



Sarah
Gamble

Pharmacy Technician

What does your job entail?

The ICS pharmacy service consists of:

- Medication history taking including a transcription check of service users MAR (Medication Administration Record)
- Medication review and optimisation
- Patient assessment with taking medication
- Facilitating safe discharges from ICS
- Multidisciplinary working
- Effective communication with primary care colleagues including GPs, GP pharmacists, community pharmacists, district nurses
- Identification / management / reporting of medication incidents

How did you get into this line of work?

By accident! Aged 21, having completed a degree in Sports Management in the UK and returned home to Northern Ireland I took the first available full-time job (in a community pharmacy) to start earning money. I became intrigued by the various medicines I was dispensing and took time to read about what each medication was used for. I asked my boss if there was a course I could do, and he found out that there was a Pharmacy Technician course starting in the local technical college which enabled me to study part time whilst still working. On completion of the course, I applied for an IMM (Integrated Medicines Management) post in Craigavon Area Hospital and was very lucky to have been offered the post.

Outline your career to date

After leaving the community pharmacy I took up post in Craigavon Hospital for two years as an IMM Pharmacy Technician. I then took a career break in 2011 to travel to Australia where I worked in the pharmacy of a private hospital. When I returned home after travelling for two and a half years, I took up a position in Prison Healthcare for two years until a post became available in Craigavon Hospital. I am back working in the Southern Trust for the past six years and have been in my current Intermediate Care post for three years.

Tell us about your qualifications and training

After my GCSE's I completed a HND and degree in Sports Management. When I started to work in the community pharmacy, I then completed a Level 2&3 in Pharmacy Services along with a BTEC to complete my Pharmacy Technician course. The course took two years complete whilst also working full-time so the time went in very quickly.

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

I speak directly to clients every day so having excellent communication and interpersonal skills is very important. Every client is different and may have hearing, sight, or cognitive impairment. I have to be able to adapt to these situations whilst being professional and maintaining confidentiality at all times.

What is the best advice you've ever received?

Be kind to people; treat people as you would like to be treated.

Working with older people has its challenges but it is also one of the most rewarding parts of the job too. Giving someone that extra bit of your time and showing care, compassion and respect can make their day.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I like to keep active – I play hockey, tennis and Gaelic football. I also enjoy hiking, cycling and Pilates. I recently got a new puppy, so he takes up a lot of my spare time now too!

What advice would you give your 16 year old self?

Don't worry what the future holds and what you are going to do; there will be many futures and various paths you will take along the way. Always be open to new opportunities, enjoy what you do and give it your all.