



Insights

Benchmarking Report

Primary Care Salary Benchmarking Report 2026





Introduction

Primary Care is undergoing a significant period of transition, driven by rapid shifts in government policy, evolving patient expectations, and the growing complexities associated with an ageing population. Demand for appointments continues to rise, and with national strategies pushing care delivery further upstream, the pressure placed upon GP surgeries and frontline services has intensified. This sustained demand has created a workforce environment characterised by increased competition, expanding role requirements, and heightened operational pressures.

Contract reform plays a central role in shaping this landscape. GP practices are now contractually required to deliver online advice and digital-first access models, while Community Pharmacy is assuming

broader responsibility for the management of short-term conditions – an intentional move to redistribute patient flow and alleviate pressure on traditional primary care settings. These structural changes have, in turn, accelerated the need for a more diverse and highly skilled workforce capable of operating across both clinical and digitally enabled pathways.

As the NHS continues to invest in expanding multidisciplinary teams and enhancing community-based care, the demand for qualified Primary Care professionals shows no signs of slowing. This has contributed to an increasingly competitive market in which private healthcare providers are identifying Primary Care as a

natural area for expansion. With both public and private organisations competing for talent, employers are under growing pressure to differentiate their offer through career development, flexible working models, and clearly defined progression frameworks – factors that have become essential to attracting and retaining the calibre of clinician required to support sustainable service delivery.



