



Jemma Haines

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What does your current role involve?

I am service lead for a tertiary multi-disciplinary Airways Service. I manage patients with complex breathlessness including Inducible Laryngeal Obstruction (ILO) and chronic cough. I am an RCSLT national professional advisor and am a member of the professional practice policy committee. I am very active with clinical research. I am proud to say I am doing my dream job!

What was your first role after graduating?

I worked for 6 weeks as a therapy assistant before commencing my first SLT post in a large teaching hospital. I was fortunate to have a caseload of voice, dysphagia and head and neck which gave me and an excellent foundation for my chosen specialism.

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

One of the first patients I treated as an NQT had vocal cord dysfunction with significant disease morbidity. Following therapy she was asymptomatic with no hospital admissions – I was hooked!

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

I have been very fortunate to have supportive managers to support my career development. I spent 2 years as a generalist and then became ENT lead in a small DGH. At that time I jointly conceptualised a MDT service to support patients with complex breathlessness needs (predominantly ILO) and for 11 years grew and developed the team, influenced national MDT agendas and contributed to MDT treatment. As a result of my experience I was recently appointed as Consultant SLT in a nationally renowned respiratory treatment centre.

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

Significantly!

I believe CPD is not just about setting aside specific time to complete designated training (although this is very important) I am constantly challenged and ask questions to further my own development and improve the care I deliver..

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

- Shadow MDT clinics
- Be business savvy
- Be passionate about the caseload
- Our profession is evolving, be responsive to this
- Think about your impact (no matter how small) and always ensure you measure it
- Become research active

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