So you want to be a.......

DIETITIAN

On the job....
Dietetics is a healthcare profession which involves applying scientific information about food and nutrition to individuals and groups of people. Dietitians are experts in diet and nutrition, and work with patients with specific dietary needs as well as promoting good health by informing others about diet and nutrition. You will have opportunities to work in NHS hospitals and community settings, or in private practice. Dietitians also work in public health, the food industry, education, sports nutrition or the media.

Would I be a good Dietitian?
Dietitians, as with all other health professions, need to be able to work well as part of a team, as they work with other health professionals on a daily basis. You need to have good communication and education skills, and be able to explain complex information in simple terms. You also need to be good with people, tactful, patient and understanding, and be able to motivate others. There is a need to be sensitive to different cultural issues and attitudes surrounding food, as well as having a real interest in food yourself.

How do I become a Dietitian?
To become a registered Dietitian you need a degree approved by the Health Professions Council, in Nutrition and/or Dietetics. These usually take 4 years, although the University of Plymouth BSc (Hons) Dietetics course is an extended 3 year programme. All the degree programmes involve a large amount of practical clinical work throughout the course, so you will be in hospitals and clinical settings, working with patients, from an early stage. To qualify for a university degree course, you will need at least 5 GCSEs A*-C, and a post-16 qualification, such as A levels, including Biology and Chemistry or a BTEC in a suitable subject.

What will I earn?
While you are studying, your tuition fees will be paid by the DoH. You will also be entitled to apply for a bursary. There are many different work opportunities within dietetics, but within the NHS the starting salary is approximately £18,000, rising to £37,715.

Alternative Career Options
Dietetics Assistant • Occupational Therapist • Nursing

For further information visit....
www.bda.uk.com
www.nhs.uk/careers
So you want to be an........

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST**

**On the job....**
Occupational Therapists (OTs) work with patients to help them overcome physical, psychological or social problems. Their aim is to enable people to live as independently as possible and help them to participate in everyday activities. OTs work with a person to design a unique programme of treatment, sometimes modifying the environment around them and using specially adapted equipment. For example they might help someone with limited hand movements learn to dress themselves. OTs can work in hospitals, community settings, social services and for charities.

**Would I be a good Occupational Therapist?**
To be a good Occupational Therapist you need to be patient, practical, creative and adaptable. You also need to have good communication skills and problem solving skills, and to be able to think creatively to find different solutions for the patients’ needs. You also need to be able to work both independently and as part of a team, as you will be working with other health professionals, including, for example, doctors, nurses and physiotherapists.

**How do I become an Occupational Therapist?**
To become an Occupational Therapist you need a degree in Occupational Therapy. In the South West, you can study Occupational Therapy at the University of Plymouth. Occupational Therapy courses normally last for 3 years, and all the degree courses involve a large amount of practical clinical work, so you will be in hospitals and clinical settings, working with patients, from an early stage. To get on to the course, you will need 5 GCSEs A*-C, and a post-16 qualification, such as A levels or a BTEC.

**What will I earn?**
While you are studying, your tuition fees will be paid by the DoH. You will also be entitled to a bursary. In the NHS the starting salary is approximately £18,240, rising to £35,185 for an experienced therapist. There is a national shortage of Occupational Therapists, so employment prospects are good.

**Alternative Career Options**
Occupational Therapy Assistant or Support Worker
Nursing
Social Work

For further information visit....
www.cot.org.uk
www.nhs.uk/careers
Podiatry

So you want to be a....... 

PODIATRIST

On the job....
Podiatry is the assessment and management of lower-limb abnormalities – especially those associated with walking. You will treat skin, nail, muscle and joint problems in people ranging from the very young to the elderly. In the NHS you will often treat patients with arthritis and wounds associated with diabetes and your treatment could even save them from having a leg amputated. Another part of Podiatry is minor surgery eg. removing ingrowing toenails under local anaesthetic. Podiatrists also advise on good foot health for example footwear or hygiene and prevention of problems caused by walking badly. You will have opportunities to work in NHS hospitals and community settings, or in private practice. After qualification you can specialise in areas such as, sports injuries, forensics or bone surgery.

