



Allied Health Professions (AHPs) Day

Celebrating AHPs in the independent health sector

Introduction

Thousands of Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) work in the independent healthcare sector and deliver care to millions of NHS and private patients every year.

AHPs hold a wide variety of roles, helping to assess, treat, diagnose and discharge patients across all parts of the independent health sector. In focussing on prevention and improvement of health and wellbeing, AHPs working in independent providers play an absolutely vital role, from delivering physio in both hospitals and the wider community, to ensuring people get fast diagnosis, as well as supporting patients of all ages during each phase of their perioperative care.

Here are just some of the inspiring stories of AHPs working in the independent sector today.



Suzy Delves

**Deputy Physiotherapy Clinical Services Manager,
Mount Alvernia Hospital, Circle Health Group**

I joined Mount Alvernia in 2010 and began as a Spinal Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist, and now I job share the role of the Deputy Clinical Services Manager for the physiotherapy department. I really enjoy my role and the balance between treating patients and fulfilling management duties.

Helping patients to understand their condition and achieve their goals is incredibly rewarding and from a management perspective I enjoy supporting my team in developing their careers. Being involved in service development, it gives me great satisfaction to witness services come into action. At Circle Health Group we are fortunate to have the most up to date and innovative equipment, which alongside highly trained and motivated staff, enables us to provide an excellent service to patients. I have also benefitted from new training and career progression opportunities and am currently being supported to do the Institute of Leadership and Management courses and I look forward to continuing my career progression.



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Suzy Delves, Deputy Physiotherapy Clinical Services Manager,
Mount Alvernia Hospital, Circle Health Group

Emma Cormack

Speech and Language Therapist, Cleveland Clinic London

The best thing about being a Speech and Language Therapist is getting to work as part of a diverse multi-disciplinary team, and being involved with many complex and interesting patients for a number of weeks or months during rehabilitation.

I am currently a Speech and Language Therapist with Cleveland Clinic London, working in a specialist neuro-rehabilitation service. My role involves improving and promoting effective communication for patients, their families, fellow Cleveland Clinic caregivers, as well as managing swallow difficulties to enable someone to eat and drink again after an illness or trauma. This is integral to the rehabilitation process, and these goals are often a high priority for patients, both whilst in hospital and also for their future.

This is a very rewarding part of the job and it is a joy to work with patients and their families during their rehabilitation journey.



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Emma Cormack, Speech and Language Therapist, Cleveland Clinic London



Rebecca Gray

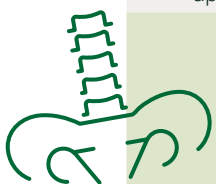
Team Lead and Senior Physiotherapist, Connect Health

I always knew I wanted to be a physio. I've always done sports, representing team GB at softball when I was 14 and playing football for Norwich City ladies. I've had injuries and been fascinated by what bodies are capable of and how they heal. This combination of sport, the biological aspects, coupled with a real interest in helping people resulted in me pursuing a physio career.

I studied at Kings College, London and Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital and joined Connect Health in January 2019 on the Advanced Development Programme (ADP) working in Camden and, after 8 months, secured a senior role.

I like that the role is rehab focused. You get to do gym-based rehab sessions and, clinically, everyone you work with is up to date with the evidence base, so you know you are all moving in one direction together. Patients are presenting with more complex issues. The pandemic has meant that patients have had added complexity and mental health pressures. Patients may have become deconditioned, perhaps through home working, bereavement, job loss, changes to social security and all of this can affect your MSK health. I've seen people come through with all of these things.

You have to be able to deal with the intensity, but there is a lot of support in my role and Connect Health's approach to job crafting helps tailor my objectives and goals to my personal needs.



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Rebecca Gray, Senior MSK Physiotherapist, Connect Health

Mohan Chandra

CT Radiographer, Diagnostic Healthcare Ltd

After Medical Imaging graduation in 1996, I am heading towards 25 years career progression as a Radiographer. Working as a CT Training Lead at Diagnostic Healthcare Ltd, I have been given excellent opportunities for learning and they are committed to supporting continued professional development. At Diagnostic Healthcare we have friendly teams and a patient-centered collaborative workplace. As a valued member of the team I am given every opportunity to demonstrate my professional skills towards career progression and am encouraged to actively review policies and improve services.



As a Radiographer I am a trustworthy point of care contact for patients on their healthcare journey, providing education about the imaging procedure and answering questions to increase understanding and alleviate anxiety about their health condition.

Radiographers are making a difference to patient care in the healthcare setting, and this is the most important part of my role. We get to know our patients really well as they return for follow up scans and we become involved in their journey. We know we really can make a difference to someone's experience.

