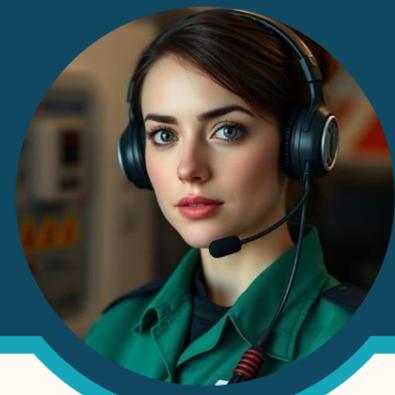


The Role of the Modern Paramedic in the UK



What do they do?

Paramedics in the UK are highly skilled, Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) registered and regulated healthcare professionals who play a critical role across various settings including emergency care, primary care, and urgent care.

They provide patient-centred services that integrate healthcare, public health, social care, and public safety.

Paramedics often work autonomously and in uncontrolled environments, drawing on critical and dynamic decision making to assess and manage an undifferentiated and unpredictable caseload safely and effectively.

Where do they work?

Paramedics are most well-known for their role within ambulance services, responding to 999 calls and delivering immediate care in emergencies.

However, their scope extends beyond this traditional image. They are generalists and increasingly work in GP practices, hospital emergency and acute departments, community health teams, hear and treat services, and out of hours services across the UK.



There are lots of opportunities for specialisation and career advancement. Paramedics can progress to positions such as advanced/consultant practitioners with prescribing, take on specialised roles within critical care, SORT/HART (dangerous environments), and support services in primary and hospital-based settings, palliative care, mental health, education, research, and governance.

Scope of Practice

The HCPC does not define their registrants' scope of practice. This means there is not a set list of tasks that paramedics can and cannot perform, and this will vary from registrant to registrant.

However, during their undergraduate studies paramedics will typically gain proficiency in the following skill areas before potentially specialising further into their careers:

ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT ACROSS ALL AGE GROUPS AND CAUSES	AIRWAY MANAGEMENT UP TO AND INCLUDING SUPRAGLOTTIC AIRWAYS	ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF ACUTE AND CHRONIC MEDICAL AND TRAUMATIC CONDITIONS	APPLICATION OF STRUCTURED PATIENT CONSULTATION USING RECOGNISED MODELS	CONSULTATION AND SHARED DECISION-MAKING FOR SAFE REFERRAL AND DISCHARGE	BASELINE OBSERVATIONS
12-LEAD ECG INTERPRETATION	TARGETED SYSTEM-BASED ASSESSMENTS	WOUND ASSESSMENT AND MINOR WOUND CLOSURE	MANAGEMENT OF NORMAL BIRTHS AND COMPLICATIONS IN LABOUR	MAJOR INCIDENT MANAGEMENT	PALLIATIVE CARE

Core Responsibilities

- PATIENT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT**
 Assess, treat, manage, discharge, transport and, where appropriate, refer people to relevant services or pathways
- LEADERSHIP & DECISION-MAKING**
 Managing challenging environments involving traumatic or medical emergencies, often under high-pressure and/or unpredictable conditions
- COLLABORATIVE WORKING**
 Working closely with other health and care professionals such as GPs, community & social services, emergency services, and alternative referral pathways to manage patients in the community and reduce inappropriate hospital admissions
- PERSON-CENTRED CARE**
 Ensuring care is personalised, co-ordinated and enabling so that people can make choices, manage their own health and live independent lives, where possible
- MENTORSHIP**
 Supporting the development of different types of students and newly qualified paramedics in a positive learning environment through guidance, supervision, sharing knowledge role-modelling, and feedback

Education

To practice as a paramedic in the UK, individuals must complete a course approved by the HCPC. This has recently changed, and new registrants must now be educated to undergraduate degree level.