Would I be a good Podiatrist?
Podiatrists need excellent interpersonal skills and communication skills, to talk to the patients and put them at ease. To be a good Podiatrist, you will need to be able to work as part of a multi-disciplinary team, as you will work with a variety of other health professionals such as doctors, community nurses and physiotherapists.

How do I become a Podiatrist?
To work as a Podiatrist you need a degree in Podiatry. In the South West region, you can study Podiatry at the University of Plymouth [BSc (Hons) Podiatry]. There are another 12 courses around the country, all of which take 3 years. All the courses involve a large amount of practical clinical work, so you will be in hospitals and clinical settings, working with patients, from an early stage. To get on to the degree course you will need 5 GCSEs A*-C, and a post-16 qualification, such as A levels or a BTEC.

What will I earn?
While you are studying, your tuition fees will be paid by the DoH. You will also be entitled to a bursary. As there are so many different work opportunities within Podiatry, it is hard to answer that question, but within the NHS the starting salary is approximately £17,670, rising to £37,715 for a management position. Many NHS Podiatrists also run part-time private practices. A normal private practitioner earns around £40 per hour.

Alternative Career Options
Podiatry Assistant • Operating Department Practitioner • Physiotherapist

For further information visit....
www.feetforlife.org
www.nhs.uk/careers
On the job....
Physiotherapists treat people with physical problems caused by illness, accident or ageing. They maximise their patients’ ability to move through manual therapy, therapeutic exercise and general health advice and support. Many Physiotherapists work within hospitals, across a range of wards, from general outpatients to intensive care, where round-the-clock chest physiotherapy can be vital to keep unconscious patients breathing.

Would I be a good Physiotherapist?
Physiotherapists need excellent interpersonal skills and communication skills, to talk to the patients and put them at their ease. To be a good Physiotherapist you will also need to be sensitive, tolerant and caring, as well as enthusiastic, dedicated and determined. You will work both on your own and as part of a team, so need to be able to use your own initiative as well as work with others.

How do I become a Physiotherapist?
To work as a Physiotherapist you need a degree in Physiotherapy. In the South West region, you can study Physiotherapy at the University of Plymouth. Other institutions around the country also offer the programme. The degree takes 3 years and will involve a large amount of practical clinical work throughout the course. Getting on to a Physiotherapy degree is very competitive, and you will need good A levels, including a high grade in A level Biology, or equivalent, as well 5 GCSEs grade A*-C. You will also need to show you have a good knowledge of Physiotherapy, preferably with some related work experience.

What will I earn?
While you are studying, your tuition fees will be paid by the DoH. You will also be entitled to a bursary. As a newly qualified Physiotherapist you will enter the NHS pay scale with a starting salary of approximately £18,500. There are lots of opportunities to specialise and work privately, earning up to over £50,000.

Alternative Career Options
Physiotherapy Assistant
Podiatrist

For further information visit....
www.csp.org.uk
www.nhs.uk/careers
So you want to be an........ OPERATING DEPARTMENT PRACTITIONER

On the job....
Operating Department Practitioners (ODPs) are an important part of the Operating Department team working with surgeons, anaesthetists and theatre nurses to help ensure every operation is as safe and effective as possible. ODPs provide high standards of patient care and skilled support alongside medical and nursing colleagues for patients before, during and after their operation. ODPs are involved with the Anaesthetist in preparing the patient for their operation, assisting the Surgeon during the operation and monitoring and assessing the patient in recovery after the operation. You will work in a variety of environments from A&E and trauma to maternity units and intensive care.

Would I be a good ODP?
ODPs work as part of a team so you need to be a good team player. You need to be able to communicate well with people at all levels. ODPs have to be thorough and have a good eye for detail.

How do I become an ODP?
To work as an ODP you need to be registered. Registration requires completion of a 2 year diploma course in Operating Department Practice. During the course you will spend a large percentage of your study time on placement gaining practical experience of working as a healthcare professional. To get on to the diploma, you will need 5 GCSEs A*-C, including English, Maths and a Science.

What will I earn?
While you are studying, your tuition fees will be paid by the DoH. You will also be entitled to a bursary. As a newly qualified ODP you will enter the NHS pay scale on a starting salary of £16,000. As you gain experience and take on more responsibility, your salary can rise to around £40,000 pa.