Stuart Cousins FREC CertRP
Head of Compass Associates

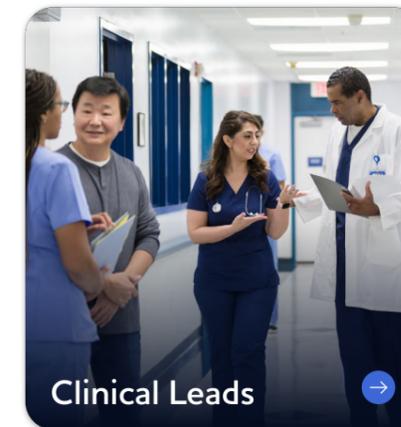
📞 07465 411 481

✉ scousins@compassltd.co.uk

🌐 Connect



Advanced Nurse Practitioners



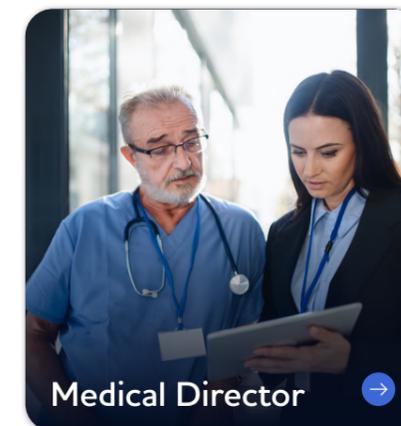
Clinical Leads



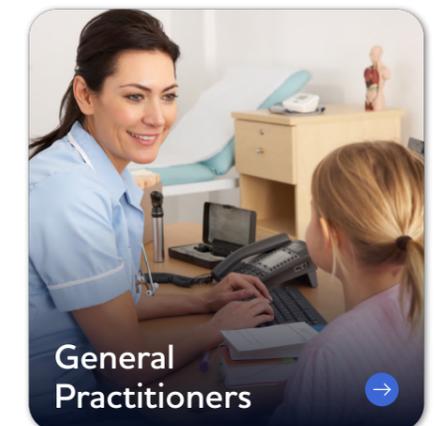
Advanced Physiotherapy Practitioners



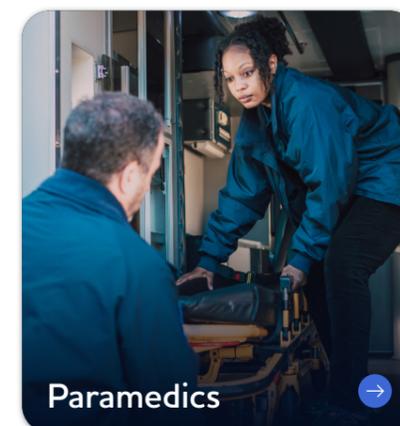
First Contact Physiotherapists



Medical Director



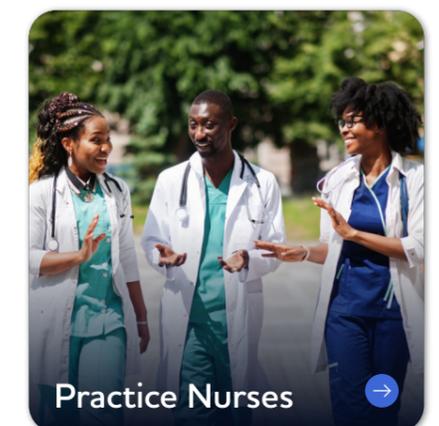
General Practitioners



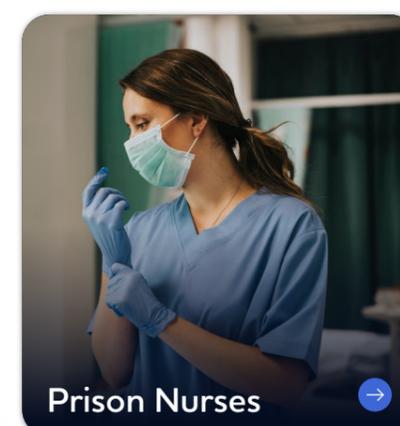
Paramedics



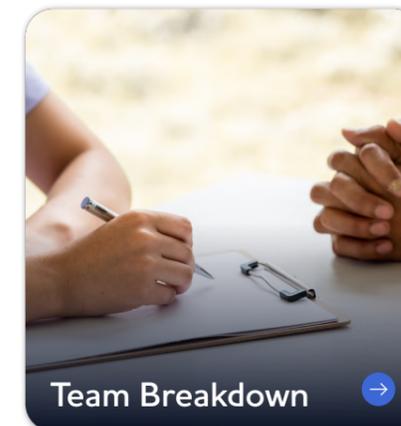
Practice Managers



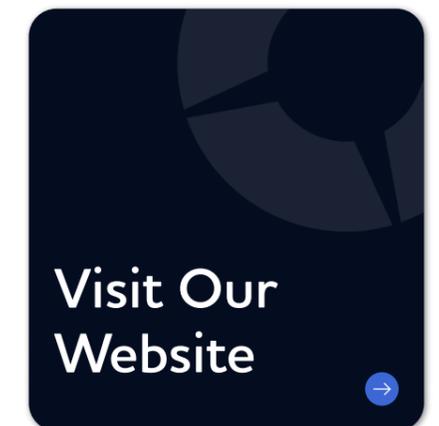
Practice Nurses



Prison Nurses



Team Breakdown



Visit Our Website

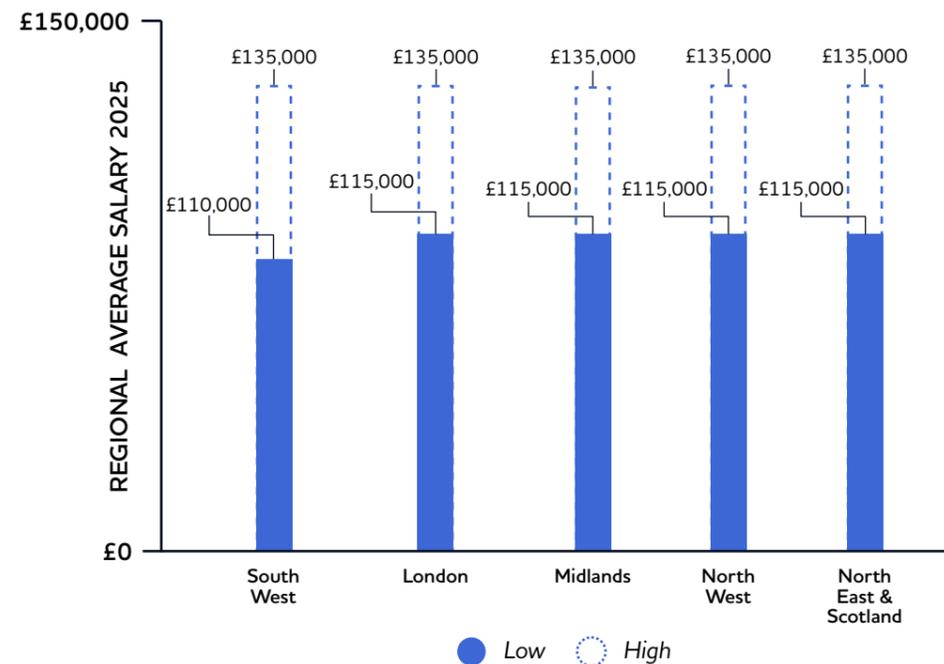
