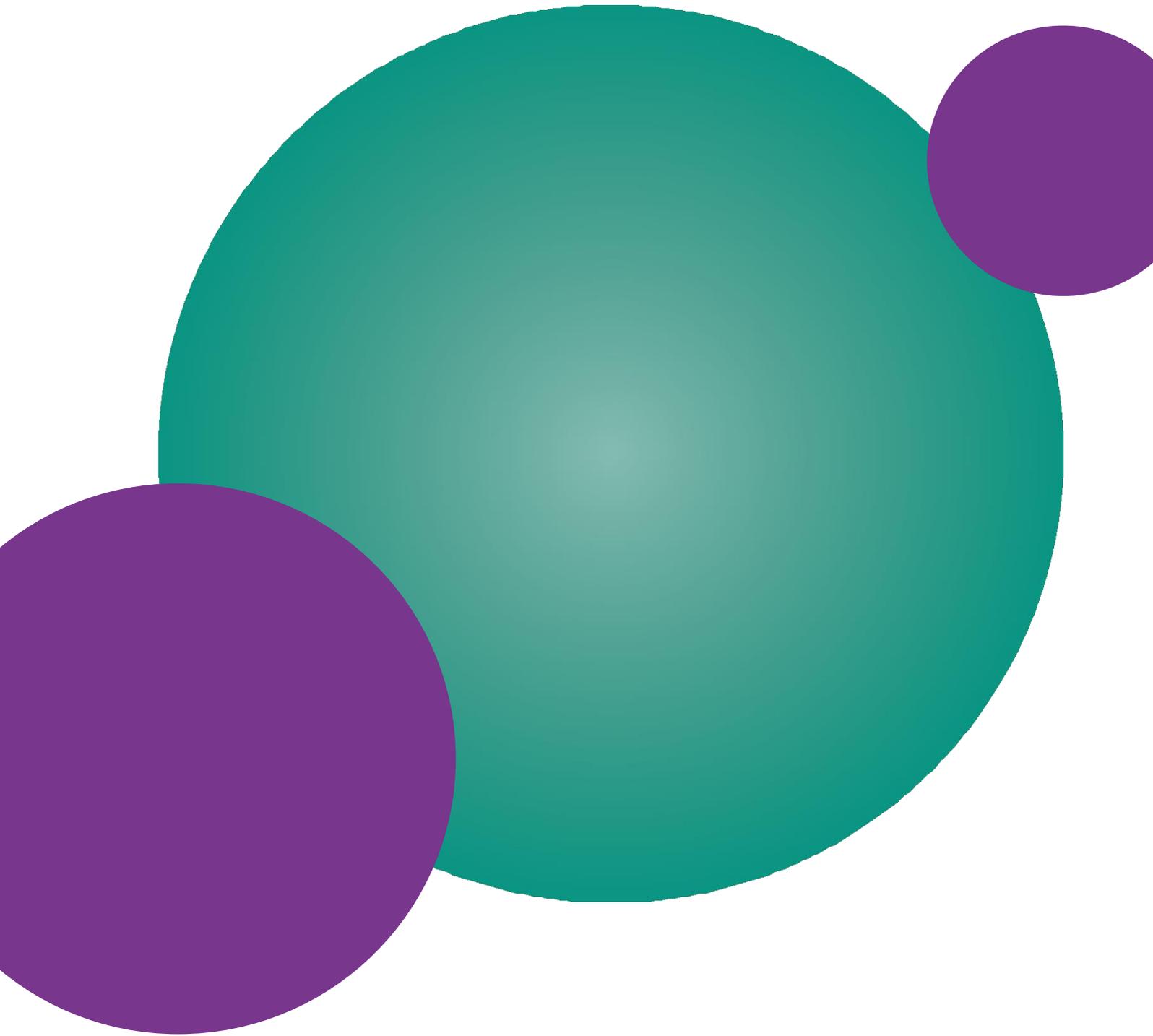


Allied Health Professions

Job profiles



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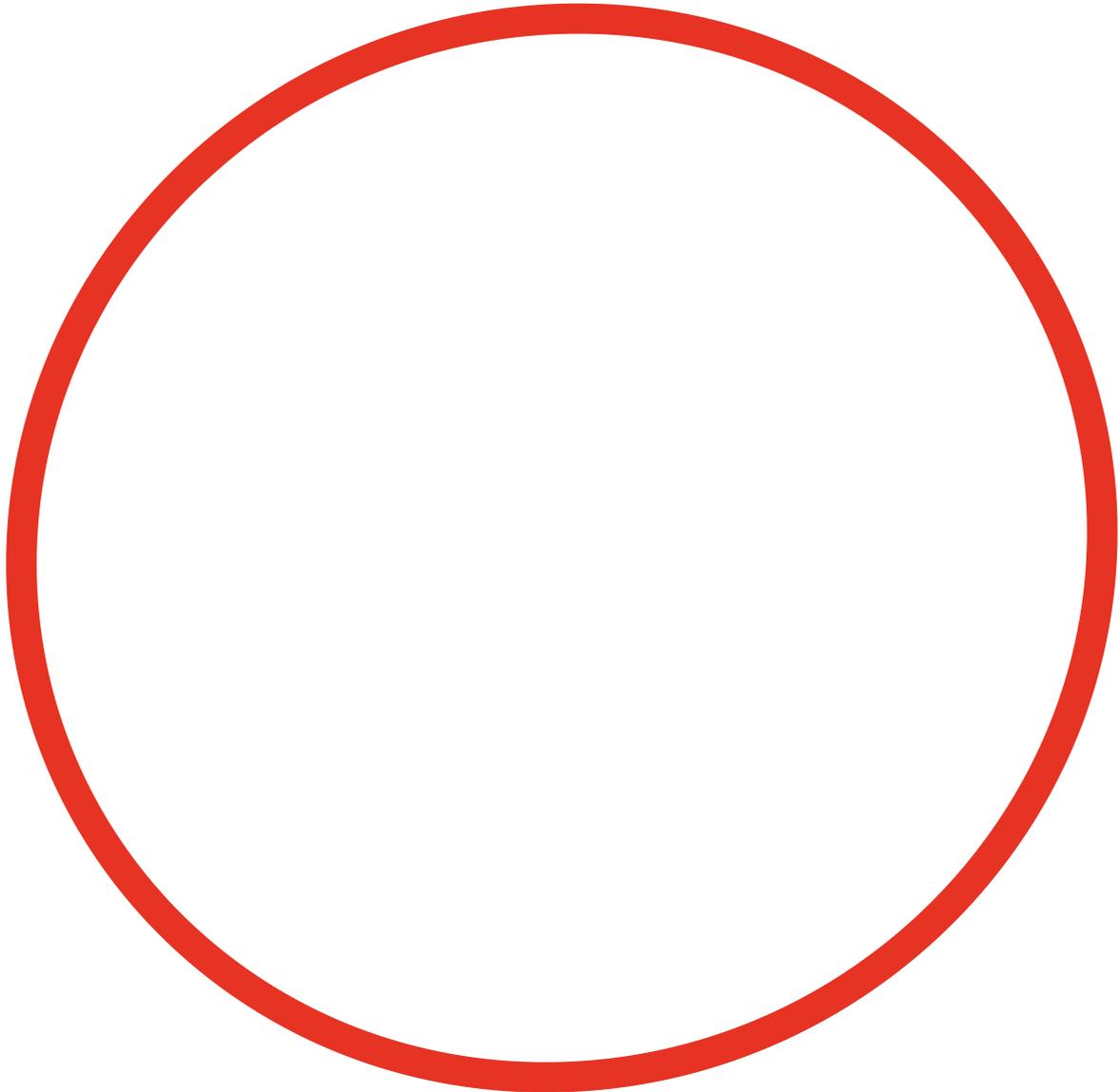
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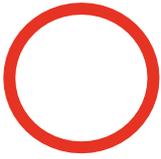
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ART THERAPY



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Phil McFadden

Job title: Art Psychotherapist

Location of work: Bro Cerwyn Resource Centre, Hywel Dda
UHB; Psychology (Adult Mental Health)

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I use generic skills to help people who have mental health difficulties explore whether Art therapy is likely to be of benefit; and if not to signpost them to services which may be beneficial. Through Art therapy I seek to assist people to make (usually visual) representations which in some way describe their emotional response to their experiences. These artworks are often metaphorical, so assisting people to countenance at a distance events which can be seen as chaotic or traumatic, and also opening up possibilities to re-frame those experiences and sometimes to visualise new possibilities. Because the art is made by the client, insights are self-authored and lead to greater likelihood of autonomous growth. At various stages in the process I review progress with the clients and consult with and report to other members of the Mental Health Service, Social Services and GPs.



What do you enjoy about your job?

Every session is different. The best thing is when somebody sees something in their work which opens a new understanding, and a different doorway for the rest of their life.

What are your career ambitions?

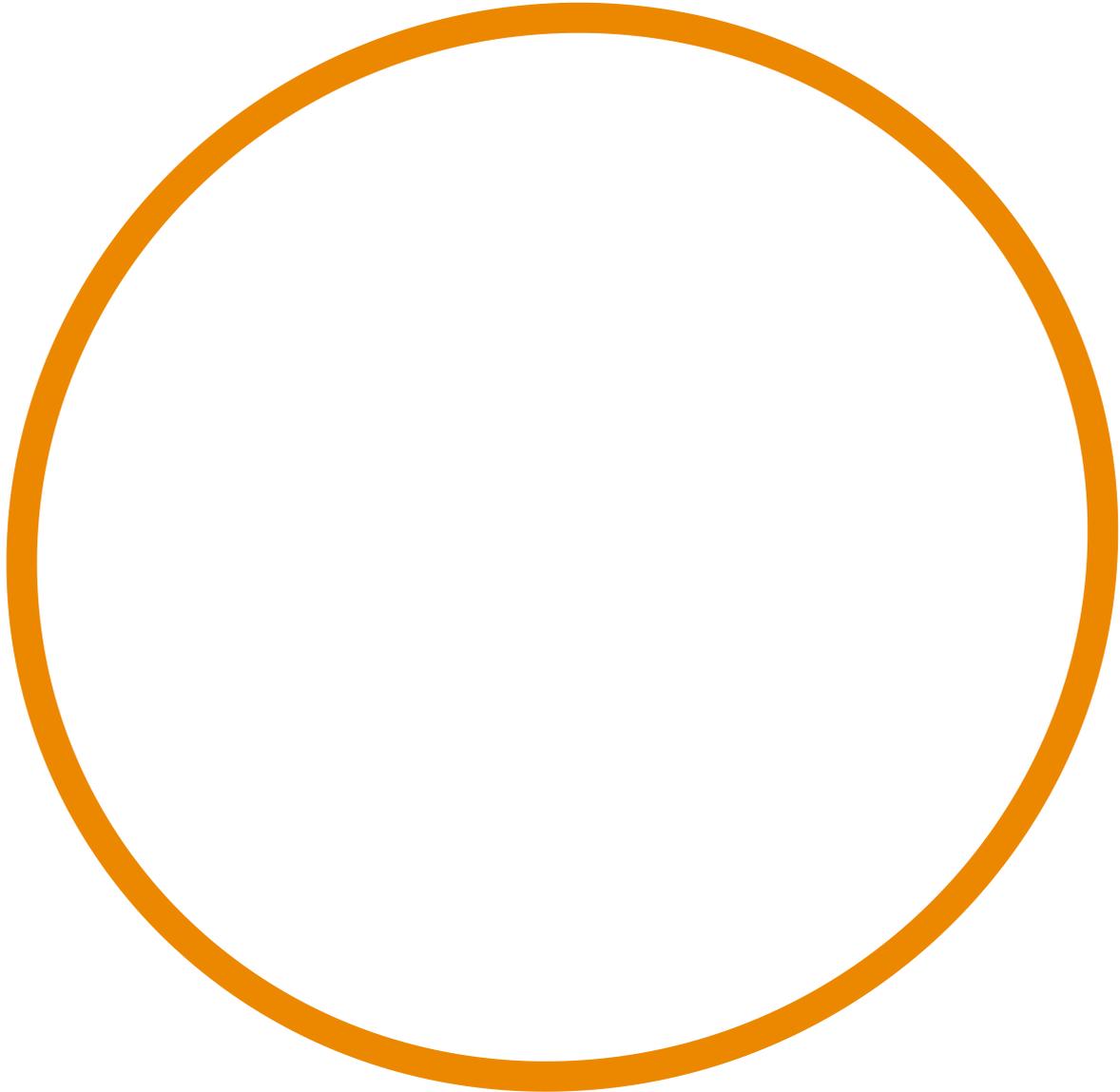
To watch people grow.

How did you get into your role?

I was an Artist who made a living by pavement drawing. Through this I met many disaffected people who confided in me sketches and poems they wrote. I heard about the post-graduate training for Art therapy and applied to the courses. I was accepted by the University of Sheffield.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Someone with a lot of experience of making their own art and coming to a deeper understanding of themselves, with or without guidance but with a wish to guide others to learn through their own experience rather than by teaching them rules or methods.



DRAMA THERAPY



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Esyllt George

Job title: Freelance Dramatherapist and NHS Arts and Health Coordinator

Location of work: Private practice and Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

As a Dramatherapist my role involves creative therapy interventions, working with groups and individuals in the community. As an Arts and Health Coordinator for the NHS I coordinate arts for health and wellbeing interventions for the NHS.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy the variety, creativity and interplay of arts therapies and arts for health and wellbeing interventions.

What are your career ambitions?