Alternative Career Options
Nursing

For further information visit....
www.plymouth.ac.uk/healtheducation
www.nhs.uk/careers
So you want to be a........
MIDWIFE

On the job....
Qualified midwives have the practical skills and knowledge to provide care and advice to support pregnant women, to deliver babies and to provide postnatal care. Midwives work with women from when they first become pregnant to a month after the birth of their baby. You may also be involved with educating young people about contraception and sexual health or helping couples who have difficulty conceiving. Your place of work will be in the community and/or hospitals. Midwifery gives you an appreciation of the social, political and cultural factors in the provision of maternity care.

Would I be a good Midwife?
Good communication skills are essential to enable you to talk to people from all walks of life and all ages. It is important that you are sensitive to the needs of each woman to provide them with individual care. Midwives work together as part of a team.

How do I become a Midwife?
To work as a registered Midwife you need to gain a degree in Midwifery. The course takes three years. During the course you will spend a large percentage of your study time on placement gaining practical experience of working as a healthcare professional. You will need at least 5 GCSEs grades A*-C and a post-16 qualification, such as A levels or a BTEC, to qualify for a degree.

What will I earn?
While you are studying, your tuition fees will be paid by the DoH. You will also be entitled to a bursary. As a new graduate midwife you will enter the NHS with a starting salary around £18,800 pa.

Alternative Career Options
Adult Nursing
Child Health Nursing

For further information visit....
www.plymouth.ac.uk/healtheducation
www.nhs.uk/careers
www.nmc-uk.org
So you want to be a....... CHILD HEALTH NURSE

On the job....
Qualified Child Health Nurses care for sick children and provide support for their families. You will work with children, from new born babies to adolescents, in their homes and in hospital with differing levels of dependence. Children are still growing so the impact of the illness or injury on their development has to be taken into account when delivering their care. Specially trained nurses are required who understand their particular needs and who can work closely with families as part of the caring process, helping them with feelings such as panic, anxiety, anger, powerlessness and guilt and enabling them to come through their crisis.

Would I be a good Child Health Nurse?
Child Health Nursing is a rewarding and satisfying career but also demanding and due to the high levels of responsibility, it can be stressful. You need to be able to relate well to children and cope well with the physical, intellectual and emotional demands of caring for young people.

How do I become a Child Health Nurse?
To work as a Nurse you need to gain a diploma or a degree in Child Health Nursing. Courses take three or four years, depending where you choose to study. During the course you will spend a large percentage of your study time on placement gaining practical experience of working as a healthcare professional. To qualify for a diploma course, you will need at least 5 GCSEs A*-C, and for a degree you will also need a post-16 qualification, such as A levels or a BTEC.

What will I earn?
While you are studying, your tuition fees will be paid by the DoH. You will also be entitled to a bursary. As a new graduate nurse you will enter the NHS with a starting salary between £16,525 and £18,240 pa.

Alternative Career Options
Social Work

For further information visit....
www.plymouth.ac.uk/healtheducation
www.nhs.uk/careers
So you want to be a....... 
MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONER

On the job....
Qualified Mental Health Practitioners provide support for people suffering from a range of mental health problems. You will work with patients of all ages and from a wide range of backgrounds. As your career develops you may choose to specialise in areas such as drugs and alcohol misuse or working with offenders. You could also become involved in education, research, or management roles. Your place of work may be in people’s homes, in small residential units or local health centres with a lot of independence to plan your own work load. You are also an important part of a team, working with GPs, psychiatrists, social workers and others to co-ordinate care.

Would I be a good Mental Health Practitioner?
Mental Health Nursing requires you to use your specialist skills and personal strengths to form a one to one professional relationship with each patient. You need to be able to listen, collaborate with, and then to help people find means of coping with their problems using interpersonal and therapeutic skills.

How do I become a Mental Health Practitioner?
To work as a Mental Health Practitioner you need to gain either a diploma or degree in Mental Health. Diploma courses take three years and degree courses take three or four years, depending where you choose to study. During the course you will spend a large percentage of your study time on placement gaining practical experience of working as a healthcare professional. To qualify for a diploma, you will need five GCSEs grades A*-C, and for a degree you will also need a post-16 qualification, such as A levels or a BTEC.

