⁹



of job seekers are dropping out or considering dropping out of the recruitment procedure due to lengthy and complex processes.²³



descriptions, and streamlining the application process. In the next chapter, we'll discuss this process in more detail.

3. Elevating your communications

The NHS needs to clearly communicate the career opportunities it can offer in the right way, on the right channels and at the right time.

Write job descriptions that resonate

Job titles and descriptions are often misunderstood by those outside of the NHS. Job descriptions must be understandable, appealing and resonate with the wider audience to successfully pique their interest and entice them to apply. Stick to standard experience levels like “Senior” rather than describing roles in terms of ‘bands’ or other terms people are less likely to look for.²² Finally, consider going over your job description to ensure it is as ‘plain-speaking’ and easy to understand as possible. People need to get a feel for what the job will really be like.

Show candidates that you're listening

Reviews have become a regular part of our online search routine—especially when it comes to finding new employment. Look to your Glassdoor presence to see what people are saying about the organisation and what FAQs occur. Demonstrating that there are real people behind your employer brand who are listening and responding positively to feedback goes a long way in attracting candidates—and improving transparency.

Use digital to spread the word

If you're not optimising your digital presence to communicate your employer brand, you're hiding your light under a bushel. Take a look at your website—is the job search function user-friendly? Or your social channels—are you sharing community impact stories or showcasing the organisation's commitment to innovation and inclusivity? These are very quick fixes you can make before getting into the nitty-gritty of sponsored advertising.

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SECTION 2

Cast a wider talent net with skills-based hiring

The What, Where, Why, and How

As the NHS faces challenges tied to increased demand and more people leaving or retiring, Organisations need to cast a wider talent net—attracting people with transferable skills and those who are new to the workforce within non-clinical roles.

To do this, however, there is a need to rethink your communications and overcome rigid pre-qualification criteria, limited reach and lack of diversity. Here, we'll discuss skills-based hiring and why it's the pole vault the NHS needs to overcome these hurdles.

1. What is skills-based hiring?

In skills-based hiring, we focus on candidates' specific skills that fit the job, rather than on job titles or

qualifications. This straightforward tweak to your hiring plan brings in a more diverse group—reaching out to people from various career backgrounds who have built up a robust set of transferable skills.

It's about expanding the talent pool, welcoming more people to apply and connecting with local communities. And, the organisations who get on board early will be the ones scoring big in finding and snagging top talent.

2. Where does the NHS fit into this?

From the HR teams who recruit clinical and non-clinical staff to the finance teams who manage the budgets—all of these people play their part in helping to keep the NHS running and providing excellent patient care.

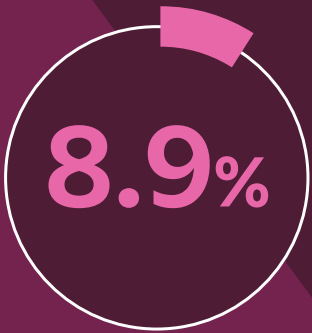


12.5%

NHS trusts are reporting their staff leaver rate to have increased to 12.5%.²⁴

However, we recently found that great candidates aren't applying for roles they believe they can execute well because of the emphasis on higher education qualifications.²⁵

For the NHS, this means prospects assume the need for a high level of academic qualifications and are unaware of the non-clinical opportunities available. And, where the private sector continues to


 8.9%

The NHS workforce in England faces an 8.9% vacancy rate, urgently requiring new talent attraction.²⁶



emphasise qualification, there is an opportunity to win talent over to the NHS.

3. Why should you focus on a new way of hiring?

A need for transferable skills

The NHS should hire in a way that welcomes different talents and skills. By looking at people's abilities, like communication and teamwork, they can offer more job opportunities and keep valuable employees. And, this will help the NHS to keep up with changes in healthcare. Remember the janitor at NASA who helped put a man on the moon? Whether you're an IT specialist who keeps systems running or the facilities management team who keeps the hospital clean, everyone in the NHS plays a vital role.

To remove the barriers to non-clinical roles

The NHS needs a fresh way of hiring to open doors for non-clinical roles. Using inclusive processes and smart technology, they can connect with

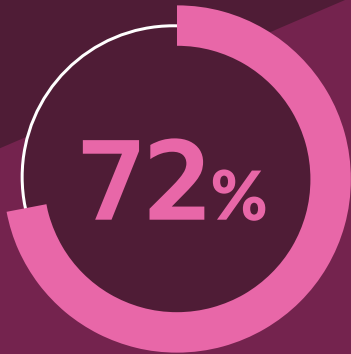
a diverse pool of candidates. And, with 350+ different careers in the NHS, shifting away from rigid criteria ensures a more inclusive and talent-focused hiring process, that will not only see these roles filled with the right skills, but they'll be in a better position to retain them.

To reflect local communities

There is strong evidence that where an NHS workforce reflects the community it serves, patient care and the overall experience become more personalised and improved.²⁸ This helps build trust in the organisation as an employer and raises awareness of entry-level non-clinical staff opportunities—making the NHS an appealing career choice. 72% of 18-34-year-olds would consider rejecting a job if equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) support is lacking.³⁰ Therefore by focusing on relevant abilities that matter for the job, we can highlight these values to prospective employees—emphasising successful EDI initiatives to drive their reputation as a diverse employer.

