

# Meet the Mentor

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and Skills for Health teams**

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## Shruti Sharma

**Shruti is an apprenticeship mentor at Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust, and is currently mentoring 1 apprentice completing the Level 6 Physiotherapy Degree apprenticeship.**

**Shruti, tell us how did you become a mentor?**

After finishing my postgraduate degree in neurological physiotherapy, I was fortunate to work in institutes with physiotherapy colleges. In the department, we had students on placements and also new staff who were being inducted and oriented towards the new roles and responsibilities. The opportunity to mentor students during the final year through internship presented and I took up the role. Since then, I was involved with mentoring students, taking classes and helping them navigate through their journey to become empathetic and knowledgeable physiotherapists. After moving to the UK, I started working with NHS Mersey Care and an opportunity to mentor a physiotherapy apprentice has been given to me. I am looking forward to the role and journey.

**What kind of individual support do you give the apprentices?**

Weekly meetings, one to one case discussions, working through queries and doubts. Providing support to avoid burnout.

**How have you benefitted from being a mentor?**

It has helped me develop and continue to grow as a physiotherapist and as a person. It is very easy to get used to seeing patients and not ask important questions. By being a mentor, you always keep that inquisitive student alive inside you.





## **How has your organisation benefitted from the apprenticeship programme?**

This programme is new to our organisation and it has expanded our job role. Something new always adds value and I believe the apprenticeship programme will do the same for the organisation.

## **What have been your biggest challenges whilst being a mentor?**

Assisting an apprentice reach their true potential is a very big responsibility and it comes with its own set of challenges. I think ensuring the correct amount of support an apprentice requires, in order to ensure that things are not too simple or too complex for them is the biggest challenge.

## **And your biggest successes?**

To be able to witness your apprentice becoming an independent and confident physiotherapist.

## **What do you hope to do next?**

I hope to continue my role as a mentor if I am given further opportunities. In the long term, I hope to be a part of curriculum development.

## **What tips do you have for people wanting to become a mentor?**

- Patience
- Humility
- Knowledge
- Introspection