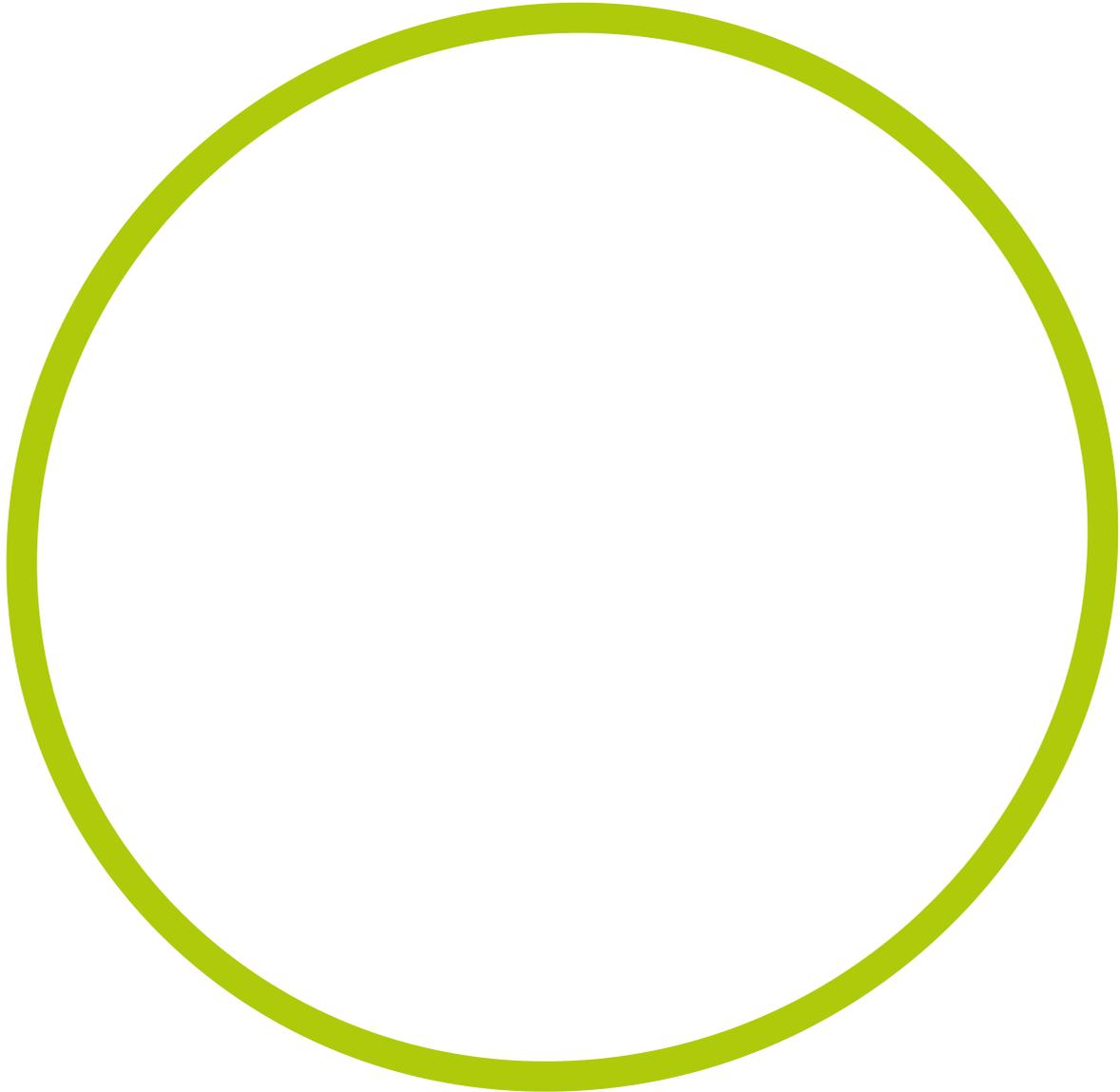
To develop creative supervision sessions both for arts therapists and artists working in arts and health.

How did you get into your role?

I completed a degree followed by postgraduate qualification as an HCPC approved Dramatherapist.

What kind of person does your job suit?

This role would suit someone with an interest in interplay of psychology and health benefits of creative expression. Also, someone who is a keen networker and has the ability to multi-task.



DIETETICS



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Catrin Hill

Job title: Registered Dietitian

Location of work: Swansea Bay University Health Board

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

My job is to help people with their nutritional needs and concerns and to support people who have health needs that are impacted by nutrition. For example, a dietitian can support and offer advice to a patient who has a health problem which is leading them to experience weight loss or a reduced appetite. Dietitians work in lots of different settings. In busy hospitals, we work closely alongside other health professionals to provide nutrition support to patients who are very unwell and need lots of help to get better. Dietitians also work in public health to provide evidence based public health advice and in the Primary Care setting too to support people with health and nutrition needs but who are not in hospital. Being a dietitian is a really varied job and you can work with and help patient of all ages - from very young babies to the very elderly and with people who are experiencing a very wide range of health conditions.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I really enjoy the variety that the role brings; particularly the variety of people from all walks of life that I meet and work with day to day. Being a dietitian is a very team-based occupation and I work with other health professions such as nurses, doctors and Speech and Language Therapist on a daily basis. I also love being able to unpick the science surrounding nutrition!

What are your career ambitions?

The great thing about dietetics is that the career opportunities are broad and there's plenty of chances to work in and specialise in different areas of dietetics/health. I've only graduated and become a registered dietitian in the last 12 months, but I've already had opportunities to work in lots of different clinical areas and help patients who are experiencing many different medical conditions. In the future, I can use all these experiences to then decide on a particular area of dietetics and health that I'd like to specialise in such as paediatric dietetics, or gastroenterology dietetics. I'm also looking forward to hopefully being able to promote dietetics more - the role of a dietitian can often be misunderstood!

How did you get into your role?

I got here by completing a three-year undergraduate degree in Nutrition and Dietetics. Postgraduate degrees are also available! Entry requirements for the degree include science based A levels, although Access Courses or Foundation Degrees are also a way of getting on to the degree programme if you don't have the required A levels; which is what I did. If you're interested in a career in dietetics, it's worth visiting the websites of universities that offer this degree course to see what your next step will need to be before being able to apply.

What kind of person does your job suit?

The role would definitely suit someone who is a caring 'people-person' and someone who has a keen interest in Healthcare. Also, it suits someone who's interested in science, particularly in health science and the science of nutrition. There are still so many exciting things to be learnt and discovered about nutrition and health!

If you think you might like a career in healthcare, enjoy working with other people, and find human nutrition interesting - dietetics could be the career for you!



Name: Alexandra Rees

Job title: Clinical Lead Dietitian for Dementia Wellbeing
Community Team

Location of work: Hywel Dda University Health Board

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I work as part of a multi-disciplinary team including a clinical psychologist, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist and pharmacist to provide advice and support to people caring for people living with dementia. This includes supporting other community dietetic colleagues, providing training to other health care professionals and care home staff and providing specialist input as a team to help prevent people living with dementia experiencing stress and distress. I currently work from home due to Covid-19 restrictions and have provided telephone consultations as well as virtual consultations. Once restrictions lift we will be providing visits to support care homes directly. Other recent projects include developing an online training package for delivery to care homes and other health care professionals.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy working with a wide range of people inclusive of other health care professionals and care staff. I enjoy learning about new developments in nutrition and since starting my new role I have enjoyed learning more about dementia and especially a more psychosocial approach to providing dietetic advice and support. I also enjoy meeting new people and being able to help people improve their wellbeing through improvements in their nutrition or improving their knowledge about nutrition. I also thoroughly enjoy developing and delivering training.

What are your career ambitions?

I would like to promote the role of Dietetics especially within the field of nutrition within dementia. I hope to be able to prove our worth as a profession within this field to create more opportunities for other dietitians to specialise within this field as well as have more representation within Welsh Government in relation to Dietetics.

How did you get into your role?

I studied Biochemistry and Genetics at Nottingham University where I gained a 2:1. I enjoyed learning about genetics in particular but did not want to become a teacher or work in a research lab. I went to a Careers Fair in London and successfully applied to be one of nine British graduates to be trained in New York by the retail company Abercrombie & Fitch. I was part of the team that opened the first Abercrombie & Fitch store in London. During this time, I developed an interest in nutrition and healthy eating and missed science and so applied for the Postgraduate Diploma in Dietetics in Cardiff Metropolitan University. My first Band five job was in Durham as a community/ acute Dietitian for maternity cover for a year. I then moved back to Wales to take the new post of the band six Care Home Support Dietitian, after one year I gained a half promotion to the Band seven Community Nutrition Support Dietitian. I did this split role until I returned part time from maternity leave when I became just the Community Nutrition Support Dietitian. Then I started my current role in May 2020 after returning from my second maternity leave.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Has a keen interest in nutrition and enjoys learning new things. Enjoys working as part of a team and enjoys interacting with a wide range of people. You need to enjoy talking to people as well as being able to empathise and be able to convert sometimes complex nutrition information into easy to understand advice. You also need to be organised and enjoy that every day can be different.



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Jane Spivey

Job title: Specialist Dietitian/Community Gastroenterology Lead Dietitian

Location of work: Swansea Bay University Health Board (0.6 WTE) and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (0.4WTE)

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I provide evidence based nutritional care and advice for people living with long term and chronic health problems in hospital and at home such as cancer and diseases of the digestive system such as inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis), liver disease and pancreatitis. In community and the hospital, I work with a team of health professionals including doctors, nursing, pharmacists, physios, occupation therapists and GPs to provide a person centred and holistic care approach. I empower the patient to understand the importance of nutrition and give them strategies to improve their symptoms and keep them as well as they can be. I am a supervisor and educator, providing clinical supervision and support for student dietitians, new entrant dietitians and dietetic support workers. I am an innovator and work creatively to achieve dietetic service and health board wide goals through service improvement.



What do you enjoy about your job?

It can be so versatile and can provide job opportunities in a variety of job sectors including public and private health care, charity, freelance/media, public health, industry. It's extremely rewarding working with people to improve their health, particularly when you are working effectively as a team with shared goals such as supporting an individual's recovery through stroke rehabilitation or optimising someone's health in preparation for cancer treatment to give them the best possible outcome through prehabilitation.

What are your career ambitions?

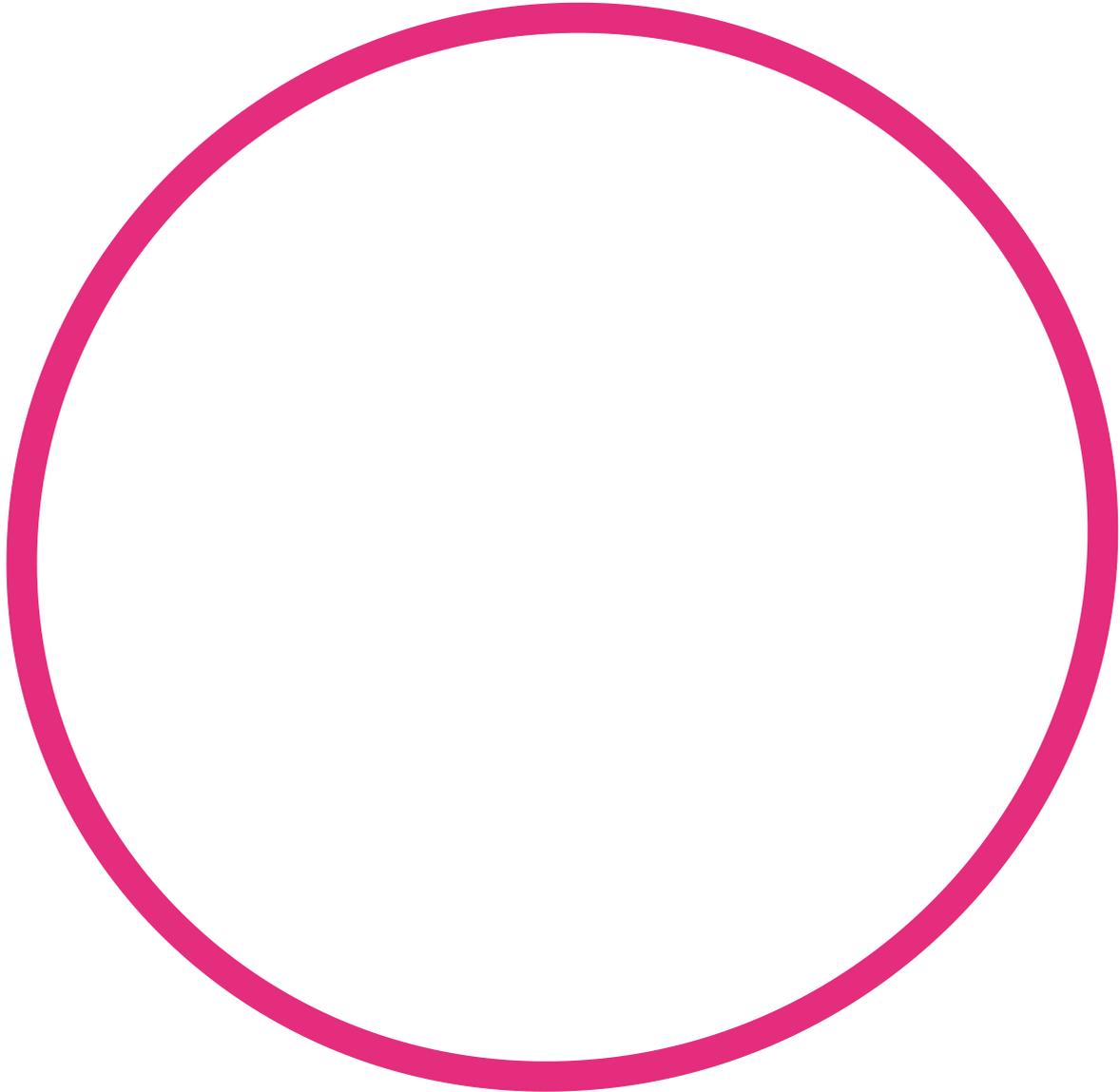
My passion is oncology, and I am currently working towards gaining as much experience through secondment and different sectors including cancer a cancer charity, and other health boards to build upon my cancer knowledge and experiences. I hope that one day can work as a cancer specialist dietitian and lead a service. I'm particularly interested in cancer prehabilitation.

How did you get into your role?

I didn't realise I had an interest in nutrition until I was doing my A-Levels, so I initially went on to complete a BSc Nutrition and Health Sciences degree (Teesside University) where I was introduced to Nutrition and Dietetics. I'd always known that I wanted to work in health care and had an interest in science, so I was inspired to pursue this career choice. To gain further experience, I initially worked as a dietetic support worker which put me in good stead to apply and successfully enrol onto a post graduate diploma with master's modules in Nutrition and Dietetics (Cardiff Metropolitan University).

What kind of person does your job suit?

If you have an interest in science, particularly biology and chemistry and the application of this to nutrition and health. It also helps if you like food! If you have great communication and people skills as you will cross all walks of life in the profession through the patients, you will work with and the multidisciplinary team. Networking within the profession as well as thinking outside the profession as an Allied Health Professional is key to self-development and learning as well as enabling a more efficient and effective way of working with other Allied Health Professionals. A creative and open mind helps with problem solving to overcome barriers to change may that be working with a patient to identify the key issues impacting their health and agreeing changes or recognising areas for improvement within the service and influencing change.



MUSIC THERAPY



Name: Ben Cowley

Job title: Music Therapist

Location of work: Higher Education

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

To provide specialised emotional and psychological support with a unique ability to draw upon the components of music in order to provide that support within the context and confidential nature of a therapeutic relationship. How music therapy is delivered is person centred and tailored to each client with a therapeutic goal in mind. It could be on a one to one basis or in group scenarios. While the ways music can be utilised are limitless, music therapy could include work such as song writing, improvising using musical instruments, singing, lyric analysis, and rhythm specific exercises. Some clients may just want to talk to someone who is emphatic and understanding of their struggles. You do not need to be a performer or have any knowledge of music in order to benefit from music therapy. It is suitable for anyone. Music therapists are typically found in private practice, the NHS and some private sectors, particularly care homes and special education settings.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy being able to offer more creative solutions where it might be difficult for a client to find the words. I am currently working in a conservatoire where I provide Specialised Mentoring Support. The ways I can relate to my clients on a practical level has been invaluable to the work.