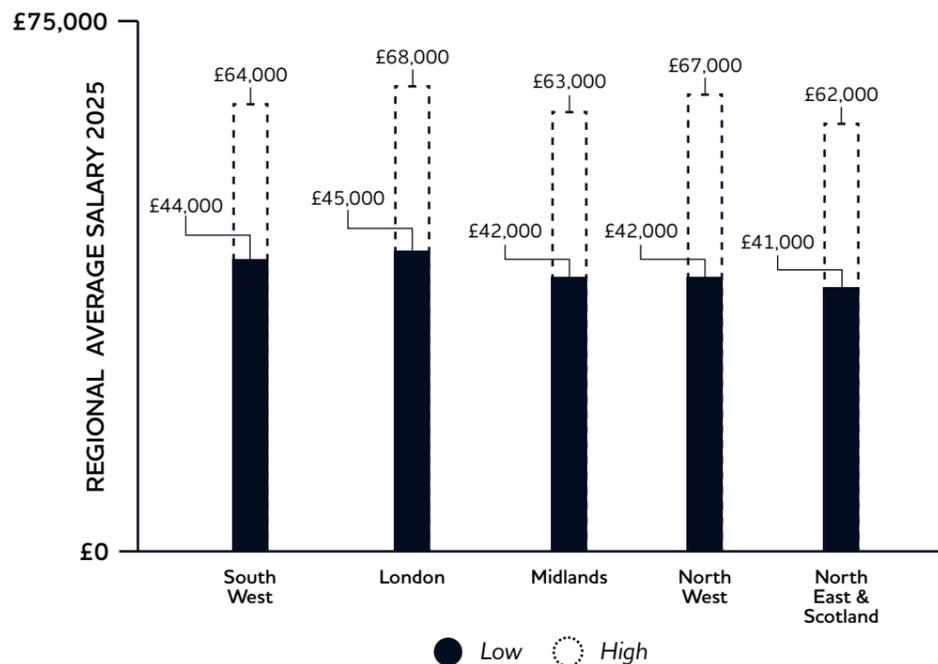


Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs)

Advanced Nurse Practitioners continue to be in high demand across the UK, particularly as GP surgeries seek alternatives to ease pressure from physician shortages. The increasing competitiveness of the healthcare recruitment landscape has driven up salaries for ANPs, especially in regions experiencing heightened demand. ANPs provide critical support across diagnostics, prescribing, and treatment, making them essential to primary care delivery. To attract top talent, employers must go beyond base salaries and offer comprehensive packages that include flexible working conditions, opportunities for CPD, and a well-defined career progression framework.

