

"It's not just nurses and doctors that work in the NHS. There are more jobs than I ever knew existed"

Introduction

Tamsyn is employed by RCHT as a Blood Tracking Coordinator, the Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust is part of the Cornwall Healthcare Community, working in partnership with other local Trusts to deliver high quality healthcare services. The Trust provides acute medical and surgical services to a population of around 530,000, which more than doubles during the busy holiday periods, from three hospitals: The Royal Cornwall Hospital, Truro, West Cornwall Hospital, Penzance and St Michaels in Hayle.



Image: **Tamsyn Zee**, Tracking Coordinator – Royal Cornwall

How did you get started in your career?

After finishing university, I moved back to Cornwall with the intention of completing a master's qualification. This was due to start the following year, I therefore applied for administration jobs at the hospital as I was advised it was a rewarding place to work with multiple benefits. I obtained a job in the Research and Development department and began to see how many opportunities the NHS provided; I also thoroughly enjoyed being part of this community. After six months I applied for my current job in Blood Transfusion and was fortunate to be successful. That was over two years ago now.

Can you outline a typical work day?

Working in Blood Transfusion means that no two days are the same. I generally begin by responding to emails that were received the day before from clinical staff. I often then go and teach on the mandatory training programme for an hour, covering multiple aspects of transfusion. After that I can spend my day running around the wards training different people, designing posters, writing Standard Operating Procedure documents or helping my colleagues investigate transfusion errors.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I thoroughly enjoy the clinical aspects of my job. Attending trauma calls, watching transfusions and assessing clinical staff members, being present at major haemorrhages. My colleagues and I have recently designed a new application that is used on an iPod for labelling transfusion specimens. This has been an incredible experience, from designing the original steps, being part of the production process, building the iPods and training over 50 wards covering three hospital sites. We are now trying to spread our application nationally. This has developed my skills in teaching, business, application design and coding as well as building a strong and positive relationship with clinical staff.

What skills are important for anyone wishing to start in your profession?

Each job role will require a different set of skills or qualifications. This can range from GCSE level qualifications to master's level. The overall skills required to work in the NHS are compassion and a caring nature with the intention of doing something for the good of others.

What main personal attributes do you think is important for your type of job?

Enthusiasm and confidence.

Do you have any tips or suggestions on how young people and adults can enter your industry?

Apprenticeships appear to be a great method for people to enter the NHS that want to learn whilst working. I entered by applying through NHS jobs and then progressing internally, this is also an easy way of progressing.

What career progression opportunities are available in your business/sector?

There are multiple progression opportunities, whether that is within a specific department or applying for a higher banded job within the NHS. Whilst working in the NHS for the last two and a half years, I have been able to undertake a variety of courses, such as national diplomas and degree level courses all of which have helped my progression.

Why is it important for your sector to attract and train young people and new entrants?

Younger people bring new and fresh ideas to the table which is essential in an ever changing NHS. They are often enthusiastic and willing to learn and adapt to the environment. All of these attributes allow for change to take place without the stress that is often associated.

What trends do you predict for your industry within the next 10 years? E.g. is it a growing market requiring more young entrants

I believe more young people will come straight from college or school and start apprenticeships rather than attending university. This not only prevents the large loans but allows people to learn on the job and be moulded into the required job role.

General words of advice

It's not just nurses and doctors that work in the NHS. There are more jobs than I ever knew existed, it's just looking and researching what's out there.

Further contact/information

Further information about Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust can be found on their website www.rcht.nhs.uk

For the latest information on Work Experience, Voluntary Work, Apprenticeships & Careers opportunities across Cornwall's Healthcare Sector visit www.getincornwall.com

If you want to know about the range of careers and learn more about what it is like working in the NHS, please visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk