



Anne Breaks

**Consultant Speech and Language Therapist
Evelina London Children's Hospital**

What does your current role involve?

I lead the acute speech and language therapy service – which includes inpatients and outpatients as well as providing a tertiary neuro-speech clinic and working in a MDT medical feeding clinic. Research is well supported and my PhD is progressing well!

What was your first role after graduating?

Speech therapist at Inglefield Manor School, a Scope residential school which used Conductive Education. I was the only speech therapist and worked closely with physiotherapists and teaching staff

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

My clinical specialism is dysphagia and the more I learned about the area the more I wanted to specialise.

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

I worked in schools and community clinics and became a team leader, and I progressed to professional lead and head of children's therapy services. I decided to study (part time) for a PhD and at that time I became a children's community services commissioner and then became a Designated Clinical Officer for SEND in Surrey. When the opportunity to return to clinical practice in a tertiary hospital arose I knew that it was the right thing to do. My experience 'out of SLT' has been invaluable but its great to be back!

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

I have always belonged to SIGs/CENs, I and kept up to date with new clinical developments. Serving on working groups and boards at RCSLT enabled me learn and understand more about strategies and policies. I also find the CAHPR events useful to keep a broad view of hot topics

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

- Work in as many areas as possible
- Always be open to new challenges and opportunities
- Reflect on the range of skills of speech and language therapists and consider how they could be used in other roles

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