Clinical Leads

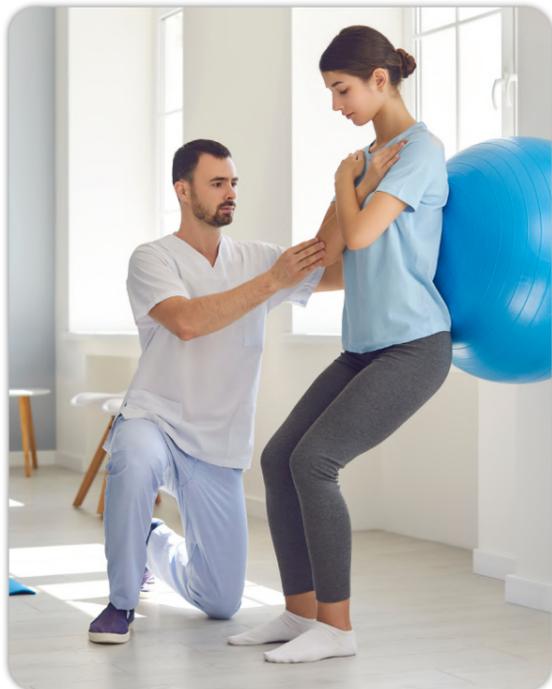
Clinical Lead roles for GPs are increasingly viewed as a strategic investment in both patient care and clinician retention. These positions provide experienced GPs with the opportunity to expand into leadership while maintaining a clinical presence, which appeals to those seeking broader career development. Employers can use this as a retention strategy, creating defined career ladders from standard GP roles into leadership through CPD and quality improvement training. Offering such progression pathways not only improves workforce morale but also enhances clinical governance and reduces reliance on costly agency support.





Advanced Physiotherapy Practitioners

First Contact Physiotherapists and Advanced Physiotherapy Practitioners often work across multiple environments, and their decisions are strongly influenced by the quality and type of workplace. There is a growing trend of physiotherapists operating on a self-employed basis, with many opting to rent clinical space or offer services independently. For organisations looking to secure permanent practitioners, a clinical setting that promotes collaboration and is well-integrated with wider health services is more attractive. Employers must also consider flexible working patterns, shared clinical environments, and aligned values to remain competitive.