What are your career ambitions?

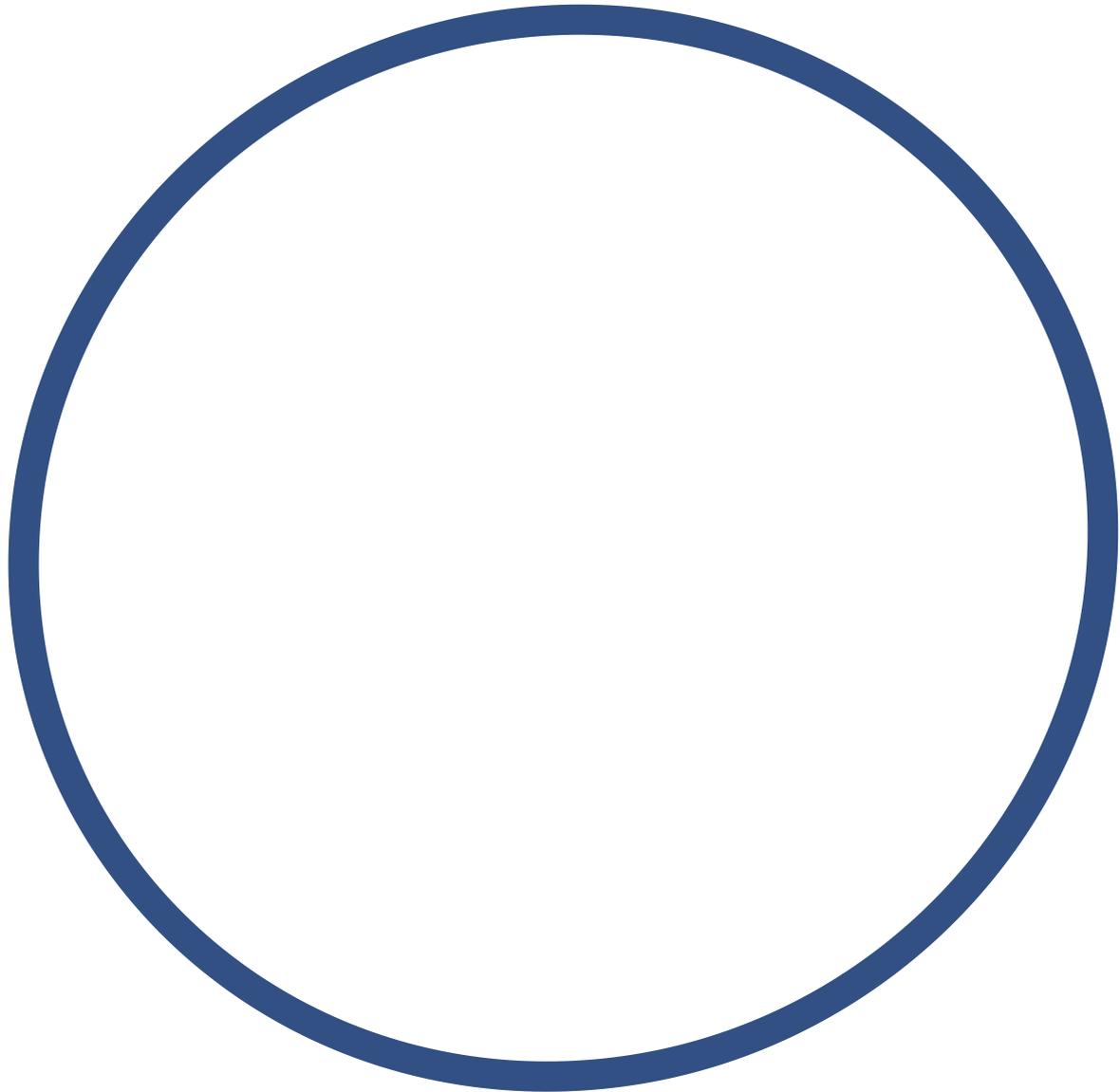
I'd like to see music therapists in more mainstream and cross-disciplinary roles. It is a commonly misunderstood profession but, in my opinion, has a high level of skill that would be valuable in a multitude of healthcare roles.

How did you get into your role?

I completed a BA degree in Music and then an MA in Music Therapy. This is the sole route into the profession at the moment but other undergraduate degrees are considered if you can demonstrate a high level of musicianship. Upon graduation from the MA program you are eligible to register with the HCPC and begin practicing.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Some who likes the idea of using their creativity to benefit someone's health.



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY



Name: Rebekah Daniel

Job title: Occupational Therapist

Location of work: Community Health and Wellbeing Team,
Primary Care, Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I am an Occupational Therapist. I work with a small team of other healthcare workers and third sector agencies, linked to your GP surgery to see how we can help to keep you well in your own home. This may be by giving you advice, or by providing small pieces of equipment. The aim is to help you to remain as independent as possible, for as long as possible. I look at what is important to you and try to help support your activities and skills. This helps you to looking after yourself and improve your health and wellbeing.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I love the variety of my role. Every day is different. I love meeting people and knowing that I have made a difference. It is so rewarding to help someone to do something that they have not managed to for a while.

What are your career ambitions?

I would like to remain working for the NHS.

How did you get into your role?

I used to be a virtual personal assistant, but knew I wanted to be an Occupational Therapist (OT) for a while. I went to university later in life and graduated aged 40. I have worked for the same health board for nearly seven years and have been promoted to my current role.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Likes to help people to achieve what matters to them. Someone who can think creatively as the solution may not be obvious. It would also suit someone who is friendly, patient and someone with good communication skills.





Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Emma Isaac

Job title: Occupational Therapist

Location of work: Hywel Dda Health Board, Department for Communities, Community Resource Team

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I work in conjunction with the blue badge team in Carmarthenshire County Council, by completing mobility assessments for all blue badge applications in Carmarthenshire. This includes completing standardised mobility assessments with applicants to ensure consistency and equality is maintained in the correct issuing of disability blue badges across the authority.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy meeting applicants and where appropriate issuing blue badge to applicants and hearing how it will increase their independence and enhance their quality of living.

What are your career ambitions?

To increase the numbers of OT's employed in this role to ensure consistency in equality is maintained with the issuing of blue badges across Wales.

How did you get into your role?

Three A-LEVELS

BSc honours Occupational Therapy Degree

What kind of person does your job suit?

Enjoys helping people and is keen to uphold standards.





Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Emily McCarthy

Job title: Occupational Therapist

Location of work: Memory Assessment Service, Keir Hardie Health Park, Merthyr Tydfil. Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

To provide occupational therapy assessment and intervention to people within primary care who have concerns with their memory or loss of cognitive functional skills. To support the multi-disciplinary team (MDT) in providing an individual occupational profile to inform diagnosis. To work with people to engage in strategies to support their cognitive and memory concerns. This can be achieved by developing individualised programmes utilising resources such as digital technology, whiteboards, memory clocks and prompted practice to reinforce learning and promote retention of knowledge.

What do you enjoy about your job?

Working with patients, listening to their needs and being able to support them to reach their goals around their memory. Being able to work with families also to provide objective information around the person's occupational profile and performance, seeing improvements with occupations that are valuable to the person and maintaining skills important to them.

What are your career ambitions?

I wish to continue to develop skills and knowledge in working with people with memory difficulties. I would like to study for a masters to deepen my knowledge and understanding.

How did you get into your role?

I was an electronic engineer for eight years from leaving University. I left my job to have my children and then retrained as an OT at the age of 35 by studying a PGDip in Occupational Therapy at Cardiff University.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Is passionate about providing person centred care and understands how to consider a person holistically. Someone who enjoys creative thinking and problem solving and values the importance of promoting independence. Someone who works well in a multi-disciplinary team and also can be autonomous and promote the core values of the profession of Occupational Therapy.





Name: Zoe Parker

Job title: Primary Care Occupational Therapist

Location of work: Community Health and Wellbeing Team, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, Dewi Sant Hospital, Pontypridd

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I assess patients within the community, mainly in their own homes by providing equipment, minor adaptations to support them to carry out activities of daily living as independently as possible. If this is not achievable, I work with families and support agencies or organisations to maintain someone to live in their place of choice. My aim is to keep people well and active at home by maintaining their health needs and preventing hospital admission. I enable patients to maintain or improve quality of life and make plans with them to ensure they are actively involved in decisions about their care and future needs. I endeavour to save GP and primary care staff support to maintain their patients social, mobility and wellbeing needs.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I love the person-centred nature of my role, I can engage with patients within their own environments and am able therefore to advise and plan for support that they deem suitable and appropriate.

What are your career ambitions?

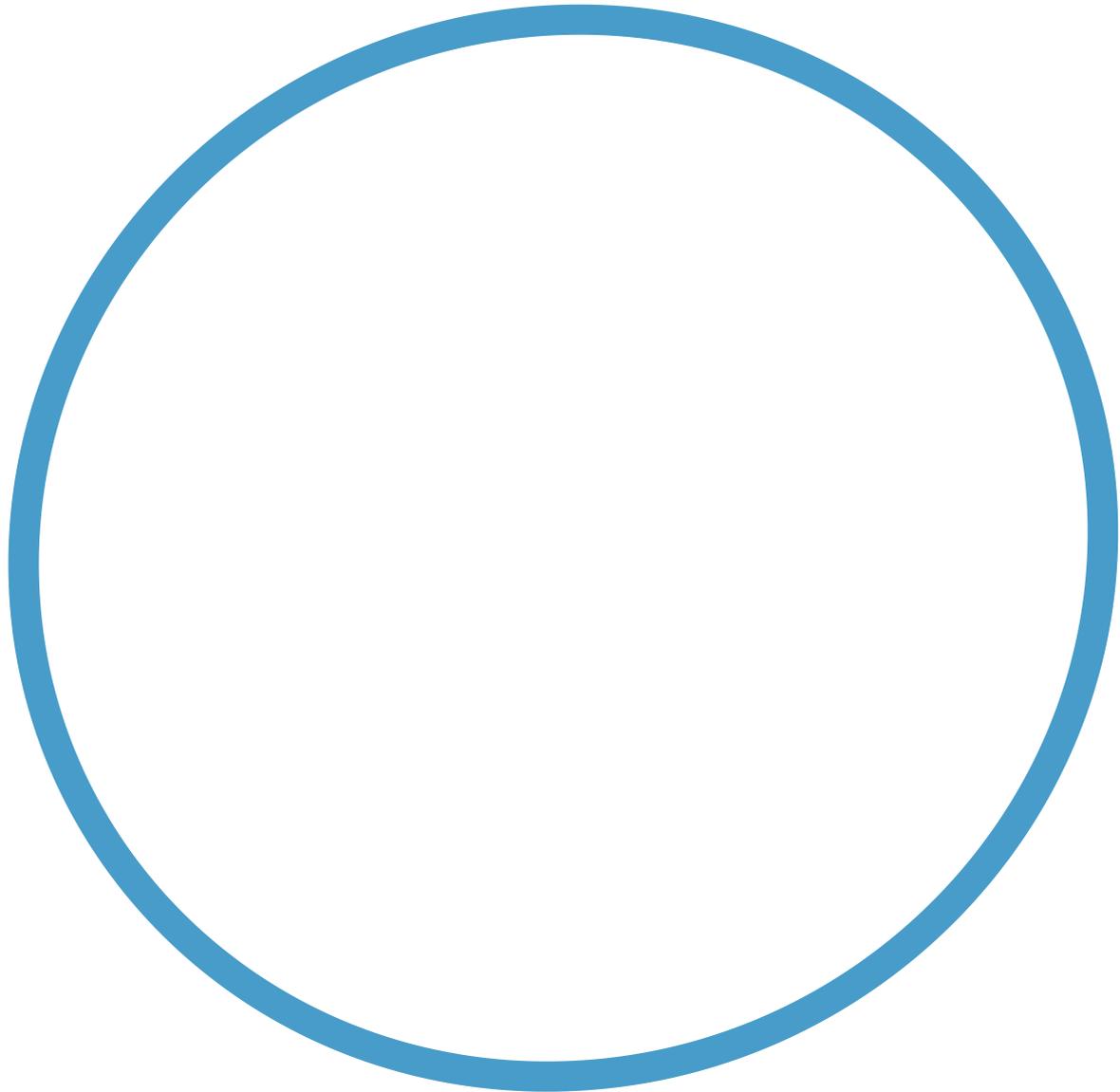
I would like to become a specialist primary care OT and develop more opportunities in my role to develop training links with medical personnel.

How did you get into your role?

I had a trainee OT post where I attended the part time OT course for four years in Cardiff. I worked four days and trained one day weekly at Eastgate House. This enabled me to have a wage to maintain my mortgage and outgoings whilst training as a mature student.

What kind of person does your job suit?

My job would suit an OT who is flexible, able to work peripatetically both in a team and in practices as a lone professional. The person would need to be friendly and be able to work with role blurring boundaries to assist GPs and staff to deliver the primary care agenda, whilst maintaining OT core skills and being able to express those skills verbally to others.



ORTHOPTICS



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Addysg a Gwella Iechyd
Cymru (AaGIC)
Health Education and
Improvement Wales (HEIW)



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Rachel Leverton

Job title: Orthoptist

Location of work: Orthoptic Department, Royal Gwent Hospital,
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I am an Orthoptist. That means I specialise in vision and eye movement disorders. This involves carrying out vision assessments on both children and adult patients, to diagnose and treat conditions such as lazy eye (amblyopia), squints (strabismus) and double vision. My role involves me working closely alongside a number of different healthcare professionals including ophthalmologists (eye doctors), optometrists and ophthalmic nurses.

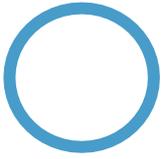
What do you enjoy about your job?

I work with a number of different patients with different conditions. This means that there is a lot of variety within my job...no two days are ever the same! I also love that there is a lot of scope for continuous learning of new skills and opportunities to take on extended roles within Orthoptics. So far I have had the opportunity to carry out further training and take on new roles in a number of areas outside my usual practice. This includes ophthalmic photography (taking photographs/scans of different parts of the eye), clinical tutoring, visual field testing and much more. I have also been supported to complete a Masters qualification alongside my work which opens the scope of how I can develop in my role even further. Another benefit to my job is that it had a good work-life balance. Generally I work weekday, daytime hours. This allows me to also prioritise friends, family and a healthy, fun lifestyle on top of having a rewarding and challenging work life!

What are your career ambitions?