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Mohan Chandra, CT Radiographer, Diagnostic Healthcare Ltd



Ash Capel

Paramedic and now Head of Quality and Risk, HCRG Care Group

My current role certainly helps me to have an influence on improving the quality of care patients receive. I get a unique insight into the great achievements of our services, delivered by a multi-disciplinary team, and I am able to support services to investigate where things don't go so well, ensuring we learn from errors so our patients are kept safe in their time of need.

Being a Paramedic, I have the clinical awareness of what levels of care are expected across our broad range of services and can offer a sometimes unique perspective on some solutions to some of the challenges and risks we have recognised as an organisation.



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Ash Capel, Paramedic and now Head of Quality and Risk, HCRG Care Group



Phoebe Cowham

Imaging lead, Healthshare

I've had a varied career in radiography, working in both NHS and private practice, joining Healthshare as a Senior MRI Radiographer before being promoted to my current role as Imaging Lead.

I lead the department and my responsibilities include ensuring the health and safety of my teams and patients, people management, training, performing scans on patients including elite athletes, and setting up and managing new services as the business grows.

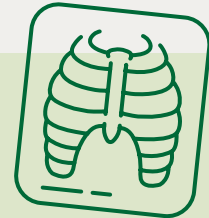
For me, I love the diversity of the kind of patients that I work with through Healthshare. It's the perfect mix of working with both NHS and private patients, who are very grateful for what you do, and I have real opportunities to make suggestions for ways we can do things better and take ownership of those projects.

I've gained a lot of different experiences in my career but I've still found opportunities to learn new things. For example, I recently received fantastic training in how to deliver DEXA (bone density) scans, which was completely new to me, and now we run an effective new service.



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Phoebe Cowham, Imaging lead, Healthshare

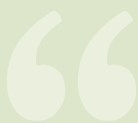


Saahil Vora

Community Physiotherapist, HomeLink Healthcare

I work as a Community Physiotherapist for HomeLink Healthcare. I joined in February 2022, and it was a fantastic decision for my work/life balance. My role is to rehabilitate, ensure patient safety and provide patient centred care to individuals who have been discharged from hospital. The importance of providing early physiotherapy in the home environment is crucial to ensure patients have the chance to progress. This is conducted by carrying out a thorough assessment, goal setting and specific home-based exercises to achieve this.

A walkthrough of my day consists of firstly calling each patient in the morning to schedule a suitable time to go and see them. When schedules are busy, I see around 5-6 patients a day however during the summertime it is around 3-4 patients a day. Each visit ranges from 30-60 minutes depending on whether the patient is a new patient or follow up. I also have a wonderful team which makes this job so enjoyable. I've also had significant training and learning opportunities - I am provided with excellent support to help develop my own areas, as well as my role in supporting the rehab support workers to develop theirs.



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Saahil Vora, Community Physiotherapist, HomeLink Healthcare

Jodie Breach

Physiotherapy National Lead, Nuffield Health

I qualified as a physiotherapist in 2002 and after a short time working in the NHS, I joined Nuffield Health's Cheltenham Hospital. As a foot and ankle clinical physiotherapist, I enjoyed using my background in ballet to understand and help patients for many years.

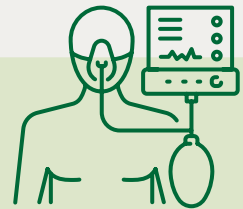
After returning from my second maternity leave, I wanted to progress my career and I was lucky that Nuffield Health provide opportunities to do this across its connected hospital, fitness and wellbeing services. As well as continuing my clinical physiotherapy role, I became regional lead for physiotherapy across Nuffield Health's hospitals, fitness and wellbeing centres and corporate services in the Midlands and South-West.

I adored this role as I could provide strategic support for our physiotherapists, helping them to be at their best for their patients while spreading my own wings in strategic planning, governance and championing the benefits of physiotherapy. Last October, I was promoted to National Lead for Physiotherapy, while combining with my continuing clinical role at Cheltenham Hospital. I love supporting the variety of people that I do in both roles, making a positive difference to people's lives. As an Allied Health Professional, we have so many transferable skills so it's important that we continue to get career opportunities to showcase them and support each other and people with healthcare needs.



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Jodie Breach, Physiotherapy National Lead, Nuffield Health



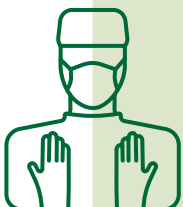
Melanie Yeoman

Operating Department Practitioner, The LivingCare Group

I began my career in healthcare 16 years ago, and originally did my training in theatres at Mid Yorkshire Hospital Trust, working in all specialities within the operating department. I worked my way up to Band 6, taking charge of a theatre which specialised in ophthalmic, dental, general and gynaecological surgery.