South West
£50,000 - £60,000

London
£56,000 - £66,000

Midlands
£50,000 - £60,000

North West
£45,000 - £60,000

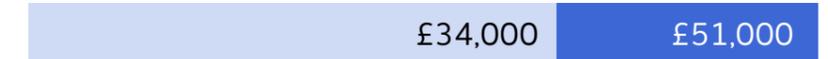
North East & Scotland
£56,000 - £66,000



First Contact Physiotherapists



South West



London



Midlands

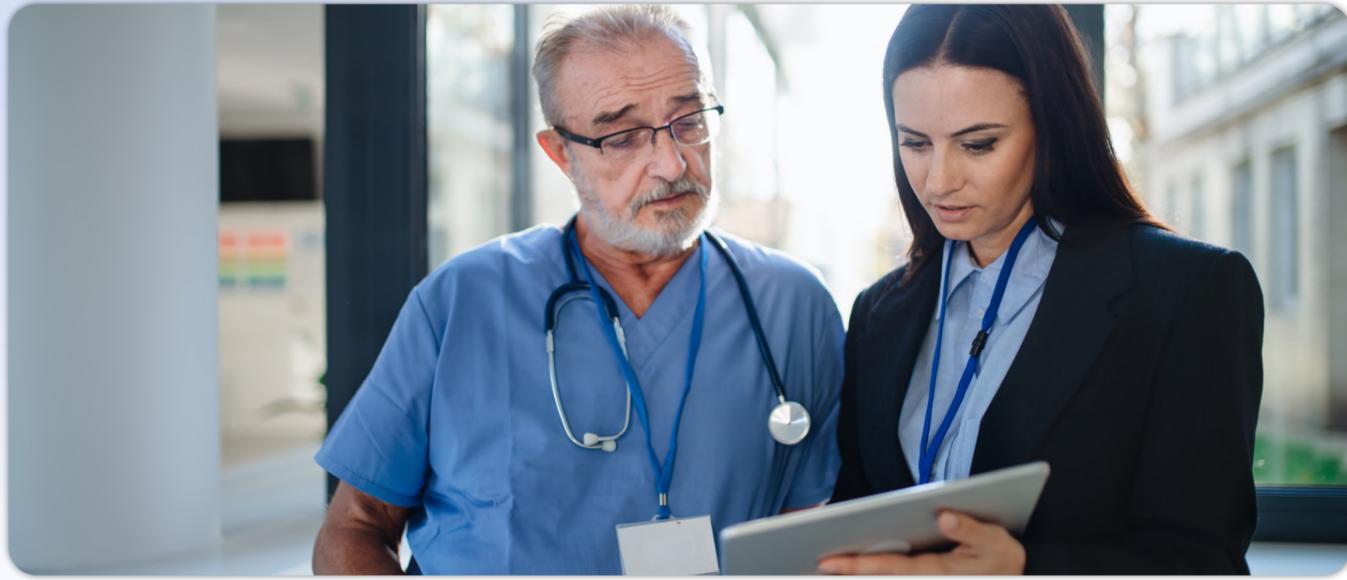


North West



North East & Scotland





Medical Director

Medical Director roles vary widely in scope and salary, largely dependent on the strategic influence, scale of operations, and clinical expectations of the role. In primary care, especially within digital healthcare platforms and multi-site PCNs, Medical Directors are often required to lead innovation and support the alignment of clinical strategy with business objectives. While some work on a part-time basis in a clinical capacity, the trend is shifting toward more strategic, less hands-on roles. Employers must therefore tailor their propositions to include competitive compensation, influence in strategic decisions, and opportunities to shape integrated care models.





General Practitioners (GPs)

Clinical Lead roles for GPs are increasingly viewed as a strategic investment in both patient care and clinician retention. These positions provide experienced GPs with the opportunity to expand into leadership while maintaining a clinical presence, which appeals to those seeking broader career development. Employers can use this as a retention strategy, creating defined career ladders from standard GP roles into leadership through CPD and quality improvement training. Offering such progression pathways not only improves workforce morale but also enhances clinical governance and reduces reliance on costly agency support.



South West	£95,000	£120,000
London	£100,000	£120,000
Midlands	£95,000	£115,000
North West	£90,000	£115,000
North East & Scotland	£92,000	£118,000



Paramedics

Paramedics are set to become increasingly integral to primary care settings under the NHS 10-Year Plan, which promotes more community-based care models. Despite this strategic focus, the sector faces a persistent shortage of paramedics, worsened by wage pressures and high demand across emergency and urgent care environments. To attract paramedics into primary care roles, organisations must offer competitive salaries, investment in training, and collaborative, multidisciplinary environments. Flexibility and development opportunities will be crucial in drawing candidates away from emergency-focused roles.