I would love to develop my role to specialise further in the area of neuro-ophthalmology. This area includes assessing patients with complex neurological disorders and injuries such as MS, Parkinson's and stroke. These patients commonly have complex visual disorders associated with their conditions which orthoptists can play an essential role in diagnosing and treating/managing. I am also keen to develop my leadership and management skills, particularly in the area of service development and improvement. I would also be very keen to experience working as an Orthoptist abroad someday, in order to learn from how things are done in different parts of the world. Orthoptists are also highly sought after in many parts of the world, particularly as the UK is a leading country for Orthoptics!





Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Rachel Leverton

Job title: Orthoptist

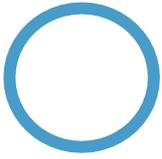
Location of work: Orthoptic Department, Royal Gwent Hospital,
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

How did you get into your role?

To qualify as an orthoptist, I completed a 3 year B.Med.Sci degree at the University of Sheffield. This course had a great balance of theoretical learning (lectures, tutorial etc) as well as a lot of hands-on practical learning including clinical placements in hospitals around the UK. From graduating, I continued learning as I worked in an Orthoptic department in an NHS hospital in East London, where I built on my skills and experience. I was also able to complete a master's degree in healthcare management during this time. After a few years I secured a role at another London teaching hospital where I was able to take on a number of more specialist roles and complete in-house training in new areas including neuro-ophthalmology and ophthalmic imaging. All of this allowed me to build up a bank of skills and experience in my role to secure a role back home in South Wales.

What kind of person does your job suit?

This role would suit anybody who works well both autonomously and as part of a team. It is a great role for someone who has a keen interest in human anatomy/physiology and someone who demonstrates compassion and empathy as many Orthoptic patients have complex life limiting conditions. The job would also require someone who likes working with people of all ages and someone who wants variety within their future career.



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Nicola Pritchard-Jones

Job title: Advanced Orthoptist

Location of work: Orthoptic Department, Nevill Hall Hospital,
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

As an Orthoptist, our core role is to diagnose and treat eye movement defects and how the eyes work together. We see a wide caseload range that may be affecting vision, from misalignment of the eyes (squint), diplopia, reduced vision, and visual field loss. I am now involved within the stroke service provided by the Orthoptic department, and some of these issues can be a direct impact of stroke due to defects in the nerves that communicate with the eyes. We work closely with the stroke MDT, providing assessment and diagnosis of potential eye problems, and then also assist to provide information and treatment in managing the eye symptoms.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I particularly enjoy the diverse range of patients we see; no two days are the same. Working closely with patients and building rapport with them, whilst striving to provide them the best possible care is very fulfilling. I enjoy working as part of a multi-disciplinary team, valuing everyone's input as part of the rehabilitation to the patient's recovery.

What are your career ambitions?

To continue to advocate the involvement of Orthoptists in the role of stroke rehabilitation, whilst continuing to learn and develop alongside my colleagues whether that be clinically or through further education.

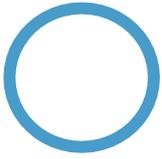
How did you get into your role?

Studied at undergraduate level for BSc Orthoptics at University of Liverpool. I have completed a Masters level module in Neuro-Ophthalmology.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Someone who genuinely cares about people, providing a person-centred approach to the patient's health and well-being. You need to have excellent communication skills and be adaptable and flexible in your approach.





Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Patrick Reedy

Job title: Specialist Orthoptist

Location of work: Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

Orthoptists diagnose and manage patients with eye movement and eye alignment problems, as well as the visual development of children. We therefore see patients of all ages predominantly in hospital outpatient and community settings. We work closely with certain ophthalmologists when deciding on surgery and investigating more complex cases. We also work alongside optometrists to issue children's glasses.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy the variety of cases we see. Although strabismus (eye turns) may appear very similar, there is plenty of variation as to their biological cause and management options available. I enjoy being part of the process identifying where a strabismus has a sinister cause, which can lead to saving sight and even life in certain situations. I also particularly enjoy working with children, it makes the working day a lot more fun.



What are your career ambitions?

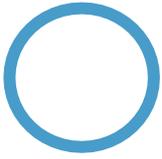
I really enjoyed studying neuroscience and brain anatomy in my orthoptic degree, and it's so interesting working with the visual system daily. At the moment, I'm completing an MSc in molecular neuroscience and so I'd like to go into researching visual neuroscience further as part of my job.

How did you get into your role?

I have a degree in modern languages and after working in the humanitarian and education sectors I wanted to move back to the UK and work in science or health. I arranged some work experience and found orthoptics a lot of fun. I was persuaded most of all because orthoptists were particularly positive about their careers, so I decided to go down this path and study the BSc at Liverpool University.

What kind of person does your job suit?

You need to be interested in the biology of the visual system combined with being able to communicate with a wide variety of people. Many people we see have additional needs, may be non-verbal or have a degenerative disease, but we need to work out how well these people can see and whether they use their eyes together. Not everyone has opportunities to realise whether they would be able to adapt, so I'd recommend trying to get work experience in an orthoptic department or even nursery or health centre.



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Nicola Turner

Job title: Head Orthoptist

Location of work: Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport. Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, (ABUHB).

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

My clinical role involves assessing, diagnosing and treating a variety of patients working symbiotically with Consultant Ophthalmologists. I also work closely with other members of the wider Ophthalmology team including ophthalmologists, optometrists and ophthalmic nurses. As part of the Orthoptic team I deliver a variety Orthoptic services to children, young people and adults across a wide geographical area within ABUHB.

What do you enjoy about your job?

From a clinical perspective, every day is different, the variety of cases seen and the ability to make a difference - whether this be treating a child with poor vision or adult with double vision are both equally rewarding. I also enjoy leading and motivating my team. I work Monday-Friday, therefore I am able to enjoy a good work-life balance.

What are your career ambitions?

If I had been asked this question as a newly qualified Orthoptist – I would have said to become Head of Department and to work overseas – both of these ambitions I have achieved. My current career ambition is to promote the role of Orthoptics and to encourage members of my team to take on extended roles such as non- medical injecting for the treatment of age- related macular degeneration (AMD) and stroke assessment.

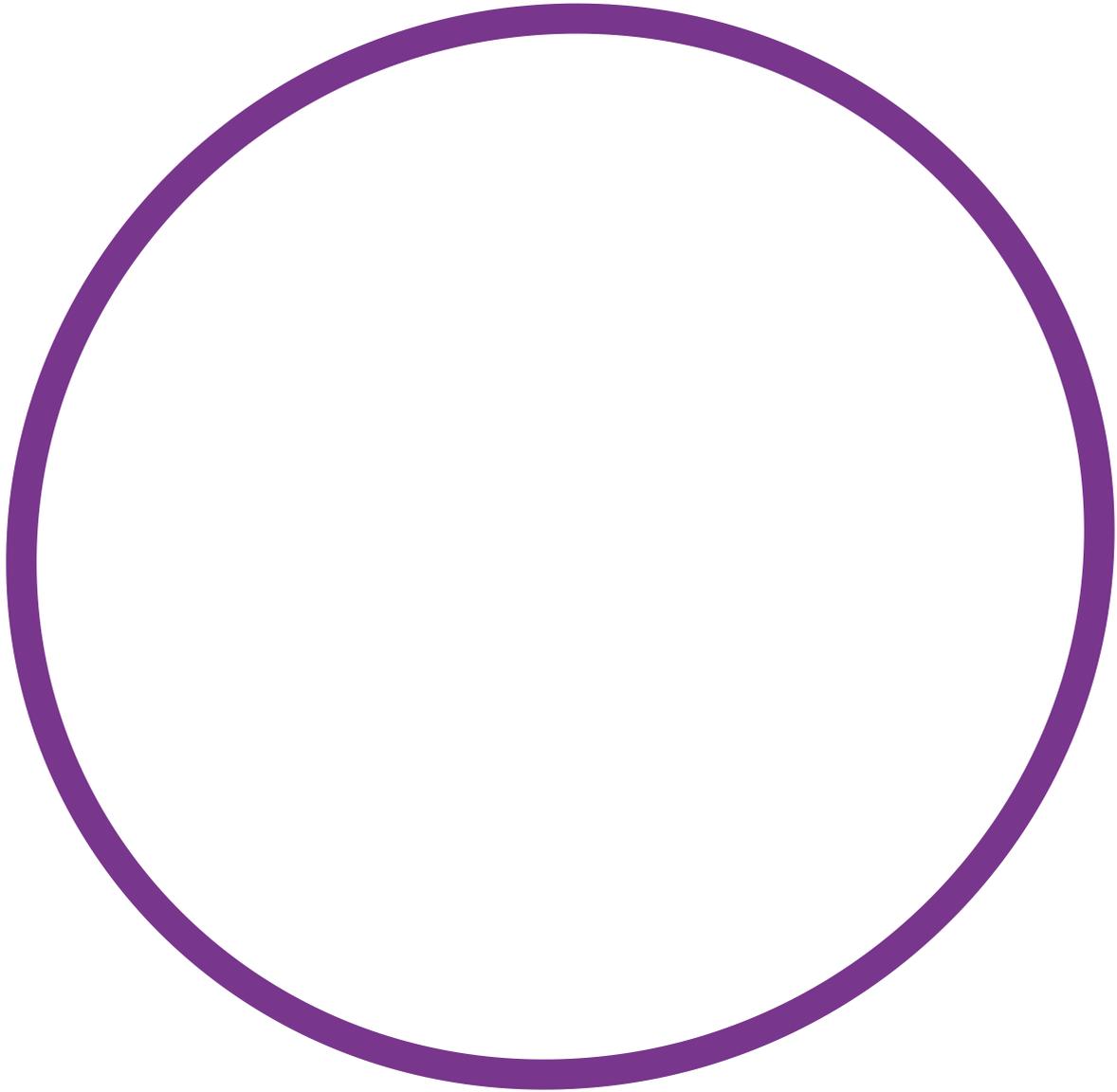
How did you get into your role?

I completed a three year diploma in Orthoptics which has now been superseded by an Orthoptic degree course held at three universities across the UK, namely Sheffield, Liverpool and Glasgow. I have since completed a Masters Module in Leadership and Level 5 Institute of Leadership and Management Certificate. I initially started my Orthoptic career in Newport, after successfully applying for a two year employment break, I spent a period of eight years working overseas in Bermuda – although I was unable to return to Newport, I secured a post as a Specialist Orthoptist in Llantrisant, where I was based for eight years and where I began my leadership and management training. I returned to Newport after gaining an Advanced Orthoptic post and a few years later was successful in obtaining my current role as Head Orthoptist.

What kind of person does your job suit?

The role would definitely suit someone who is an excellent communicator and enjoys working with people of all ages. The skill and ability to work autonomously as well as part of a team is also essential.





ORTHOTICS



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Jo Davies

Job title: Clinical Specialist Orthotist

Location of work: Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Royal Gwent Hospital, Podiatry and Orthotics Department

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

An orthosis is an externally applied device used to influence the structural and functional characteristics of the neuromuscular and skeletal system. My job involves assessing someone's function and considering if an orthotic device may assist or improve alignment, function or pain. We look at the biomechanics of a certain limb/body segment/ the whole body to see what the deficit is and work with the patient's goals to assist weight bearing activity and prolong mobility as long as possible. Where the patient is not mobile we look at contracture management to maintain range of movement and reduce pain. An orthotic device could be insoles for symptomatic flat feet or designing custom footwear/body brace for significant malalignment or deformity. We also provide spinal braces for individuals with spinal fractures and those with scoliosis. Although there is a wide range of off the shelf orthoses not everyone fits within those ranges so we capture a body segment, design, work with manufacturing to manufacture the device, fit, adjust and continually review its function altering as needed as presentations change and progress.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I love that no two days are the same and I'm in different clinics including domiciliary and wards visits. I get to work alongside different healthcare professions building close working relationships. I love working with people from all walks of life and be able to have a positive impact on their rehabilitation, meeting functional goals and quality of life.

What are your career ambitions?

I have a real interest in rehabilitation neurological conditions and aim to work towards specialising in this area. I am also an advocate for dementia friendly healthcare so would love to have an input in this area also. Complete a masters and keep learning and developing new skills that can improve the service I can offer my patients.

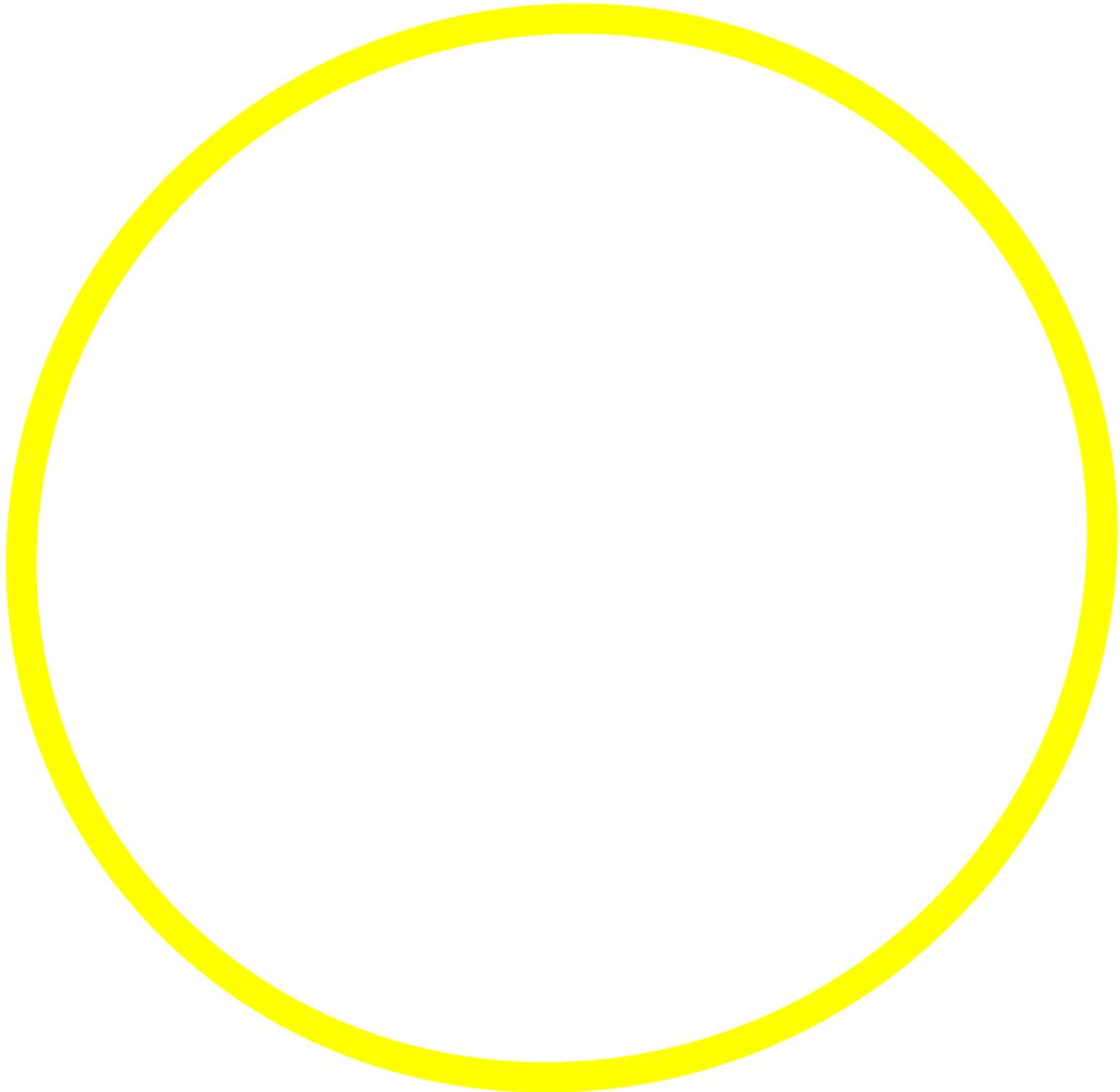
How did you get into your role?