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- 26. [Vacancy rate of the NHS workforce](#)
- 27. [NHS England, Support the NHS](#)
- 28. [Indeed & Glassdoor's Hiring and Workplace Trends Report 2023](#)
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 72%

of 18-34-year-olds would consider rejecting a job if EDI support is lacking.²⁸

HOW: CASE STUDY

Now that we've established why the NHS needs to embrace skills-based hiring let's take a look at how it's already helping organisations reach a whole new pool of applicants—with Indeed.

Amid the demand during COVID-19, the NHS, like healthcare organisations worldwide, encountered heightened recruitment challenges. In 2021, the Health Foundation's REAL Centre (a segment of the foundation that analyses the NHS workforce) emphasised the need for a 40% staff growth over the next ten years to handle increased demands and recover from the pandemic. Indeed stepped in to help the NHS navigate this challenge.

The recruitment roadblocks

The NHS was challenged by understaffed HR roles and a lack of awareness about diverse roles within the Trust. Outdated recruiting systems, laden with qualification-heavy job descriptions, also deterred potential candidates.

Rabiu Ala Harana is one such healthcare support worker, who encountered these obstacles in the recruitment process.

“

Most of the time when I applied, I didn't get an invitation for an interview because there was not enough on my CV and the certifications to show that I had the background of skills needed to carry out the job.”

Rabiu Ala Harana
Healthcare Support Worker, NHS

Going skills-based and streamlined

In response, the NHS and Indeed strategically implemented skills-based hiring to address these challenges. Indeed designed a tailored solution covering sourcing, screening, and scheduling to lighten the workload for the NHS recruitment team.

Sponsored job advertisements and webinars targeted a diverse range of backgrounds, ensuring a broader talent pool.

Viable candidates moved forward to interviews that Indeed scheduled for NHS recruiters, which were held at large-scale, in-person and virtual hiring events across all seven regions of England.

“

The collaboration with Indeed encouraged the NHS to think in more innovative and creative ways about their recruitment processes.”

Carolyn Fox
Strategic nurse advisor, NHS England

Raising awareness, reducing admin

The collaboration resulted in tens of thousands of attendees, leading to 4,000 job offers, and 40% of those were new to care. By making the hiring process smoother and focusing on skills, Indeed and the NHS attracted people from different backgrounds. The refined, skill-based hiring process not only helped the NHS attract healthcare support workers, especially when other industries began to hire more after COVID-19, but also set up a better and more inclusive hiring process for the NHS.

“

They guided us through a lot of the questions to expect. We were just talking without a formal interview and they shook hands with me and said congratulations, I got the job. It was the easiest process I'd ever seen.”

Rabiu Ala Harana
Healthcare Support Worker, NHS



SECTION 3

5 Steps to driving more value from your recruitment process



Recruiting the right candidates while delivering cost savings

Recruitment teams within NHS organisations are juggling a multitude of challenges—finding the right candidates, connecting with local communities, and ensuring compliance with right-to-work requirements. So, how can they keep all of these balls in the air while delivering value and cost savings?

Step 1: Don't wait for candidates to come to you

- **The struggle:** Boosting visibility for non-clinical roles is challenging due to limited time, budget, and awareness, making entry-level NHS positions relatively unknown.
- **The fix:** You need a way to increase the reach of your job advertisement and highlight the variety of opportunities within the NHS that

don't require a medical background or years of experience.

- **Win with Indeed:** By posting your vacancies on Indeed, you are reaching a large and varied candidate base. As the UK's #1 job site, you can reach the skilled workers you need directly through our talent network.³¹

Step 2: Take the guesswork out of applicant screening

- **The struggle:** There could be hundreds of applicants for a single role and each one has to be checked and scored—a hugely time-consuming task.
- **The fix:** You need a way to quickly filter and assess resumes based on particular requirements to reduce the time and effort required for initial evaluations.

- **Win with Indeed:** Screener questions in Indeed Connect provides pre-made questions to choose from (or you can create your own)—so that you can save time trawling through CVs that don't even meet the minimum requirements.



50%

Jobs with screener questions are 50% more likely to result in a hire.³¹



50%

Jobs using Screening and Scheduling automation are 50% more likely to report a hire by day seven.³³



Step 3: Minimise manual tasks for your recruitment team

- **The struggle:** Beyond screening, the hiring process is laden with manual tasks such as contacting and scheduling interviews, which can cost you time and in some cases even candidates.
- **The fix:** You need a way to minimise the busy work for your recruitment team, so you can focus on building connections with talent and hiring faster.
- **Win with Indeed:** When automated screening comes together with our Direct to Interview feature, Indeed automatically schedules a phone or video call that fits both your schedule and theirs. We'll let you know about upcoming calls and send reminders to your candidates.