South West
£28,500 - £51,000

London
£28,500 - £53,000

Midlands
£28,500 - £42,000

North West
£28,500 - £46,000

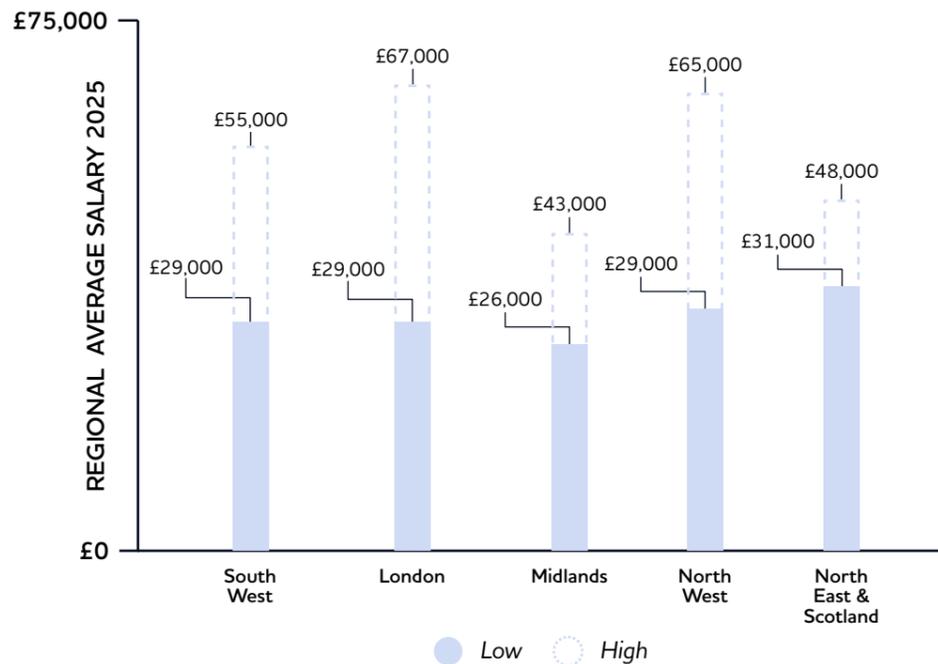
North East & Scotland
£56,000 - £48,000





Practice Managers

The role of the Practice Manager is expanding in scope and complexity. Once considered primarily administrative, today's Practice Managers are expected to handle finance, compliance, HR, operational planning, and patient engagement. This evolution has led to increased demand for commercially aware, strategically minded candidates capable of managing complex primary care environments. Competitive salaries are important, but equally important is recognition of the strategic value these professionals bring. Employers should support development through leadership training and define clear role expectations to attract strong candidates.



Practice Nurses

Practice Nurses remain a vital component of GP surgery operations, but the sector continues to face shortages. Regional discrepancies in funding, reduced NHS budgets, and the drive to reduce agency use have collectively resulted in upward salary pressure for these roles. Practices must be proactive in offering not just competitive pay, but also stable working hours, access to CPD, and opportunities to engage in specialist areas like chronic disease management or health promotion. Creating a supportive clinical environment is essential for both attraction and retention.