I studied Prosthetics and Orthotics for 3 years at Salford University to obtain a bachelor's of science degree. Although I am dual qualified in Prosthetics and Orthotics, I knew that orthotics is where my real interest was. My first role was for a company contracted into the NHS in the north west of England for 5 years then re-located to back to Wales.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Someone who enjoys a challenge, can think out-side the box and is hands on and practical. Orthotics involves a lot of problem solving and someone who likes being patient facing and building relationships with patients and their families. Someone who likes to keep learning as new research is available all the time and new products and designs to ensure our patients get the best and most appropriate orthosis/treatment we can provide.





PARAMEDICS



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Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Sarah Lewis

Job title: Emergency Medical Technician

Location of work: Central and West-South Powys, Knighton Station

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I enjoy my role as an EMT, I mostly work as a crew where we respond to 999 calls in our local area. Not all patients need to attend hospital, care can be provided with support of the GP to enable patients to stay at home where they can receive the treatment or further support if needed. We have the option to request senior clinician support if needed such as EMERTS, mountain rescue teams, HART, senior paramedics, or the clinical desk. Any call can be upgraded or even downgraded by a clinician while on scene depending on the patient's clinical need. We liaise with family members, carers and other agencies involved with the patient to ensure the highest level of patient care is delivered to all that use the service. When arriving at hospital with a patient we provide an accurate handover to the hospital detailing all clinical findings including any social problems that may be a factor with ongoing care.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I have always wanted to become an EMT since I was a child. I am very proud of my job and really enjoy my role. Every shift is different and takes me to places I have never been. I thrive on helping people and always provide a high level of patient care. It's the best Job I have ever had.

What are your career ambitions?

I have recently qualified as an EMT after 16 years in the ambulance service, within another trust. I have spent a long time waiting for my chance to progress which has been delayed due to family commitments. I raised my two sons as a single parent. I am so pleased and proud to have reached my goal as an EMT. I am now keen to build on my clinical knowledge and perfect my skills in order to be the best I can be. My goal for now is to become involved with as much as I can within WAST, including charitable fundraising support for TASC, staff wellbeing and the wish service. I am always looking for opportunities within my workplace to further my development.

How did you get into your role?

I started on the patient transport service for Hereford and Worcester ambulance service in 2003. This then became West Midlands Ambulance Service. I worked on the High Dependency Service, the Health Care Referral Tier, and I have been a community first responder in my local area. My goal has always been to become an EMT.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Enjoys meeting new people. Enjoys a new challenge. Can communicate effectively with people from all social and cultural backgrounds. Is professional and takes pride in their patient care. Is friendly and approachable.



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Rob Townsend

Job title: Paramedic

Location of work: Betsi Cadwaladr UHB and Welsh Ambulance Service (NHS) Trust, EMS - Rhyl Ambulance Station / Central

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I'm a Paramedic and respond to 999 calls for help from the public in either an ambulance or a Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV). I work in partnership with another clinician on an Ambulance or solo on an RRV. I'm educated and trained to make decisions in complex and high-pressure situations in unfamiliar and often unpredictable environments. We have expertise in dealing with critically ill and injured patients using a range of equipment and medications whilst getting the patient to the right hospital for their ongoing treatment. Paramedics also work closely with other healthcare teams, such as: GPs, Nurses, Mental Health Crisis Teams and Pharmacists to manage patients in the community or closer to their home.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy the changing and on occasion the challenging nature of my work from dealing with critically ill patients, to those with an exacerbation of a chronic condition, or working with people in crisis who don't know where to turn for the best - the chance of continual learning is great with every day being "a school day".

What are your career ambitions?

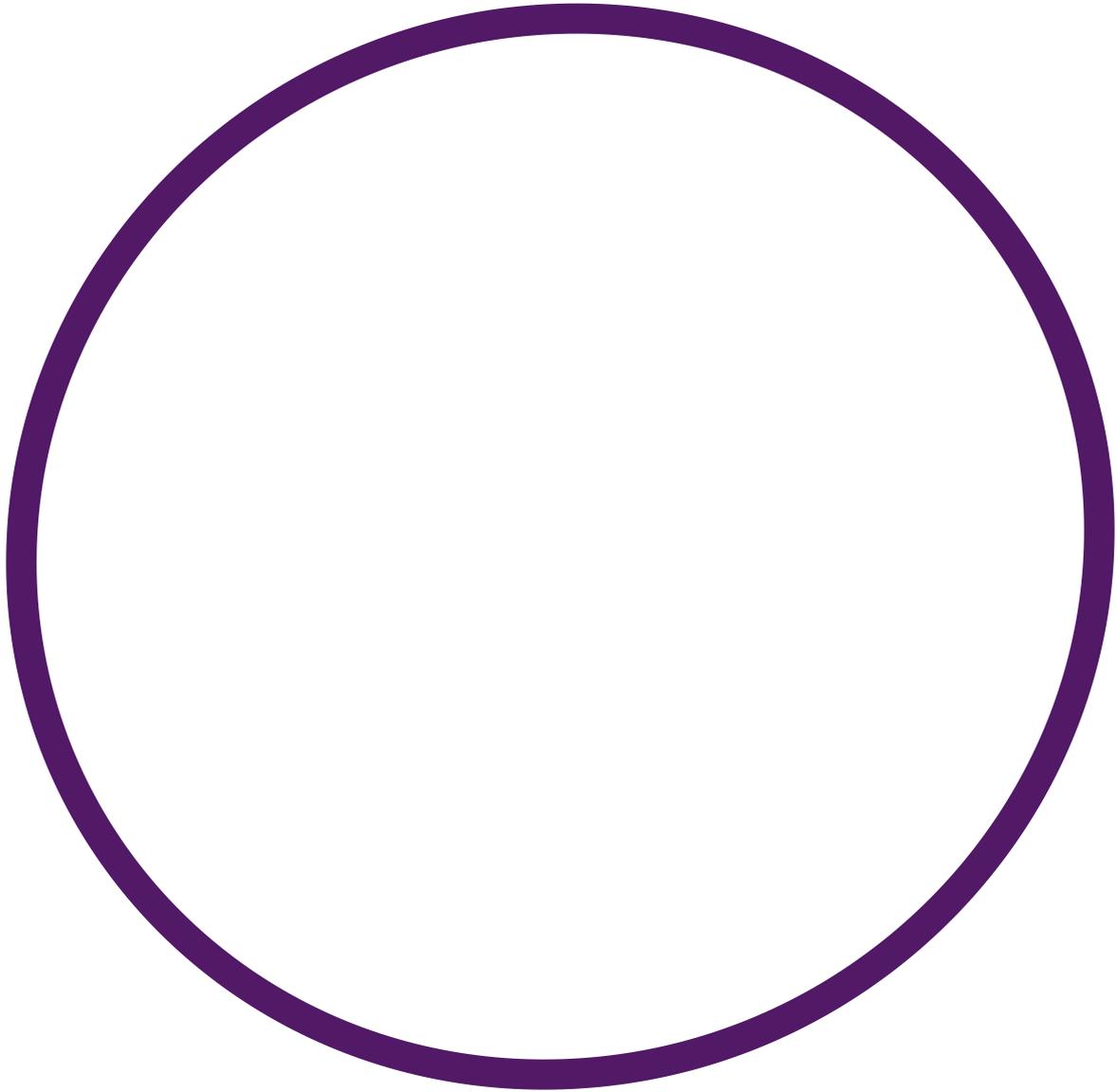
As a clinician I wish to continually learn and develop so I can provide the best care for the patient and become a Masters Qualified, Advanced Paramedic Practitioner (APP). Our job has become ever more challenging and being able to provide access to different clinical pathways, conversations with more senior clinicians and the prescribing of appropriate medications can lead to safe hospital avoidance for the patient.

How did you get into your role?

I had a degree and a Masters degree in another field before joining the Ambulance Service where I trained internally - firstly in Urgent Care, then after selection and further courses moved to an Emergency Medical Technician role, then worked and trained in another Ambulance Service as a Student Paramedic before attaining my professional registration as a Paramedic.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Firstly, someone who cares for the public with a passion and has a driver to help those in need. Secondly, someone who has a keen eye for detail and is able to make systematic decisions in sometimes challenging environments whilst being conscious of assisting the patient towards recovery and where that recovery could be best expedited, be that a GP Surgery, Hospital or Major Trauma Centre.



PHYSIOTHERAPY



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Rhiannon Anthony

Job title: Specialist Physiotherapist - Community Health and Wellbeing Team

Location of work: Cynon Valley Cluster - Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB.

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I'm a physiotherapist within the Community Health and Wellbeing Team. We are a team made up of multiple disciplines who work together to enable our patients to live as independently as possible and with a good quality of life. We work together to ensure our patients are as independent as possible, as safe as possible and that their environment is suitable and safe for them.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy working closely with other professionals and learning about their roles and how we can work together and learn from each other. I also enjoy the valuable time we spend with our patients and seeing what we've achieved together.

What are your career ambitions?

To continue to learn and develop alongside my MDT colleagues to ensure that we always strive give the best care to our patients.

How did you get into your role?

Initially I failed to achieve a place to study physiotherapy from school as I was hospitalised with meningitis prior to my A-levels. I sought a different route and studied Exercise science with Sport and Coaching which gave me a great baseline of anatomy and physiology and also a grounding in long term conditions management. I then applied to complete a fast-track PT course and studied at the University of East Anglia gaining a MSc (pre-reg) in Physiotherapy.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Is passionate about rehabilitation with a focus on the older generations and those with long term health problems. It would suit someone who can work under pressure to problem solve in order to ensure safety within a variety of environments.





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Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Debbie Davies

Job title: Head of Physiotherapy Services

Location of work: Physiotherapy, Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

As the Head of Physiotherapy Services I lead and manage over 270 staff all delivering physiotherapy for the populations in Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf. The teams deliver services to children, young people, adults and families of all ages. Physiotherapy teams help people affected by injury, illness or disability through movement and exercise, manual therapy, education and advice. They maintain health for people of all ages, helping patients to manage pain and prevent disease. Physiotherapy helps to encourage development and facilitate recovery, enabling people to stay in work while helping them remain independent for as long as possible. Physiotherapists work in teams with other health professionals in very many settings from hospital to home, schools, community venues and with partners in leisure, social services education and the voluntary sector.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I am inordinately proud of staff in the physiotherapy service. Everyone from administration teams who coordinate over 75,000 referrals through to the registered physiotherapists and the growing associate workforce. I love the variety of services and people we can help; from those in critical care to those with sports injuries and the most vulnerable in our communities such as frail elderly or children.

What are your career ambitions?

To showcase the value of physiotherapy, especially where we work in teams to make a positive difference in a person or families' life.

How did you get into your role?

O-levels and A-levels. Diploma in Physiotherapy (showing my age). Master's degree in leadership (later in my career).

What kind of person does your job suit?

Committed to the NHS and loves to make a difference. Is passionate about wellbeing and helping people become as independent as possible. Someone who relishes developing staff and enjoys problem solving in teams. Someone who is resilient, willing to put in the hard work on a consistent basis and take a few knockbacks on the way.



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Rhiannon Griffiths

Job title: Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist in Pelvic Health

Location of work: Physiotherapy Department, Royal Gwent Hospital, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

My role is to help patients who suffer with pelvic floor dysfunction improve their symptoms. Pelvic floor muscle dysfunction can lead to a number of different symptoms from Urinary incontinence, Pelvic Organ prolapse, Bladder and Bowel control issues, Faecal Incontinence, pain with intercourse and Pelvic pain. I also treat women in the postnatal period if they have had difficult labours or any injuries that may predispose them to any of the conditions above. This means that a work with a number of different colleagues including Urology, Colorectal, Pain and Gynaecology consultants and clinical nurse specialists in clinics. I also work alongside my MSK physiotherapy colleagues.



What do you enjoy about your job?

Helping people to regain their continence and feel confident about returning to their hobbies or work without fear of any embarrassing situations and without needing to go for any surgery. Getting women back into a position where they can have pain free intercourse. Educating colleagues and patients regarding my role and its importance in female and male pelvic health.

What are your career ambitions?

To work more closely with my consultant colleagues and to have patient pathways that allow for physiotherapy to be highlighted as a suitable and successful treatment option at an earlier time frame.

How did you get into your role?

BSc in Physiotherapy then three years as a rotational Band five Physiotherapist where I had the opportunity to shadow a pelvic health physiotherapist and enjoyed the work and the patients. I then became a Band six Physiotherapist in MSK and Pelvic Health for four years before gaining the Clinical Specialist role in ABUHB. I have completed a few external training courses in the speciality of Pelvic Health Physiotherapy and have recently completed an MSc.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Someone who enjoys working with people and passionate about working with patients that have symptoms that are largely stigmatised by society. Caring and empathetic and eager to learn and develop their skills. Passionate about improving care and making sure that surgery is the last resort for management of these conditions.



Name: Claire Madsen

Job title: Executive Director of Therapies and Healthcare Sciences

Location of work: Bronllys Hospital Headquarters, Powys Teaching Health Board

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I represent AHPs and Healthcare Scientists on the Powys Teaching Health Board, and provide strategic leadership for all of these professions. I also contribute to the national agenda in Wales.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy the interaction with all of these diverse professions and the ability to raise the profile of these professions, both internally and externally. I like the challenge of the role and the variety of work.

What are your career ambitions?

I want to stay in this role for the next few years as only in this post for one year. After that I will look at available opportunities.

How did you get into your role?

As a Physiotherapist, I worked in many sectors (NHS, private, education, thirds sector, prison healthcare and in Europe) have been a consultant physiotherapist and then lead AHP. I have been a deputy clinical director overall health professions including nursing and medicine and then a director of operations for prison healthcare. Now in this post as Director of Therapies and Healthcare Science.

What kind of person does your job suit?

They would need to be a AHP or Health Scientist, passionate about these professions and multi-disciplinary working. Someone who likes challenge and variety and wants to make a difference. A person who is driven, resilient and likes a challenge.



