

Apprenticeships Case Study

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**L7 Senior Leader Apprenticeship
Dental**



What prompted you to become an apprentice/apply for your apprenticeship?

A passion for people both staff and patients which I fulfil daily. However, I have a longing to help on a bigger scale! I hope this apprenticeship/master's degree will help me on my way to achieving this.

Being from a BAME background I am slowly and unfortunately understanding the opportunities that I get overlooked for (conscious or unconscious bias) so I want to be able to challenge those biases with a solid education background to help me do so – hence this apprenticeship which can convert to a master's degree. I want my children to be able to grow in a place where they are not overlooked for roles because of their ethnicity.

I have a motto: 'be the change that you want to see' I aim to use this as ammunition to make healthcare leadership more equitable, inclusive and diverse

I probably should not write this for others to see but here goes..... on my personal 10-year plan, I hope to have progressed upwards on the healthcare leadership ladder and who knows, someday may even make it to board level! (we all need dreams right?!...)

Tell us about your role, what does a typical day look like?

I am a dentist! A normal day for me involves a morning and afternoon clinic treating patients with complex needs both paediatric and adult. Patients might need to be hoisted from their wheelchairs, have challenging behaviours and traits such as autism, nonverbal, hate or love the dentist, be extremely anxious or be medically compromised to name a few. Patients who are unable to access a regular high street dentist would come to see a community dentist which is my role. I complete treatment under local anaesthetic, inhalation sedation and general anaesthetic. Having been a senior dentist for almost 6 years I am a line manager for dentists and hygiene therapists.

The above clinics are 3 days a week, on the 4th day of my working week I have admin session and time to complete work towards the apprenticeship. This might involve online learning or activities based on the learning which I complete with the dental team.

Within my apprenticeship group of 8 members, we are scheduled to go to each other's workplaces once or twice throughout the course to allow us to help with each other's 'wicked' problems

What is the best thing about your apprenticeship?

My apprenticeship group! I feel very grateful to have such a varied group of peers from many different trusts in healthcare but also from the public sector. Nobody really understands what the pressures are of an apprenticeship unless you are physically doing it so it's nice to be in a group with so many wonderful minds and job roles. We can really understand and appreciate each other's roles and motivate each other during stressful times such as assignment deadlines.

In my group of 8 we have clinicians, HR advisors, nurse leads, software colleagues, IT colleagues, managers and service leads so when we can discuss problems with each other the range of viewpoints and wealth of information we are able to give to each other is very rich!

For me – I love the learning part. (no joke!) It's been 13 years since I graduated from university as a dentist. To be able to feel like I'm progressing and learning again, as well as now being a mother of 2 young children and wife is an accomplishing feeling – albeit very tiring too!

What would you say to others thinking about an apprenticeship?

People always will say 'its a lot of work' – Im going to be honest, its more than that...its a super dooper load of work!

In my experience though, working as well as having a young family and studying is a massive challenge simply due to time constraints. The key to this however is to plan and then plan some more.

And then when you think you have planned enough-plan abit more!

I have found that this helps that overwhelming feeling we all get from time to time. So my advice – if you are prepared to plan – DO IT! It will see you get to the places you aspire to be!