South West
£28,500 - £51,000



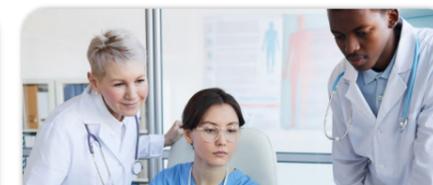
London
£28,500 - £53,000



Midlands
£28,500 - £42,000

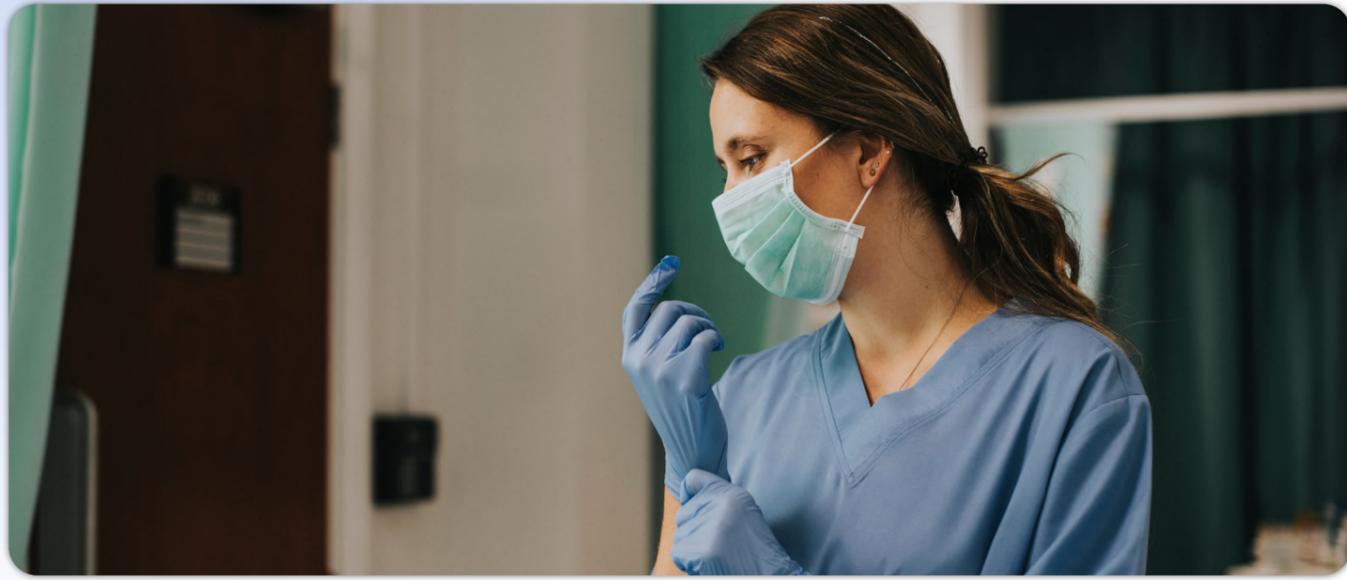


North West
£28,500 - £46,000



North East & Scotland
£28,500 - £48,000





Prison Nurses

Prison nursing roles are among the most complex and demanding within primary care. These positions are often located in geographically isolated areas, and candidates must navigate enhanced vetting, safety concerns, and often limited peer support. As a result, top-end salaries have increased to reflect the challenge of the role. Beyond pay, success in recruitment and retention is heavily reliant on transparent communication about the working environment, strong onboarding, and provision of mental health support and wellbeing programs. Employers that invest in robust support frameworks and career progression opportunities will see higher retention rates.



Band 5

£30,261
National Average
(Excluding London)

£31,494
London Average



Band 6

£36,850
National Average
(Excluding London)

