

# Apprenticeships Case Study

**Kate Newton**

**L3 Business Administration  
Patient Services (PALs)**



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

Having to leave my last job within education due to medical issues and new disability, I felt very lost and isolated for several years. One afternoon I decided to sign up for a refresher course in digital skills. My wonderful tutor, Sid at Riverside College spoke to me about doing extra training and putting me in touch with lead tutor for the apprenticeship scheme for Halton and the wider area, Charlotte.

It was Charlotte who told me about Bridgewater, but was I too old for an apprenticeship?

Surely I could not retrain, being 'disabled, old and a number of years out of work'? Charlotte convinced me that I could, I had lots of skills that I had acquired over the years, and I could be useful.

My second daughter, husband and I have been extensive users of the local NHS services, from Alder Hey, Broadgreen, Halton and Warrington Hospital through to many of the Bridgewater services so why not try and give a little back to a wonderful service.

So, after applying for several apprenticeships at Bridgewater I received a call for the interview at Spencer House.

I was so nervous the day of the interview but when I met Sarah and Kathryn I felt totally at ease, maybe I could do this!

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

I was placed within a lovely team, Patient Services. A great team of people and so nice to have a supportive manager, Hitesh.

I learn something new each day and the team have trained me at my pace. Andrea and Joanne, the two PALs officers have taught me how to upload the Talk To Us forms which feeds the data for NHS England. I am learning about the corporate world which is an area I never thought I would work in, in my whole life. Val has taken me through and explained the complaints procedure and the use of 'tool kits' for investigation. Caroline has shown me how different systems are used such as Envoy and the journey of patient through 'lived experience'. I have learned about 'Team's' and 'Zoom', PLACE assessments and so much more.

I work part time and work mostly in the office but there are times when I have worked from home which is great and so helpful especially in managing my health conditions and family issues that arise.

## **What is the best thing about your apprenticeship?**

Its lovely working around so many passionate people who really do care for the patients and the NHS. Being an apprentice is amazing opportunity to rekindle skills that I thought may have been lost, builds confidence and new skills in a nurturing environment.

Also being given the opportunity to give something back to the organisation that has supported me and my family through, arthritis, Heart failure, transplant, cancer, and other conditions in between.

Plus, it's so lovely to be paid after years of struggling on benefits, this Christmas is the first in I can really make it special in a good way and the apprenticeship scheme

has been a lifeline for me and my family so thank you Bridgewater for giving me this opportunity.

What would you say to others thinking about an apprenticeship?

Go for it! It's a great opportunity and it can take in directions you never thought you go! You have nothing to lose.