Step 4: Connect with the right skills in the local community

- **The struggle:** The NHS plans include changing recruitment practices to be more diverse, mirroring local communities in its workforce—but, it's a challenge to do so in an unbiased and efficient manner.
- **The fix:** Promote roles directly to local people with the right skills at the right moment—leading to better job-person fit, and a workforce that reflects the community.
- **Win with Indeed:** Indeed Targeted Ads directly target job seekers who may not know you're in the market for their skills. With geotargeting, we can also deliver those ads to people with a specific geographic location—so you can find diverse people with diverse skills in the local community.

Step 5: Drive more value from your recruitment budget

- **The struggle:** NHS recruitment must attract quality candidates while also minimising costs and delivering value. They need to prioritise technology and automation to help them both scale and manage spend.
- **The fix:** Matching and hiring platforms safely streamline the recruitment process with systems that integrate into their workflow, delivering value and saving cost at every point.
- **Win with Indeed:** Our dynamic bidding technology optimises spend so you can fill roles more efficiently. Only pay when we deliver results with Indeed's pay-for-results model, a new approach to cost-effective hiring.

Digitisation, automation and AI are now a significant part of our everyday lives. If the NHS embraces these with Indeed, they can connect with the right talent and make recruitment smoother and faster—all while integrating seamlessly into their workflow. This not only brings value, but it's the way to go to make sure organisations don't fall behind private sector companies in the race to recruit talent.

Sources

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33. Indeed data (CA, FR, UK, US)



CONCLUSION

Close the gap and win your unfair share of talent with Indeed

By automating manual tasks Indeed increases recruiter efficiency by

10X³³

To close the gap and win your unfair share of talent to the NHS you'll need two key elements –a multifaceted approach to recruitment... and Indeed.

Key takeaways

- By refocusing its employer brand, the NHS can amplify its unique story and virtues, and connect with people in local communities that may not have considered a career in the NHS previously.
- Skills-based hiring ensures a more inclusive recruitment process, a more diverse talent pool and candidates with the right abilities for the multitude of non-clinical roles in the NHS.
- From pre-screening criteria to automated messages, leveraging automation will also be crucial for driving value from your recruitment process.

Indeed stands ready to support your Trust in this transformative journey. This is your tool for reducing agency spend and ensuring you can achieve your goals as set out in the Workforce Plan.

Deliver value and cost savings at every point

Our platform offers a cost-effective solution. With Indeed, you can access a wide candidate pool without incurring hefty fees, making us a budget-friendly partner.

Meet candidates where they are

Indeed and Glassdoor receive over 59.9M visits each month.³⁴ With our sponsored job feature, your jobs are more likely to be promoted to the right audience. As the UK's #1 job site³⁵ you can reach the skilled workers you need directly through our talent network.

Use AI to streamline how you hire

Leverage AI to help you target and match with the right candidates, auto-generate job descriptions and even create competitive salary offers—amplifying the success of your campaign and recruitment efforts.

Create an engaging candidate experience

Indeed Hiring Events quickly connect you with screened candidates through flexible interviews while automated screening, scheduling, messaging, and reminders create a hiring process that's ten times more efficient.

Elevate your employer branding

Our Employer Branding Hub lets you showcase the NHS narrative and become an employer of choice. Job seekers want to know what it's truly like to work with you.

Indeed is not just a platform. It's a strategic partner, connecting the NHS with talent at scale, streamlining recruitment, and delivering value and cost savings –helping you to work better.

This isn't a one-solution-fits-all project, hires will be strategically balanced by pulling together key products, people and knowledge to ensure we have an aggressive presence, powerful messaging and ease for the Trust.

Indeed enables the NHS to connect with the right talent, streamline recruitment safely, increase speed to hire, and integrate into workflows to save costs at every step.

Benefit from expert teams dedicated to supporting you at every stage, from strategic planning to tactical execution.

Create more inclusive hiring processes by targeting job seeker behaviour as well as Indeed profile information ensuring your jobs reach diverse talent pools in local communities.

Ready to position the NHS as the employer of choice?

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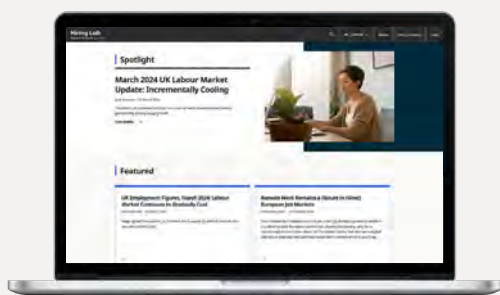
36. [How to Reduce Time to Hire with Indeed's Recruiting Automation](#)

The world can work better, with Indeed.

Our team is on hand to get your strategy off the ground and help you win new talent. Get in touch today to see how we can support your organisation.

ukpublicsector@indeed.com

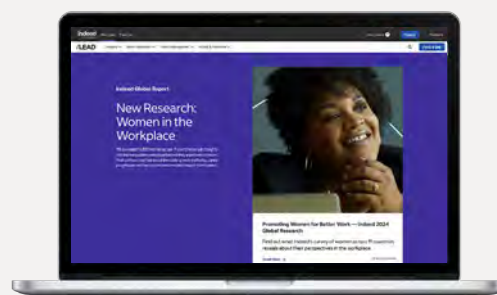
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