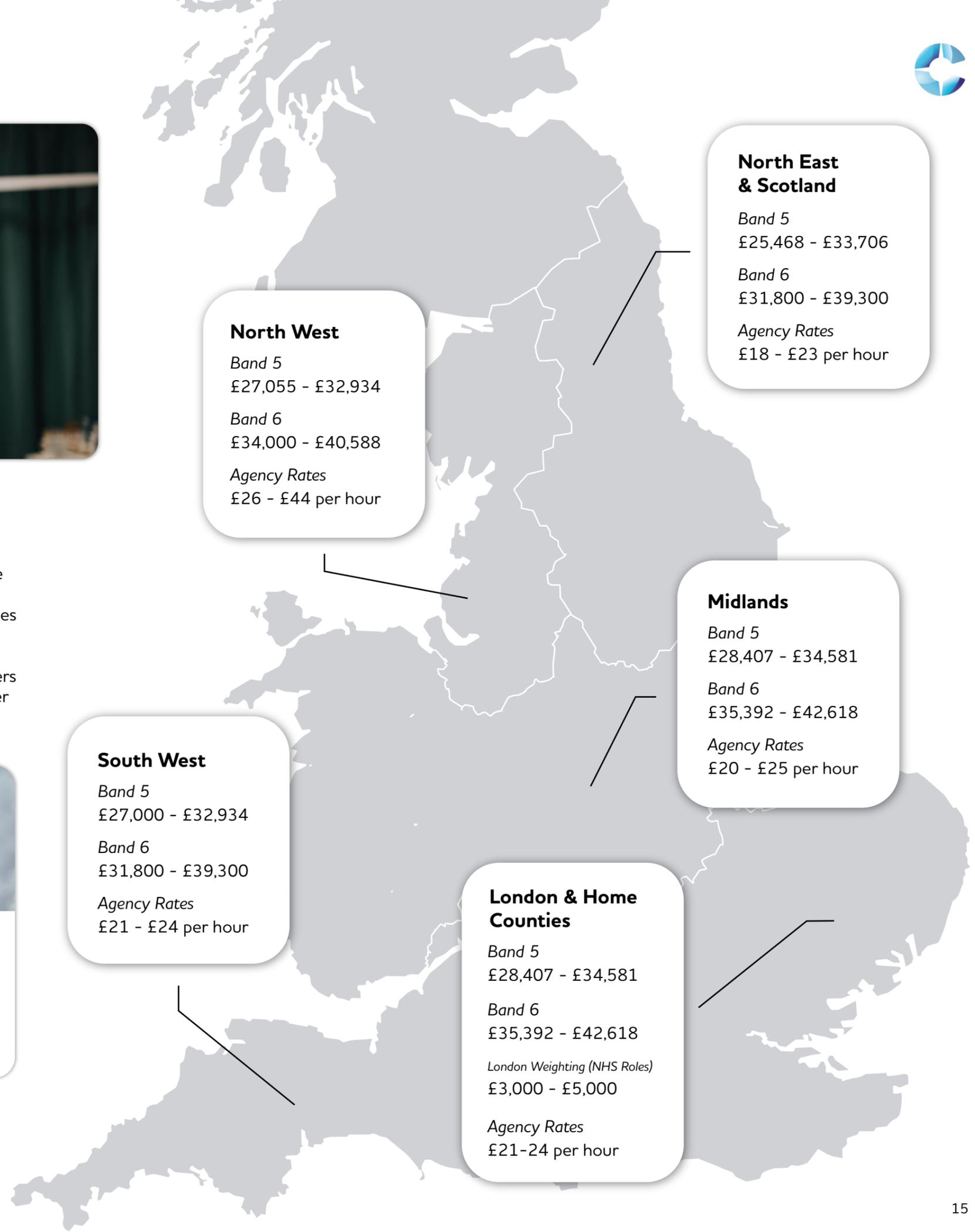
£39,005
London Average



Agency Rates

£26 p/h
National Average
(Excluding London)

£28 p/h
London Average



North West

Band 5
£27,055 - £32,934
Band 6
£34,000 - £40,588
Agency Rates
£26 - £44 per hour

North East & Scotland

Band 5
£25,468 - £33,706
Band 6
£31,800 - £39,300
Agency Rates
£18 - £23 per hour

Midlands

Band 5
£28,407 - £34,581
Band 6
£35,392 - £42,618
Agency Rates
£20 - £25 per hour

South West

Band 5
£27,000 - £32,934
Band 6
£31,800 - £39,300
Agency Rates
£21 - £24 per hour

London & Home Counties

Band 5
£28,407 - £34,581
Band 6
£35,392 - £42,618
London Weighting (NHS Roles)
£3,000 - £5,000
Agency Rates
£21-24 per hour



Team Breakdown

Our Healthcare experts

14 Years

Senior Appointments

Stuart Cousins
Head of Compass Associates

11 Years

Senior Appointments

Adam Brenton
Director of Healthcare & Specialist Services

5 Years

Pharmacy Primary Care

Jamie Cutts
Associate Director

4 Years

Primary Care GP Care at Home

Camila Mader
Lead Consultant

3 Years

Veterinary Care

Theo Hoten
Senior Consultant

2 Years

Diagnostics

Reza Abbasi
Consultant

8 Years

Cosmetics

Kane Pfeiffer
Associate Director

4 Years

Surgical Hospitals Cosmetics
Care at Home

Louise Holmes
Divisional Manager

7 Years

Surgical Hospitals

Benedict Warnes
Senior Principal Consultant

1 Year

Veterinary Care

Carina Walker
Consultant

1 Year

Healthcare

Roberto Amos
Consultant

2 Years

HR Finance Marketing

Simon Codling
Consultant

8 Years

Surgical Hospitals

Rachel Smith
Senior Principal Consultant

11 Years

Physiotherapy Pharmacy

Natasha Isaac
Senior Principal Consultant

8 Years

Radiology Diagnostics

Tom Fitch
Senior Principal Consultant

Conclusion

The primary care sector is facing a pivotal moment, shaped by evolving workforce expectations, systemic funding limitations, and the implications of government initiatives such as the NHS Ten Year Plan. With a shifting focus toward integrated and community-based care, the sector must urgently adapt its recruitment and retention strategies to remain viable.

At the heart of the challenge is the growing complexity of roles across the sector. From ANPs and GPs to Practice Managers and Medical Directors, there is a clear demand for multi-skilled professionals who can operate in both clinical and strategic capacities. Employers who invest in career development, leadership pathways, and robust CPD infrastructure will be better positioned to attract this calibre of candidate.

The locum and self-employed markets, though less dominant than before, still pose retention risks if employers fail to meet expectations around flexibility, autonomy, and recognition. Additionally, under-resourced roles—particularly Practice Nurses and Prison Nurses—require renewed focus through better work environments, competitive salaries, and wellbeing support.

The future of primary care recruitment will depend on an employer's ability to tell a compelling story—one that emphasises impact, progression, flexibility, and culture. Partnering with recruitment specialists who understand the nuances of the sector and can proactively map talent will be essential for staying ahead of the curve.

For all enquiries, please contact:



Stuart Cousins FREC CertRP
Head of Compass Associates

 scousins@compassltd.co.uk

 07465 411 481

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commitment
to the sector