Name: Amaani McGee

Job title: Physiotherapist

Location of work: Cardiff and Vale UHB, St Davids ECAS



What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I work in a clinic where the main aim is to prevent hospital admissions among the elderly. Our patients tend to be quite complex so tend to be in the clinic for the whole morning and see various professionals (e.g. Nurses, Doctors, Occupational Therapists) including physiotherapists. My main role is to help people with, among other things, their mobility, strength and balance and increase their functional independence. To do this I provide advice, exercises, equipment etc. As a service, we tend to provide short term intervention and signpost/refer individuals to other services (for example outpatients, day hospital, community) depending on patient needs. In order to be as holistic as possible we liaise closely with other professionals to get a complete picture of our patients and so support them to the best of our advantage.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy getting to know my patients, building up rapport with them and helping them over a difficult time. A lot of our patients tend to be quite anxious, and I find it very rewarding if we can help them with managing this and avoid hospital admissions. My job is very hands on, and I get to know my patients well and hear their stories.

What are your career ambitions?

I am quite new at my job, I plan to rotate in other areas before progressing. My main goal is always to work with people in need and help/support them within my scope of practice.

How did you get into your role?

I did a physiotherapy degree after taking one gap year after school.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Likes to be hands on, can problem solve. Is a good motivator. Is holistic in their approach. Has good communication skills. Loves to work closely with people.



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Rhodri Parfitt

Job title: Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist

Location of work: Powys Teaching Health Board, Welshpool Hospital

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

Assessing and managing patients with joint and muscle conditions. We receive referrals from the local GPs and physiotherapy service and provide input for patients who may need further investigations such as x-rays and MRIs, or who may need referral to an orthopaedic consultant.

What do you enjoy about your job?

Patient contact, clinical decision-making, and reasoning, contributing towards an effective team.

What are your career ambitions?

Consolidate my current position and contribute towards the development of the CMATS (Clinical Musculoskeletal Assessment and Treatment Service) and integration with First Contact Practitioner roles in GP practices.

How did you get into your role?

BSc Biology, MSc Physiotherapy.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Has some experience working within physiotherapy and would like to expand their skillset and clinical knowledge.





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Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Joanna Phillips

Job title: Physiotherapist - Young Onset Dementia Service

Location of work: Cariad Unit, Barry Hospital, Cardiff and Vale UHB

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

Physiotherapy plays an essential part in promoting and maintaining healthy levels of exercise for people with dementia. We often do this in non-traditional ways according to the preferences of the patients - playing games, using music as a motivator etc. Maintaining safe mobility for as long as possible as the illness progresses is also another important part of our role. We also play a vital role in end of life care, by managing positioning, seating and painful contractures. We work as a part of a multidisciplinary team to ensure that the patients' needs are met in the most appropriate way.

What do you enjoy about your job?

Face to face contact with patients and their families. Using my skills to achieve the best outcome for that individual and working as part of a team.

How did you get into your role?

After passing 13 GCSE's I took A levels in Biology, Psychology and Sociology. That gained me a place at Cardiff School of Physiotherapy where I graduated with a 2:1 BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy. After completing my junior rotations I took a static post on the medical wards, and then moved to a community team for several years. I moved to Mental Health 20 years into my career.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Who enjoys a challenge. Is a good communicator. Enjoys working as part of a team.



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Susan Young

Job title: Physiotherapist

Location of work: Cardiac Rehabilitation, Physiotherapy Department, Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

For my roles in cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation, I am responsible for delivering the physical activity and exercise component of these outpatient rehabilitation programmes, and work as part of a multidisciplinary team including nurses, occupational therapists, exercise professionals and administrative support staff. I assess patients with a variety of heart and lung conditions, such as people recovering after heart surgery or people living with long term lung disease, taking into account any ongoing symptoms, the effects of different medications they are taking, and other health conditions that may impact on their ability to be physically active. This allows me to then provide recommendations for safe and effective physical activity and exercise which can support recovery after a hospital admission, and also encourages lifestyle behaviour changes that can prevent future deterioration in symptoms and hospital admissions. I also deliver an outpatient respiratory Physiotherapy clinic, where I work independently to assess patients with a variety of chronic lung conditions, and provide advice regarding lung secretion clearance techniques, breathlessness management and physical activity and exercise. In addition to my clinical roles, I also supervise physiotherapy students and sit on a number of national cardiac rehabilitation professional networks.



What do you enjoy about your job?

No two days are the same! You can have two people with the same heart or lung condition, but they can present with very different problems and goals. I enjoy problem solving as part of a supportive multidisciplinary team. And I love seeing people benefit from being more confident with physical activity. For some that might mean joining a gym and becoming a regular exerciser, for others it may optimise their ability to live as independently as possible, better able to manage tasks such as washing and dressing. Through projects I complete for the professional networks I am involved in, I also enjoy working closely with other clinicians from a range of backgrounds throughout the UK, sharing knowledge and expertise.

What are your career ambitions?

I aspire to working towards a clinical lead position, identifying and setting up new community exercise-based rehab pathways for a variety of complex health conditions that are currently not catered for routinely, such as people awaiting liver transplants, those with significant vascular problems such as abdominal aortic aneurysms awaiting surgery, and patients discharged home after an admission to intensive care. With support from my employer, I am currently studying for a master's degree in Advanced Practice, which is providing me an opportunity to explore ways to further develop my own practice and optimise outcomes for patients.



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Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Susan Young

Job title: Physiotherapist

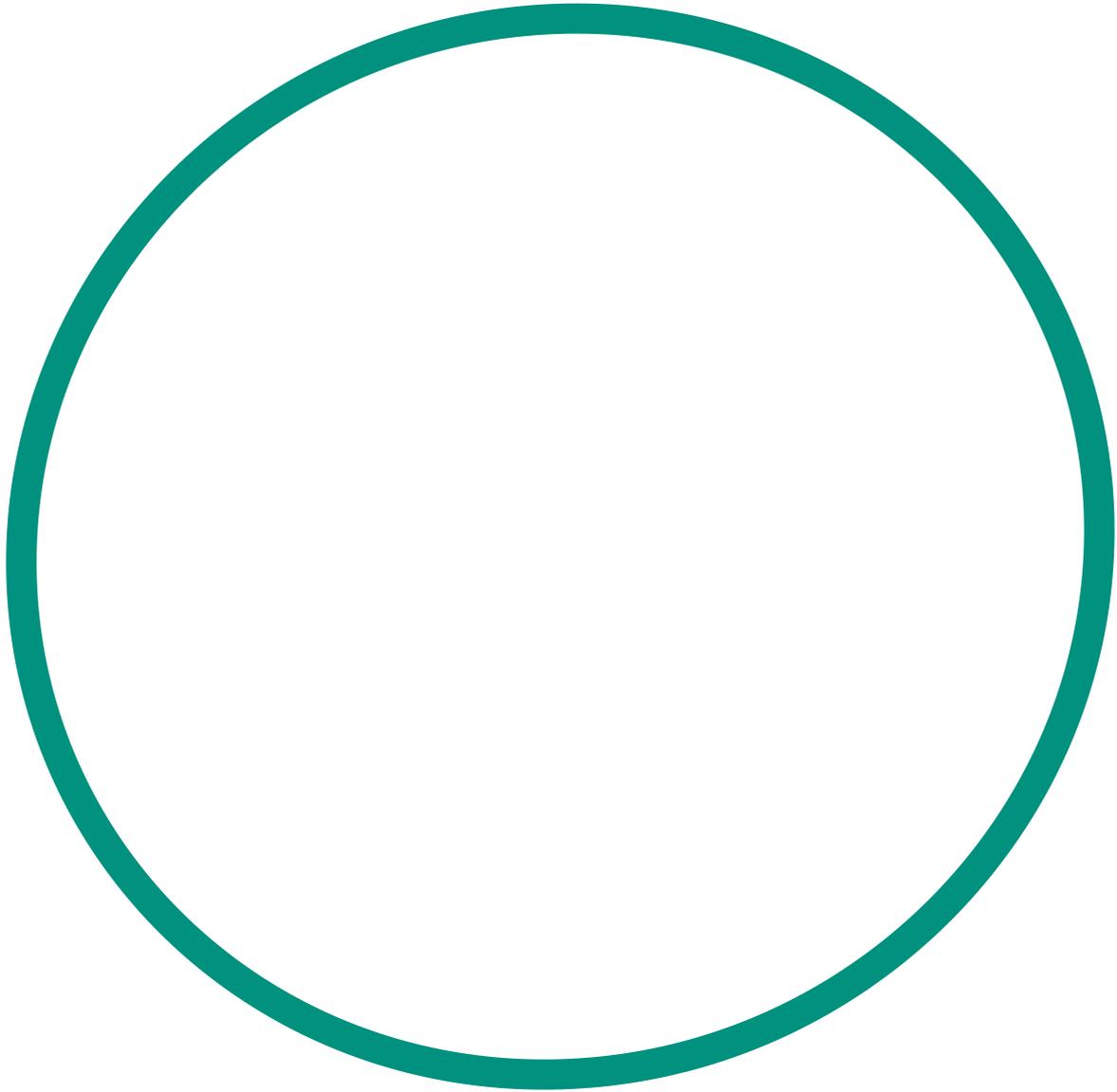
Location of work: Cardiac Rehabilitation, Physiotherapy Department, Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

How did you get into your role?

My pre-registration Physiotherapy training was a two-year Masters degree. Prior to this I had completed an undergraduate Bachelors degree in biological sciences. On completion of my Physiotherapy degree, I began working for Aneurin Bevan University Health Board as a Band five physiotherapist spending two years gaining experience in lots of different healthcare settings where Physiotherapy input is provided for example on intensive care, stroke rehabilitation wards, and musculoskeletal outpatients. After gaining this experience I progressed to a Band six role where I developed specialist knowledge and skills in a number of cardio-respiratory settings including critical care and cardiac rehabilitation and then progressed to the specialist role I hold now. Despite having specialised in cardio-respiratory, on a daily basis I still utilise the knowledge and skills I developed when working in other areas of Physiotherapy, adapting exercise for people with joint problems or reduced balance for example.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Enjoys working in a close-knit team with healthcare professionals from a range of background. You need to be passionate about the benefits of leading a more physically active lifestyle to successfully convey this to patients. The patients I work with are often fearful of exercise and activity, and a large part of my role is providing reassurance and education around the health benefits of exercise. Good communication and team working skills are essential, as is the ability to adapt and problem solve to allow patients with a range of presentations and challenges to benefit from physical activity.



PODIATRY



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Katie Evans-Bundy

Job title: Clinical Specialist Podiatrist (Diabetes/Vascular)

Location of work: Podiatry Dept, Prior Day Hospital,
Carmarthen, Hywel Dda University Health Board

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I provide assessment and diagnosis of lower limbs problems. I assess patients' circulation and provide specialist care for complex patients with wounds and Peripheral Vascular Disease. In my specialist role I work alongside Vascular Consultants, Diabetes Consultants and Trauma and Orthopaedic surgeons in order to provide specialist MDT care for patients. I am also a High Risk Team Leader for the Carmarthenshire locality.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I strive to provide patients the best possible care. I enjoy gaining rapport with patients and listening to their problems/ needs. It gives me great job satisfaction that I am able to diagnose and refer onwards as and when needed in order to provide prompt treatment.

What are your career ambitions?

I have recently become a Team Leader for the High Risk team. I am enjoying the role, albeit challenging at times. I am passionate about driving the service forward and would like to continue doing so along the Vascular Team.

How did you get into your role?

I qualified with a degree in Podiatry at UWIC (now named Cardiff Met) in 2009. I have completed several courses in regard to wounds, diabetic foot etc. I completed Post Grad certificate in Non-medical prescribing at Swansea University with a distinction last year, which allows me to prescribe safely as and when needed. I am currently completing a Postgraduate Certificate in Leadership in Healthcare with Swansea University.

What kind of person does your job suit?

It requires good people skills. Being able to speak to people from all walks of life is detrimental for this job. This ensures appropriate diagnosis for patients.





Name: Angela Jones

Job title: Podiatrist

Location of work: Cardiff and Vale UHB, Podiatry, Cardiff Royal Infirmary

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I work with patients who have both complex foot wounds and foot pain related to joints, muscle and tendon problems, to provide wound care and insoles (orthotics). Everything we do involves working with the patients to achieve their best ability to care for themselves. This includes providing education and confidence to self care with patients. We work closely with other professionals including the orthopaedic and vascular teams to achieve this. There are opportunities in the role to undertake further learning in a variety of advanced care and leadership subjects, lead on development of services, undertake research and work with external partners such as Diabetes UK and the Bevan Commission.



What do you enjoy about your job?

The variety, including the clinical work - I lead on digital innovation and prevention in my role. I love the relationships we build with our patient, working with them to deliver services they need, the results we get with them and the impact we have on their lives.

What are your career ambitions?

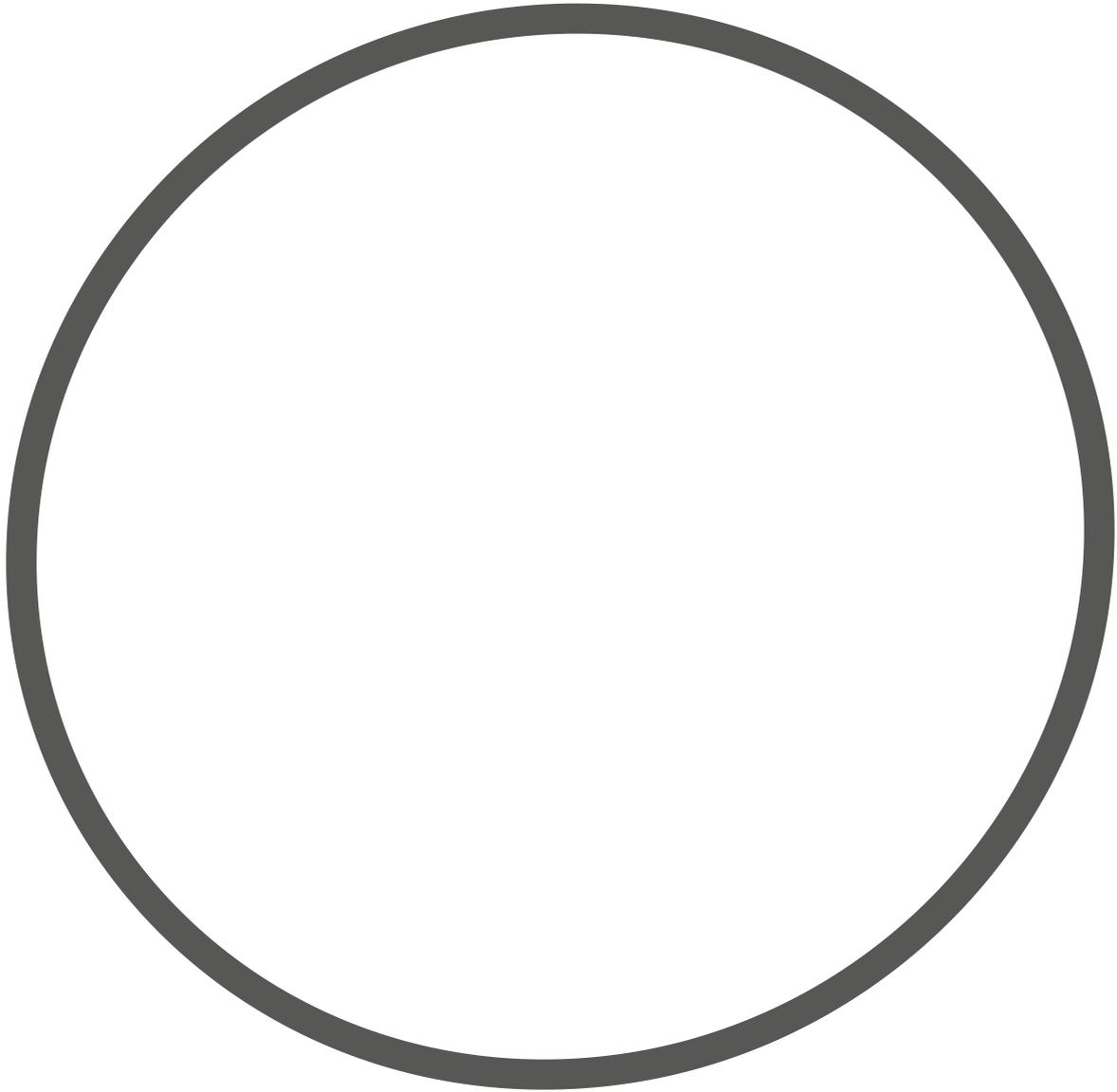
To influence how we work with patients living with diabetes in Wales, including those in ethnic communities. Building on patients' knowledge and confidence to self-care, developing a meaningful relationship with them to ensure that people recognise when they need professional podiatry help and get it quickly so that their conditions do not deteriorate and become serious.

How did you get into your role?

As a mature student (37) with no A levels, I completed an Access to Life Science one year course, then a three year degree course. Since then I have completed leadership courses including Bevan's Commission and Diabetes UK clinical champion projects. I'm currently doing an Advanced Practitioner Masters degree.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Anyone with a passion for people. Most important is the desire to encourage people to achieve the best they can for themselves. Academia is available for those who want it but practical learning is equally important.



PRACTITIONER PSYCHOLOGY



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Daryl Harris

Job title: Consultant Clinical Psychologist

Location of work: Aneurin Bevan University Health Board,
Community Neuro Rehabilitation Service, Park Road Wellbeing
Centre, Pontypool, Gwent

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

The small group of psychologists and psychological assistants working within the Community Neuro Rehabilitation Service support several multi-disciplinary rehabilitation teams. The current focus of our work is to facilitate recovery and wellbeing after stroke and brain injury. We are also developing a new pathway for people who experience non-epileptic attack disorder. Part of our work is to provide direct psychological therapy and assessment. Wherever possible and appropriate we aim to facilitate the ability of people close to survivors to address risks and wellbeing. We also work with our colleagues to support their work in promoting psychological wellbeing.

What do you enjoy about your job?

There are so many things I like about my job. I feel incredibly fortunate to learn from and with stroke and brain injury survivors about what is important in life and about how these things can be achieved despite adversity and challenge. It is so satisfying to work alongside people, their families and communities, and colleagues to collectively find ways of overcoming these challenges.

What are your career ambitions?

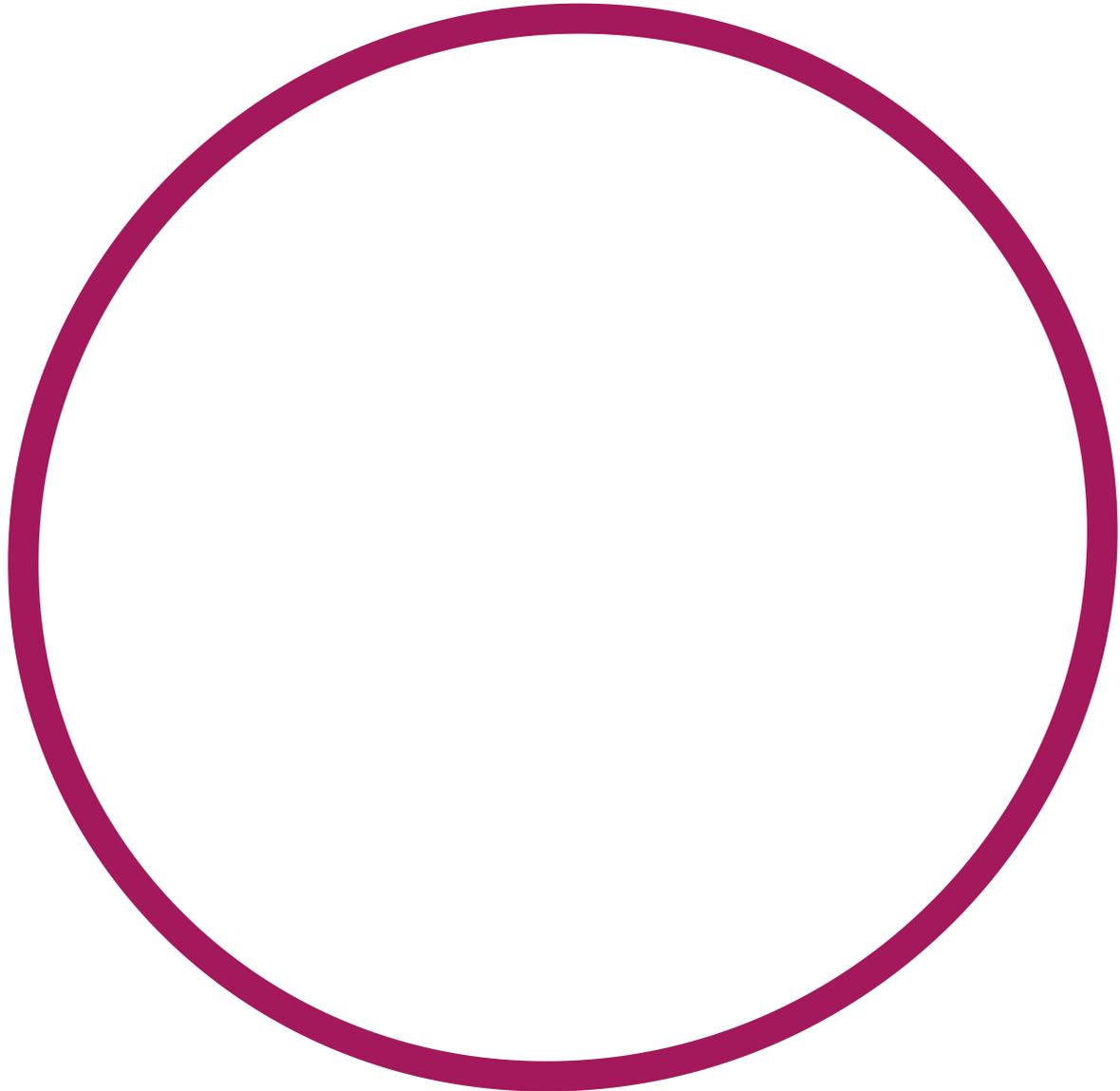
My main career ambition is continual learning. I want to contribute to a team and service that is constantly moving forward and finding new and innovative ways of helping as many people as possible to live well whilst facilitating their autonomy and control over their own lives.

How did you get into your role?

I completed my undergraduate degree in psychology at Exeter University. I was somewhat shocked when I was asked to stay on and complete a PhD in cognitive neuropsychology. This provided the springboard for me to get onto and pass the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at the University of Surrey.

What kind of person does your job suit?

I think you have to like people and be able to recognise their ability to solve their own problems. It is important to want to help people, but it is more important to want to facilitate them to realise their own potential. To put it another way to be good at seeing other people's expertise rather than needing to show your own.



PROSTHETICS



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Katy McGavin

Job title: Prosthetist

Location of work: Artificial Limb & Appliance Centre, Rookwood Hospital, Cardiff and Vale UHB

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I work as a part of a close multidisciplinary team involved in the rehabilitation of people who have had an amputation or have been born with a limb deficiency. My role as a prosthetist is to assess each person for their needs, capture the shape of the remaining limb and prescribe a prosthesis (artificial limb) that will replace the missing body part and most importantly meets the needs of the individual. The most common way we capture the shape of the remaining limb is using a Plaster of Paris mould, which we then have to shape to allow the custom 'socket' part of the prosthesis to be shaped exactly to the remaining limb for comfort. Once the prosthesis has been manufactured by our prosthetic technicians it is our role to fit this to the person and set it up to give the best function possible. We then have to maintain the prosthesis making changes and adjustments as required over the lifetime of the individual.



What do you enjoy about your job?

The thing I enjoy the most about my job is that we are a close team working with a relatively small group of patients and we all make a big difference to their lives. Any amputee is an amputee for life, and we see each person regularly so we get to know them, and their families really well. The other thing I like is that every single person is different so no two days are the same.

What are your career ambitions?

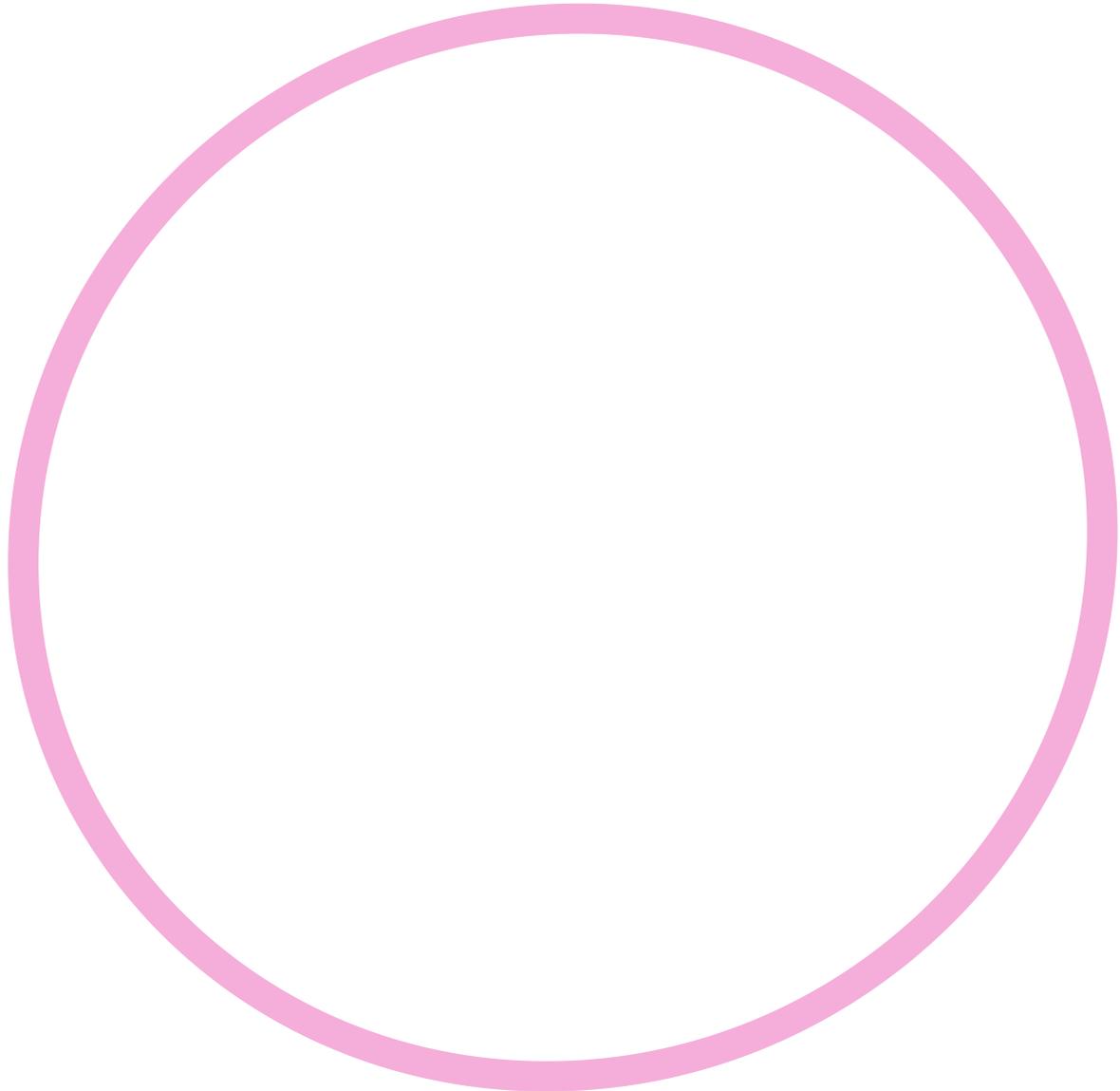
I have been doing this job for 15 years now and I feel every day I am still learning. My main ambition is to be the best prosthetist that I can be and I know that takes experience. I may consider doing a masters at some point to further my learning, but I am not so sure about management roles because it is the working with patients that I enjoy the most.

How did you get into your role?

I decided that I wanted to be an AHP and then looked into my options. I did know about the course already and when I looked into it, I decided it was definitely for me. I studied a 4 year BSc Hons in Prosthetics and Orthotics at Strathclyde University in Glasgow, which being Scottish suited me, as at the time the only other option in the UK would have been to study the course at Salford University. Getting this qualification allowed me to work as either a prosthetist or an orthotist, after initially doing a bit of both I chose to work in prosthetics only.

What kind of person does your job suit?

First and foremost someone who likes people, is patient and is a good listener. The other thing you need to be good at is problem solving. Other than that this job is a bit of a mix of creativeness along with the technical aspect of understanding biomechanics and the functions the different prosthetics. I say I'm a jack of all trades as one minute you are taking plaster moulds and shaping them and the next I'm lying on the floor with a spanner and an allen key in my hand adjusting the position of a prosthetic foot.



SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY



Name: Sali Curtis

Job title: Professional Manager for Adult Acute Speech and Language Therapy Services

Location of work: Acute Adult Speech and Language Therapy Service, Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend, Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I manage all our adult inpatient services, including the general medical wards, critical care, and stroke acute and rehabilitation services. We offer an inpatient service to any adult presenting with acute swallowing or communication difficulties. We also offer specialist assessment services including video fluoroscopy (swallow x-rays) or FEES (swallow endoscopy tests) to help better diagnose and rehabilitate swallowing difficulties. We have three District General Hospital sites i.e. Prince Charles, Princess of Wales, and the Royal Glamorgan Hospital. We also have smaller community hospital sites including Ysbyty Cwm Rhondda, Ysbyty Cwm Cynon, Ysbyty Seren and Maesteg General Hospital.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I love supporting and inspiring my acute team to deliver the best standard of care to improve the lives of those people presenting to hospital with acute swallowing and communication difficulties. We are a patient-centred service who are driven to do the best that we can for the population we service. I love striving forward for change and am constantly reviewing and progressing our services for the better.

