

National Apprenticeship Week 2021

Allied Health Professions Apprenticeship Pathway



1. What is your name?

Bethany Lane

2. Where do you work?

I work for the Northern Devon NHS Healthcare Trust, in the Barnstaple Health and Social Care Community Team, as a Therapy Assistant Practitioner.

3. Which apprenticeship are you doing and what does the study involve?

I studied for the Assistant Practitioner FdSC in Health and Social Care as an apprentice, working full time as a Therapy Trainee Assistant Practitioner alongside my study. In the first year of my apprenticeship, I also completed my Functional Skills in English and Maths.

The apprenticeship was linked with Plymouth University. It involved attending our local further education college one day a week during term-time for lectures relating to twelve degree modules, whilst doing additional study at work to complete the required assignments for assessment. Running alongside this, the work-based component of the apprenticeship programme required me to gather and present evidence of my developing competencies and skill-base.

4. What does your job role involve?

My role is generic within our multidisciplinary community team and my practice covers aspects of both Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy in rehabilitative patient care. Within my role, I support qualified therapists visiting patients with complex needs and manual handling issues in their own homes to help maintain their independence. Some of these visits are completed to avoid hospital admission and to assist with hospital discharges. I also hold and manage my own caseload of patients, organising my daily diary accordingly.



My work involves a range of tasks including, completing initial patient assessments, implementing and progressing patient exercise programmes, assessing for and issuing equipment according to patient need and documenting my patient notes on our electronic healthcare records system. Importantly, to achieve best patient outcomes, I find a crucial and rewarding part of my role is taking time to get to know my patients and nurturing meaningful, trusting relationships with them. Additionally, I am the lead therapist for running our Strength and Balance exercise class twice weekly, inviting patients into a safe gym setting to complete a circuit of exercises alongside their peers.

5. Why did you want to do an apprenticeship?

I have always been keen to develop my skill-base and progress my career, so I sought out the apprenticeship as an ideal opportunity to do this within my current team. The apprenticeship allowed me to continue working and earn money whilst re-engaging with academic education and gaining my foundation degree. I struggled at school and unfortunately did not do well in my GCSEs; however, I did go on to achieve a Diploma in Health and Social Care at college before joining the Trust. Over the next eight years I gained experience in a variety of therapy roles and the apprenticeship provided the opportunity to enhance the practical skills I gained and build upon the knowledge I had acquired.

The apprenticeship experience challenged me both professionally and personally, however I have grown in confidence and I am proud of my achievement. Additionally, the workplace aspects of my training have enabled me to develop and strengthen relationships with my colleagues who have supported me in acquiring new skills to enhance my practice and contribution to our team and our patient care.

6. What do you want to do once you qualify?

Having now completed my apprenticeship and qualified as an Assistant Practitioner, I am currently happy settling into my new Band 4 role and developing its contribution to the excellent quality of service we as a team strive to provide for all our patients. In the future, I would be keen to progress further if opportunity arose to focus on Occupational Therapy, and potentially take the next step in my career progressing to Band 5.

