

Nuclear Medicine Scientist

What does a Nuclear Medicine Scientist do?

Nuclear Medicine is the professional practice of conducting a range of diagnostic examinations or treatments using radionuclides injected or ingested into the body. This may be done to produce an image to confirm or exclude a clinical diagnosis, to assist and monitor treatment processes, for treatment of disease, for research

The nuclear medicine scientist is required to make decisions regarding the nature and extent of individual procedures, and to provide when requested medical practitioners with informed opinions regarding the results of procedures, which assists the medical practitioners in arriving at a correct diagnosis. The nuclear medicine technologist is responsible for the wellbeing of patients whilst they are in their care

What do I study to become a nuclear medical scientist?

- Bachelor of Medical Radiation Science (Nuclear Medicine) – University of Newcastle
- Master of Nuclear Medicine – University of Sydney
- Bachelor of Medical Radiation Science (Nuclear Medicine) – Charles Sturt University, Wagga
- Bachelor of Medical Radiation Physics – University of Wollongong.
- Bachelor of Medical Radiation (Medical Imaging/Nuclear Medicine/Radiation Therapy) – University of South Australia

The Bachelor degrees are conducted over three years of full-time study. Extensive clinical experience is integrated throughout the course. Centres can include major teaching hospitals and private practices

A day in the life of a Rural Nuclear Medicine Scientist

Because of the complexity of equipment and staff required rural nuclear medicine departments tend to be in larger country towns, eg. Orange. A NMS may need to examine outpatients and inpatients and prepare them for scanning. This may involve discussing with the patient the procedure to be undertaken and getting them ready for scanning as well as performing the scan. NMS's will be responsible for the preparation of radiopharmaceuticals as well as the maintenance and quality assurance of equipment and the implementation of new imaging techniques

Career opportunities

- Clinical positions in private and public hospitals
- Upper level management roles such as Chiefs or Directors of services
- Higher Education and Research roles