What are your career ambitions?

To continue contributing to strategic improvements in speech and language therapy services in Wales.

How did you get into your role?

Three x A levels followed by a four year 2.1 BSc professional qualification at Cardiff University. This has since been condensed to a three-year course. I graduated in 2000. I have trained in-house and through external courses along the way in many skills including swallowing, tracheostomy care, head and neck cancer care, video fluoroscopy, FEES, rehabilitation and more.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Is a great communicator and team player, loves to lead others, loves helping people, loves the fast pace of acute work, is compassionate and driven.





Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Naomi Brake

Job title: Specialist Speech and Language Therapist

Location of work: Hywel Dda University Health Board; Glangwili Hospital, Speech and Language Therapy Department.

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I help children who are struggling with their talking to learn the skills that they need or help adapt their home/school environment so that the child is fully supported in accessing the curriculum, making friends and expressing themselves. I work predominantly through schools but work alongside parents and many other professionals including educational psychologists and social workers.

When I work with a child, I need to look at why they are having the difficulties they are having by looking at the developmental nature of their difficulties but also their social environment. I need to understand what the contributing factors are so that I can best address the need. Sometimes I need to work directly with the child, sometimes I need to work with teaching staff and parents through direct and indirect training and advice.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I love working out what the actual needs of the child are and the best way to address them. Sometimes this takes quite a long time to fully understand. I enjoy telling others about speech and language therapy as talking is often something we take for granted without realising how complicated it actually is. I enjoy training others in how communication works and what helps a child.

What are your career ambitions?

I am really happy doing what I do. I have no career ambitions other than to keep learning about the different areas I work in!

How did you get into your role?

I completed a university course which gave me a degree and a license to practise as a speech and language therapist.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Enjoys working with people.

Enjoys problem-solving.

Enjoys working as part of a team.

Enjoys learning.



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Hayley Davies

Job title: Specialist Speech and Language Therapist

Location of work: Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
Various- Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr and ViTCC Tredegar (Blaenau
Gwent Community Resource Team)

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

To support adults with a variety of communication and swallowing difficulties across a variety of settings including hospitals, outpatient services and in the community in Blaenau Gwent (nursing/residential homes and people's homes). I work with individuals with a range of health conditions including dementia, stroke, motor neurone disease and head and neck cancer. My role involves a significant proportion of team working. In the community part of my role, I work alongside many other healthcare professionals as part of a multidisciplinary team aiming to improve and promote people's independence at home. This can involve rehabilitation where appropriate to ensure individuals can communicate and eat and drink as safely as possible and aims to reduce unnecessary hospital admissions. I also deliver a significant amount of specialist training and education packages to carers, agencies and healthcare professionals to raise awareness of the speech and language therapy role, swallowing and communication difficulties and explain how best to support individuals with these difficulties.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I love the variety of the role, working with a range of people and problem solving as a team to find solutions to complex clinical situations. I often work with individuals with multiple health conditions resulting in significant physical and cognitive difficulties. It is extremely rewarding to work with these individuals and their carers to maximise their communicative potential and ensure they can eat and drink as safely as possible.

What are your career ambitions?

I aim to develop the speech and language therapy service within Blaenau Gwent locality. I have plans to deliver further training to nursing and residential homes in the area and work with voluntary agencies to develop communication support services for individuals with communication difficulties. Personally, I aim to embed academic research into my practice with aspirations to become a Clinical Academic Speech and Language Therapist.

How did you get into your role?

I completed an undergraduate degree in English Language and Communication (BA) followed by volunteering with the Stroke Association charity and in a language unit in a mainstream primary school. I then worked as a speech and language therapy assistant for a number of years before undertaking the MSc in Speech and Language Therapy. There are two routes to qualify to practise as a speech and language therapist - you can undertake the undergraduate BSc Speech and Language Therapy courses (three-four year courses) or the MSc/PGDip Speech and Language Therapy courses (two year courses) following completion of a relevant undergraduate degree such as psychology, linguistics, languages.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Someone who likes working with a wide range of people in various settings, is flexible, has excellent communication skills, enjoys problem solving and helping others.



Name: Charlotte Hancox

Job title: Speech and language Therapist

Location of work: Currently a student who is graduating in July

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

Support patients with being able to communicate their needs, thoughts, wishes. This may be through using additional resources e.g iPad, pen and paper, alphabet board, or engaging in therapy. I help to manage swallowing difficulties by implementing modified diets/fluids or through therapy. I work with other members of the MDT to ensure best possible outcomes for patients.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy being around different types of people each day, helping people find their voice and feel confident when communicating with others, and being a part of the rehabilitation process of patients - seeing how far people come and being able to celebrate this with them.

What are your career ambitions?

To be a fully competent dysphagia speech and language therapist working on the medical wards in a hospital.

How did you get into your role?

I completed my A levels at School and I have almost completed my degree in Speech and Language Therapy at University. Through my university course I have had the opportunity to engage in lots of types of placements and also completing academic work.

What kind of person does your job suit?

A person interested in work within the NHS.



Name: Vanessa Hayward

Job title: Head of Speech and Language Therapy

Location of work: Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB



What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I am head of the speech and language therapy service and am accountable for the service and responsible for approx. 85 staff which includes registered SLTs, HCSWs and admin staff working across children's and adult services in a wide variety of roles and locations. I am also currently Interim Group AHP Lead for one locality in the HB, representing six Therapy professions ensuring we are visible and our voice is heard. In addition I am Vice-Chair of the Wales AHP Committee (WAHPC).

What are your career ambitions?

To continue as a Head of SLT service with additional AHP role or All Wales role.

How did you get into your role?

Degree in SLT. MSc in Health Service Management. ILM certificate in coaching. Attended numerous leadership courses and conferences. I have been Chair and Vice chair of various committees and also member of Royal College of Speech and Language Therapy committee and working group.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Enjoys daily variety in their role, dealing with the unexpected.

Enjoys leadership.

Enjoys lots of interaction with a wide variety of people.

Enjoys a challenge, constantly pushing yourself out of your comfort zone.



Name: Dawn Leoni

Job title: Head of Speech and Language Therapy, West

Location of work: Speech and Language Therapy, Ysbyty Eryri, Caernarfon, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health board

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

Over my career, I have worked in hospitals, care homes, rehabilitation units, cancer centres across the UK. As a Speech and Language Therapist I have been a part of various teams of professionals, and advocated for people who have difficulties communicating, due to stroke, head injury, Head and Neck cancer, progressive neurological disorders, and those who stammer, to name a few. I have also supported people who have difficulties swallowing, eating, and drinking, to maintain their wellbeing and their dignity.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I love the variety of people that I come into contact with on a daily basis. Now that I am in more of a leadership position, I enjoy the continual strive to ensure excellence in the services we provide, to ensure that I would be confident for a member of my family to receive Speech and Language Therapy. I am proud to be a part of an excellent, inspiring professional group within the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists.

What are your career ambitions?

To continue to learn and innovate in both clinical leadership, and in treating adults with communication and swallowing problems.

How did you get into your role?

BSc in Clinical Communication Studies. A range of post graduate training. Level seven Diploma in Leadership and Management and Member of the Chartered management institute. Currently studying for an MSc in Advanced clinical practice.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Is committed to excellent clinical care, who is driven, patient focused, and able to bring the best out in people, regardless of their age, background, or disability.





Name: Rosey Meiring

Job title: Dementia Lead Speech and Language Therapist

Location of work: Hywel Dda UHB

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

Speech and language therapists work with a wide range of communication and swallowing disorders, across the lifespan from baby to older adult. My role is specifically with people living with dementia. I work as part of a multidisciplinary team, comprised of clinical psychology, occupational therapy, dietetics and pharmacy. Our remit is to improve the quality of life of people living with dementia and their carers, by providing training and specialist advice. People with dementia often struggle to communicate their needs in conventional ways, so our role is to try and help work out what that person is experiencing and trying to communicate, and then to try and help meet that need, so that the person is less distressed. This might involve visiting the person, and/or talking to and supporting those who care for them.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy feeling I can contribute to making a real difference to people's lives and also having the privilege of working primarily within one specialist area and increasing my knowledge and skills. I have always loved working as part of a multidisciplinary team and adding to my knowledge that way. As we work closely together, we find that our knowledge and skills expand and overlap, and we understand more and more of what each other is looking for.

What are your career ambitions?

As I am part of a relatively new service, I am keen to establish my role, and also that of our team, within dementia care in Wales. I would like to participate in, or lead on, research projects within dementia and continue to promote the role of speech and language therapy in dementia care.

How did you get into your role?

I completed a BSc (Hons) in Speech and Language Therapy over twenty years ago. Since then I have worked in a variety of clinical roles, mainly with people living with neurological disorders (stroke, traumatic brain injury, MND, Parkinson's Disease). I also worked in Higher Education as a lecturer for nine years and was able to complete a MSc in Neuroscience, Language and Communication.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Speech and language therapy is a role which draws on knowledge and skills from science, language and psychology, amongst other subjects, so is suitable for people with a wide range of interests. To be a speech and language therapist you need to be caring, people-focused and interested in the importance of communication in everyday life.



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Menna Payne

Job title: MacMillan Clinical Lead SLT for Head and Neck Cancer/ENT

Location of work: Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, Royal Glamorgan hospital

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I work as a core member of a multi-disciplinary head and neck cancer team. My role involves assessing and providing support for patients who maybe experiencing problems with their communication, eating and drinking before treatment, but also to prepare them for the side effects and consequences of treatment. I also support patients during their treatment and then into their survivorship journey helping them to live with and beyond cancer. My role is adopted by MacMillan and I have benefited greatly with excellent opportunities for professional development and networking. I am also responsible for the delivery of the SLT services to patients with Head and Neck cancer/ENT related communication and swallowing difficulties and manage a small team of SLT staff. I am also the MDT chair for our Head and Neck cancer MDT. I have also been fortunate enough to be elected as the Head and Neck CSG lead for the Cancer Network allowing me to work at a national level.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I love developing relationships with patients and their families and finding out the best way to support them during and after their cancer journey. I get a lot of satisfaction from supporting patients to adjust to their new normal after cancer. There is a huge variety of clinical work within the field of head and neck cancer and no two days are the same. The team approach is integral and a huge reason why I have stayed in this field for so long. I enjoy working closely with my MDT colleagues to try and drive forward service improvements acting on patient feedback and best practice. I also enjoy my leadership role supporting and developing the staff that I professionally manage within the SLT service and find this area of my job role very rewarding also.

What are your career ambitions?

I enjoy my current role. I love clinical work and find that my current role gives me a good balance of strategic and clinical work.

How did you get into your role?

I qualified in 2001 with a 1:1 degree after completing a four year BSc in UWIC (now Cardiff Metropolitan University). I was initially interested in working with paediatrics but following clinical placements pursued the adult route. I have worked in the field of head and neck cancer since 2005 and have been in my current post since 2009 providing clinical care and strategic leadership. I have been supported to complete various MSc modules, have been principal investigator for a research project which won an NHS Wales Award and am a visiting lecturer at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Someone who is a team player, who is flexible and able to adapt quickly to changing situations. Someone who is passionate about delivering good quality care that is patient centred and holistic.



Life as an Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Name: Samantha Price

Job title: Children's Speech and Language Therapist

Location of work: Cardiff and Vale UHB, Children's SLT, based in mainstream schools, community clinic settings and special schools.

What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I work with children and young people from 0-18/19 years old who experience speech, language, and social communication difficulties. I work to support the child or young person to reduce the impact of their communication difficulty on their functional, everyday activities. Sometimes this involves working directly with them, but in the majority of cases it is about enabling the child/young person and those closest to them to be able to do this independently and on an ongoing basis. Sometimes this is about working on verbal communication skills, but often it also involves working on non-verbal ways of communicating as well. There are Children's Speech and Language Therapists that also work with children who have eating and drinking difficulties, not just communication. They assess and advise on helping children eat and drink safely. Not all of our work is directly with the patient – there are lots of other jobs related to admin and service development that we have to do as well.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I enjoy educating and enabling others whether that's the patient, parents, carers and other professionals, or SLT students and less experienced colleagues. Many communication difficulties are lifelong - I like feeling like I have helped someone to understand, accept and manage these lifelong issues so that it has the least impact on their life. It's not always about being able to 'fix' the problem – sometimes that isn't possible, and we have to find ways to make communication easier for them instead.

What are your career ambitions?

This changes all of the time but always follows the theme of wanting to work with colleagues to develop effective and efficient needs-led services for people - whatever role will allow me to do this.

How did you get into your role?

I did an undergraduate degree in Health Studies at Manchester Met University and then completed a master's degree in Speech and Language Pathology and Therapy at University College London. Most Speech and Language Therapists do an undergraduate degree to qualify as a Speech and Language Therapist, but it is possible to do it as a master's degree as well which is what I did.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Is flexible and thinks creatively or 'outside the box' - this is useful for clinical work and service development work as well. The person should be resilient - working with the public is rewarding but can be very challenging at times as well. The person should always be willing to learn and development their skills - it doesn't stop when you finish your training.

Name: Lauren Salisbury

Job title: Speech and Language Therapist

Location of work: BCUHB – East, Paediatric SLT Team



What does my job role as an AHP involve?

I work with parents, teachers, teaching assistants, nursery nurses and educational psychologists to ensure we have mutually agreed targets and strategies for the child to achieve maximum communicative competence in his/her educational environment. I sit on an AHP panel to contribute to decision making about a child's level of educational provision. I work with health visitors, specialist nurses, doctors, paediatricians to identify earliest signs of speech, language and communication needs and ensure the child is accessing the right services at the right time. I also work in education with physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dietitians, and nurses to deliver AHP curricula at University level.



What do you enjoy about your job?

I relish the autonomy to make child led decisions using my professional knowledge, skills, and instincts and yet I equally enjoy being part of a wider team to help these decisions unify and materialize across services and into all aspects of the child's life.

What are your career ambitions?

To become a highly specialist clinician, to one day embark upon a PhD and to lecture in Speech and Language Therapy.

How did you get into your role?

I completed A-levels (grades A-C). I completed a 3.5. year undergraduate BSc pre-registration degree. I am currently studying for a Masters.

What kind of person does your job suit?

Has excellent interpersonal and communication skills. The ability to connect with people from all walks of life regardless of gender, age, socio-economic status or background, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation. It would suit someone who understands and is passionate about communication skills being the fundamental basis for all other areas of life e.g. social relationships, education, career opportunities, mental health, physical health and wants people to achieve their best communicative competence.



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