I then began my training as an endoscopy practitioner at Living Care and in a year gained a promotion to Site Lead Practitioner. I now enjoy the responsibilities and challenges of running my own Endoscopy Clinic that is attached to a GP surgery in the community. As part of my role I manage around 15 staff at my clinic, running very busy endoscopy lists 7 days a week and working to ensure safe staffing levels, providing training to new starters, and making sure we have everything we need to ensure lists run productively. I also play a key role in undertaking weekly audits, including in accordance with JAG (Joint Advisory Group) guidelines, to ensure the safety and quality of patient care.

As an ODP, I have overall responsibility for ensuring all patients attending my clinic are treated with respect, dignity and compassion in a safe environment and that my staff provide the best possible care for our patients.



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Melanie Yeoman, Operating Department Practitioner, The LivingCare Group

Georgie Haylor

Deputy Radiology Manager, Practice Plus Group

I joined Practice Plus Group on a temporary radiographer contract at first. Thankfully a permanent position became available just two months in, and I've never looked back. I work at both our Devizes and Emersons Green sites - most of our patients are NHS patients referred to us for X-rays from their GP, but we also have private patients. Most commonly we see knees and hips, but we also X-ray hands, chests, feet - you name it!

I am very lucky to love my job so much and can really spend time with my patients and get to know their treatment plans, and what's happening in their lives. Practice Plus Group have been so supportive and have given me opportunities for promotion and the autonomy to make changes and improvements to the department.

We plan our patient lists really well and, as my team works across two sites, we can flex our resource as we need to and can prioritise patient experience. I pride myself on positive feedback and love it when patients thank reception on their way out!



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Georgie Haylor, Deputy Radiology Manager, Practice Plus Group



Diana Heinrich

Occupational Therapist, Spire Healthcare

My journey in the independent sector started back in 1991. I was one of the first Occupational Therapists working for what was then part of the BUPA hospitals group. I soon realised that I could help make a difference to patients' lives and from here on my role really took off. I carried out home visits, pre-assessments which lead to the formation of a 'joint school' which helped facilitate safe, complex patient discharges.

My role involves me working within the multi-disciplinary team and liaising with external services, e.g. social workers, to achieve the best for our patients. My role has grown over the years - in addition to running the Occupational Therapy service, I am also Spire Parkway Hospital's safeguarding and dementia lead. This is a role I am passionate about and I am proud to say that I won an exemplar award for implementing a dementia friendly care pathway that enabled carers to stay with the patient during their hospital stay. I am lucky that I still enjoy my work and thank my employer for enabling me to challenge myself.



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Diana Heinrich, Occupational Therapist, Spire Healthcare



Zoe Levick

Theatre Lead & Clinical Educator, Transform Hospital Group

I joined Transform Hospital Group in 2015 as an Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) specialising in anaesthetics. And when Birmingham City University approached Transform to provide ODP Diploma students with practical experience, I became a Clinical Educator, allocating mentors to each student and mentoring them myself in anaesthetics, recovery and scrubs.

I love to show that there are many ways you can move forward in your ODP career. Indeed, another development opportunity presented itself less than a year later as a Theatre Lead. While I was previously able to suggest changes within the theatre environment, now I also have responsibility for implementing them to benefit both patients and colleagues. While these two roles keep me very busy, I truly enjoy what I do. Getting fantastic comments on the feedback forms from students at the end of their placement, and making changes in theatre which are received positively by surgeons and anaesthetists – these are the things that spur me on.



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Zoe Levick, Theatre Lead & Clinical Educator, Transform Hospital Group



Ross Brand

Paramedic and CEO, Partnering Health Ltd

My healthcare journey started as a volunteer for St John Ambulance as a teenager and this experience shaped my career path and led me to train as a paramedic.

For over 10 years I worked front line in the NHS Emergency, Acute and Urgent Care services in the UK. I gained experience in a variety of roles within the NHS, Social Enterprise, voluntary sector, which led me the commercial healthcare sector. During my time as a paramedic, I saw some examples where patients didn't receive the best care possible. I believe people can and should do better for the benefit of every patient and I brought this belief with me into my role as CEO where I now influence and shape PHL's organisational culture. Ensuring that patients receive the best possible care remains my number one priority over all else.

As CEO of PHL I find innovative ways to solve complex problems by bringing together systems that impact positively on patient care. As a paramedic I oversaw the care of one patient at a time, in my current role I have an influence over thousands of patients' experiences. I lead a team of dedicated healthcare professions, all with the same goal of ensuring people who access care from PHL receive the absolute best care.



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Ross Brand, former paramedic and CEO, Partnering Health Ltd



The Independent Healthcare Providers Network (IHPN) is the representative body for independent sector healthcare providers. Our members deliver a very diverse range of services to NHS and private patients including acute care, primary care, community care, clinical home healthcare, diagnostics and dentistry.

To learn more about this document and about IHPN, please contact us.

T. 07540 413 802

E. info@ihpn.org.uk

W. ihpn.org.uk