What will I earn?
While you are studying, your tuition fees will be paid by the DoH. You will also be entitled to a bursary. As a new graduate you will enter the NHS with a starting salary between £16,525 and £18,240 pa.

Alternative Career Options
Adult Nurse • Operating Department Practitioner

For further information visit....
www.plymouth.ac.uk/healtheducation
www.nhs.uk/careers
Social Work

So you want to be a....... SOCIAL WORKER

On the job....
Social workers help and support people during difficult times in their lives. Working with other professionals they try and find solutions for their clients’ problems, which may be families who are struggling with deprivation, disability or abuse, young people who are finding it hard to live on their own, people with mental health problems or older people who need help to keep their independence. Social Workers work in a team with other professionals such as doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, schools, the police and the courts. Social Workers are office based but maybe in a hospital or other specialist setting, as well as service-users’ homes.

Would I be a good Social Worker?
Good communication skills are essential to enable you to talk to people from all kinds of backgrounds and of all ages. It is important that you are sensitive to the needs of each client and have resilience, patience and maturity. You will need to be able to deal with the unexpected and be committed to helping people overcome their difficulties.

How do I become a Social Worker?
To work as a registered Social Worker you need to gain a degree in Social Work. The course takes three years. During the course you will undertake a number of placements gaining practical experience of working as a social care professional. You will need at least 5 GCSEs A*-C, and a post-16 qualification, such as A levels or a BTEC, to qualify you for a university degree course. Applicants need to demonstrate work experience.

What will I earn?
While you are studying, you will be entitled to a bursary from the G.S.C.C. As a newly qualified Social Worker you will have a starting salary of at least £15,000 pa. This salary will increase to around £28,000 as you gain experience and take on more responsibility as a senior social worker.

Alternative Career Options
Mental Health Nursing
Health & Social Care Management

For further information visit....
www.plymouth.ac.uk/healtheducation
www.nhs.uk/careers
So you want to work in.......  
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE MANAGEMENT

On the job....
Graduates from Health & Social Care Management are likely to work for health and social care agencies working with professionals from a wide range of disciplines to provide a seamless healthcare service for the public. Working with individuals, their families and friends in a variety of fields and organisational settings, you could work in areas of health, community development, drug and alcohol advice agencies, women’s refuges, homeless agencies, housing, residential care, social welfare and personal services.

Would I be an ideal student for this course?
Good communication skills are essential to enable you to talk to professionals from a variety of organisations and people from all kinds of backgrounds. It is important that you have an interest in social science concepts and theories and the health and social care fields. You will need to be able to deal with the unexpected and be able to explore problem solving.

How do I gain a degree that gives me broad career opportunities in the Health & Social Care sector?
The Health & Social Care Management degree offered at the University of Plymouth, prepares graduates for employment/careers in the public and voluntary sectors, from health education and housing, to community work and residential care. Potential employers include the NHS, MIND, Age concern, Shelter and Connexions. The degree is a 3 year course. 
You will need at least 5 GCSEs A*-C, and a post-16 qualification, such as A levels or a BTEC, to qualify for the course.

What will I earn?
As a graduate working in the healthcare and social care sector you can expect a starting salary of around £15,000 pa.

Alternative Career Options
Social Worker

For further information visit....
www.plymouth.ac.uk/healtheducation
www.nhs.uk/careers
So you want to be an........
ADULT NURSE

On the job....
Qualified nurses provide care for patients with acute and long term illness and have a role in health promotion and disease prevention. You will work with patients who have short and long-term illnesses. Many will be elderly, others will be younger with chronic and acute illness and injury. Your place of work may be a hospital ward, specialist clinic or it could be out in the community – visiting people at home or local health centres. You will work as part of a multi-disciplinary team in a challenging role, not only physically but intellectually and emotionally.

Would I be a good Adult Nurse?
The challenges of Adult Nursing are many and varied. You will need to stay calm under pressure to meet the different and constantly changing needs of each patient. Good communication skills are essential to enable you to talk to patients from all walks of life and their families. Adult Nurses work as part of a multi-disciplinary team but also autonomously.

