



## Kerry Jackson

### Integrated Medicines Management Technician

#### What does your job entail?

My job involves lots of continual learning, meeting many patients and working with other members of the Multidisciplinary Team on a daily basis. I work on different wards, throughout the week, usually in Craigavon Area Hospital. My main roles are to gather information, from the patients and to maintain a supply of medication to them throughout their stay and on discharge. I also check the patient's kardex for errors and get them amended in a timely manner whilst also providing support to Pharmacists and other team members. The role of a Pharmacy Technician is continually evolving and there are many other roles that I will undoubtedly do in the future.

#### How did you get into this line of work?

I first started working in a community pharmacy in 1994, in Nottingham, and I must say I loved it from days one. This was quite different from anything else I had ever done. I loved the diversity of it and although my role was primarily in the sales area, I also had the opportunity to order from wholesalers, participate in a small amount of dispensing and helped provide the Needle Exchange scheme and Methadone to local drug users. I found this daunting at the start, but I did enjoy meeting people from different walks of life. This job certainly led me on to my current role today.

#### Outline your career to date

After I returned from Nottingham, I started to work in Northern Pharmacies LTD, in Craigavon. I remained here for seven years. During my last five or six years here, I worked in the dispensary, which I really loved, and it certainly influenced my decision to leave community and pursue a career in Pharmacy, with the Southern trust. From September 2005 – July 2007, I completed a B-Tec in Pharmaceutical Services, in Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education, which enabled me to work in many areas within the department as a Band 4 Rotational Pharmacy Technician. My role consisted of working in the Aseptic Suite, making chemotherapy, for the patients in the Southern trust, before finally settling in a clinical role as an IMM technician in 2017.

#### Tell us about your qualifications and training

As already mentioned, I have a B-Tec in Pharmaceutical Services as well as a number of GCSE's. To be accepted onto the course you must have at least five GCSE's and included in this must be Maths, English and one science subject. I personally think that Chemistry would be an advantage.

As an IMM Pharmacy Technician, our role is continually evolving and on the job training never ends. We also must complete different courses and accreditations, which enable us to be the best that we can be.

#### What qualities are required for your job – personal and professional?

My job involves meeting lots of people daily. Some of which are very ill. The qualities I feel that would be required to do my job are as follows:

- Hardworking
- Ability to use your own initiative, but also work well within a team
- Have good communication skills, including listening
- Be adaptable and have the ability to prioritise
- Have a professional manner and appearance
- Have empathy

#### What is the best advice you've ever received?

I have had two pieces of great advice in recent years. The first was...

"Strength doesn't come from what you can do. It comes from overcoming the things you once thought you couldn't"

And the second...

"If you get tired, learn to rest, not to quit"

Resting is not the same as quitting!

#### What do you like to do in your spare time?

In my spare time I like to swim. I love the pool, but for me I get the most enjoyment from being in the open water, either the sea or fresh water. The colder the better! I have made many friends through my love of water, and I have pushed myself to my absolute limit. This has given me confidence in all areas of my life, and it makes me very happy.

#### What advice would you give your 16 year old self?

You have plenty of time to decide what you want to do in the future and remember, if you choose a career and it is not what you expected it to, change! Nothing is set in stone. As an adult we spend so much time working, and we owe it to ourselves to enjoy this part of our lives. The main thing is to work hard in school and gain the best qualifications that you can. This will open as many doors as possible for you in the future. Remember university is not the only way forward, there are other routes available to you. Many people choose to do a vocational qualification or even learning a trade. Remember girls... this is open to you too.