

**Professional Clinical Lead for  
Children's SLT  
Birmingham Community Healthcare  
NHS FT**



**Ali Beard**

**What does your current role involve?**

Providing professional and clinical leadership to a team of about 80 fantastic SLTs and SLTAs within the Core and Traded NHS SLT service to children across Birmingham. I'm the 'outside face' of the SLT service involved with commissioners, LA and all stakeholders.

**What was your first role after graduating?**

I worked in Newham (London) in community clinic, special school and resource base for children SLD and PMLD

**At what stage did you decide which area of the profession you wanted to work in?**

I always wanted to work with CYP in cities. After about 3 years I became more interested in AAC & Autism Spectrum, then ASC & CAMHS

**How did you progress from your first role to your current job?**

Generalist Paed first post for 18mths as above then took a fully school based post (Special School / Resource base / mainstream) for 3 ½ years both in inner city London. I moved to Birmingham to get married and got the post of SLT Clinical Lead for Autism. After 8 years, I became SLT service Operational Manager for 18 months then Professional Clinical Lead for the whole service from 2012 to present.

**How have you used CPD to help you progress in your career?**

I have learnt from watching others (shadowing therapy) and lots of reflection and reading. I've delivered training in schools on many topics, which has meant I've had to really understand everything myself. Nowadays I use twitter to extend my knowledge and I've done NLP training which is invaluable.

**My advice to students looking to get into my current area of work:**

I did not have an ambition to be a manager (still don't), but I do want to make a difference in the system. The best leaders are courageous, emotionally intelligent, strategic and are focused on getting better things for children and families

Contact me: [ali.beard@bhamcommunity.nhs.uk](mailto:ali.beard@bhamcommunity.nhs.uk)