

Higher Training Scheme - member testimonial

Kim Collings, BAA member and Senior Audiologist at the Countess of Chester Hospital, is studying the Balance Assessment and Rehabilitation specialism of the Higher Training Scheme.

She talks about her experience so far.



"It is a wonderful opportunity to expand your knowledge and clinical expertise in a specialist clinical area."

Why did you decide to participate in the Higher Training Scheme?

I was very lucky to have the opportunity to have a funded place within my new job role. It is a wonderful opportunity to expand your knowledge and clinical expertise in a specialist clinical area. Sometimes as a band 5 there might not be many opportunities to progress in your career in a certain specialist area so the HTS makes that opportunity possible.

What this has involved for you?

This has involved completing the MSc vestibular module at university (which really does provide you with the underlying knowledge), in house training (to observe and practise your clinical skills), placements/secondments in other hospitals (it's very interesting to see how other departments perform histories, tests and rehabilitation; this adds to your clinical skills too) and placements in other multi-disciplinary areas.

I had a placement with the falls clinic which was very exciting and helpful to be aware of within this specialism. Performing/presenting case studies for your colleagues has been a good way of expanding your knowledge and skills and also making other colleagues aware of what other professionals we could refer to if for example patients are falling due to their dizziness.

How long does it take to complete the modules?

It has been a longer process than planned due to not having a vestibular rehabilitation service within my department so having to arrange different placements for observing sessions. We had some equipment failure and new balance kit installed which we had a few setup issues with in the beginning. As well as Covid-19 hitting us, I did manage to do webinars and virtual histories which aided in my knowledge.

How have you benefited (or expect to benefit) from this form of training?

This has increased my clinical skills, theoretical knowledge and given me the opportunity to progress in my career. It is giving me the confidence to put these skills into practice to assess and manage balance patients.

Would you recommend the Higher Training Scheme to others?

Yes I would. I am really enjoying my training both in house and attending other departments on placements. It is very important to have regular meeting with your clinical supervisor to assess your progress and to arrange tutorials, placements and secondments.



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