How do I become an Adult Nurse?
To work as a Nurse you need to gain either a diploma or degree in Adult Nursing. Diploma courses take 3 years and degree courses take 3 or 4 years, depending where you choose to study. To qualify for a diploma course, you will need at least 5 GCSEs A*-C, and for a degree you will also need a post-16 qualification, such as A levels or a BTEC. During the course you will spend a large percentage of your study time on placement gaining practical experience of working as a healthcare professional.

What will I earn?
While you are studying, your tuition fees will be paid by the DoH. You will also be entitled to a bursary. As a new graduate you will enter the NHS pay scale as a qualified Nurse with a starting salary between £16,525 and £18,240 pa.

Alternative Career Options
Operating Department Practitioner
Mental Health Practitioner

For further information visit....
www.plymouth.ac.uk/healtheducation
www.nhs.uk/careers
So you want to be a........

DIAGNOSTIC RADIOGRAPHER

On the job....
Diagnostic Radiographers produce images to diagnose disease and injuries. Different techniques are used depending on the part of the body which is affected and the information required – e.g. ultrasound to study the development of a baby in the womb or MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) to investigate sporting injuries. Radiographers work within many different settings in a hospital, such as A&E, X-Ray departments and surgery.

Would I be a good Diagnostic Radiographer?
Diagnostic Radiographers need an interest in technology and good technical skills, as they operate complex equipment. They also need excellent interpersonal skills and communication skills, to talk to patients and reassure them at a difficult time. To be a good Diagnostic Radiographer, you will need to be able to work quickly, safely and accurately, and remain calm under pressure. Radiographers work as part of a multi-disciplinary team but also independently, so you will need to be able to work alone and with others.

How do I become a Diagnostic Radiographer?
To work as a Diagnostic Radiographer you need a degree in Diagnostic Radiography. In the South West region, you can study Diagnostic Radiography at the University of Exeter [BSc (Hons) Medical Imaging (Diagnostic Radiography)] and at UWE in Bristol [BSc(Hons) Diagnostic Imaging]. Both of these take 3 years and will involve a large amount of practical clinical work throughout the course. To qualify for a university degree course, you will need at least 5 GCSEs A*-C, and a post-16 qualification, such as A levels or a BTEC.

What will I earn?
While you are studying, your tuition fees will be paid by the DoH. You will also be entitled to a bursary. As a newly qualified Diagnostic Radiographer you will enter the NHS pay scale with a starting salary of approximately £16,000 to £18,500. There is a worldwide shortage of Radiographers at the moment, so pay and conditions will vary depending on where you choose to practice.

Alternative Career Options
Assistant Radiographer • Operating Department Practitioner

For further information visit....
www.radiographycareers.co.uk
www.nhs.uk/careers
So you want to be a.......  
SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST

On the job....
Speech and Language Therapists are specialists in communication – they assess, diagnose and develop a treatment programme for patients who need help to communicate. This might include people with a stammer or a speech defect, or those who have physical problems due to an accident or illness, such as a stroke. They also work with people with swallowing, eating and drinking difficulties. They might work in hospitals, health centres, schools and nurseries.

Would I be a good Speech and Language Therapist?
Speech and Language Therapists need excellent communication skills, and an ability to work well with other professionals, as well as with patients who might be severely impaired or distressed. To be a good Speech and Language Therapist you also need to be able to think quite creatively and have good problem solving skills, to devise innovative programmes of care for patients.

How do I become a Speech and Language Therapist?
To work as a Speech and Language Therapist you need a degree in Speech and Language Therapy. In the South West region, you can study Speech and Language Therapy at the College of St Mark and St John (Marjon). This course takes 3 years, and involves a large amount of clinical work as well as theoretical study, so you will be in hospitals and clinical settings with patients from an early stage. To qualify for the degree course you will need 5 GCSEs A*-C and a post-16 course, such as A levels or a BTEC.

What will I earn?
While you are studying, your tuition fees will be paid by the DoH. You will also be entitled to a bursary. As a newly qualified Speech and Language Therapist you will enter the NHS pay scale with a starting salary of approximately £18,500, with more specialist posts ranging between £21,000 and £30,000.

Alternative Career Options
Occupational Therapist • Speech and Language Therapy Assistant

For further information visit....
www.rcslt.org
www.nhs.uk/careers