

# BECOMING AN ADVANCED CLINICAL PRACTITIONER - REAL LIFE STORY

Showcasing different roles through apprenticeships



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Emergency Department / Secondary Care

# 1 How did you get into your current role?

Having left school at 16 with only GCSE's I worked as a caretaker, eventually starting an apprenticeship as a plumber. As a self employed plumber I put myself through college to qualify as an electrician. After 9 years as I was sat in the rain on a building site reading The Metro newspaper I saw an advert for 'Student Paramedic' with the London Ambulance Service. It was a paid training post, with only GCSEs required for entry. I applied and 5 months later I started my medical journey.

# 2 What education/training did you receive prior to starting your Level 7 apprenticeship?

Three years after being a student paramedic with the London Ambulance Service, I qualified as a paramedic and worked in various roles. Having been heavily influenced by my mentors towards the role of an emergency care practitioner, I self-funded a BSc in health care practice at St George's University of London in 2014. I left the ambulance service to develop clinically with the goal of working in an emergency department (ED). However, with no hospital experience, and not being a registered nurse, it took a further three years to achieve this goal. I worked in urgent care centres, minor injury units, GP surgeries, NHS 111 and out-of-hours clinics to get varied experience until I started ACP paramedic apprenticeship.

# 3 What does a typical day look like for you?

I wouldn't say there is a typical day. Depending on the shift, I attend the board round (a summary discussion of the patient journey and what is required that day for it to progress) at the start and then spend the day seeing patients. I assess and treat any patient who comes into the different areas of the accident and emergency department, so 'minors', 'majors' or 'resus'. I order investigations, perform clinical procedures and manage the patient's journey through to admission or discharge. I work as a clinician alongside the medical staff.

# 4 What challenges have you faced so far?

In terms of challenges, the main one is the sheer volume of learning that needs to be done. Learning a new topic or skill is fundamentally an easy thing to do, but learning how to apply that and develop as a clinician to the required level is the real challenge. It is a daunting challenge but one I am enjoying.

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### What are you most proud of?

I am most proud of my job offer of Emergency Practitioner at the Bristol Royal Infirmary. It may seem strange, as Trainee ACP is the biggest change and the most challenging role in my career to date, but getting a job in ED had been a goal for many years, and to finally achieve that was a big moment for me. It also led to my current role so the two go hand in hand.

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### Where do you see yourself in the future?

In terms of the future my next 3 years are full on. I have my MSc apprenticeship to complete which includes non-medical prescribing and this will all be done whilst completing the Royal College of Emergency Medicine's ACP credentialing portfolio. Simultaneously I'll need to complete audits and various placements in Acute Medicine, Critical Care and Anaesthetics. As such, for now that is my future. Once I finish my apprenticeship I will want to take a break from academia and just consolidate my practice, however, the idea of doing a PHd in the future is not out of the question!

## 7

### What advice do you have for people looking to do the same apprenticeship as you?

If someone said they wanted to do an Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprenticeship, I would encourage it. My advice would be to find out everything you can about the role and if it is suitable for you, to go into it with an open mind and be prepared to work incredibly hard. It is a long journey and your confidence will likely be knocked many times. But there is so much to learn and it is hugely rewarding. In three words I think anyone undertaking this apprenticeship needs to be: **Dedicated, Passionate** and **Experienced**.

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