



**Simon
Artherton**

**Community
Occupational
Therapist**

Introduce yourself. Where do you work? What is your job role?

My name is Simon Artherton and I work in Beech Hall Health and Wellbeing Centre, Belfast. I am a Community Occupational Therapist (Team Lead) managing a team of 12 Occupational Therapists and OT Technicians. I carry a full caseload of community clients.

What does your job entail?

I manage my Occupational Therapy team providing supervision, advice, and mentoring. Combined with my Team Lead role, I also carry a community client caseload and carry out daily assessments, interventions and reports. I also adjudicate at weekly major works panel meetings discussing with case holders, major adaptation recommendations. I work with voluntary and statutory bodies to improve the quality of life for my clients.

How did you get into this line of work?

I first worked as a dental technician for almost two years and then went into college to complete A-Levels. Having read the college prospectus, I applied for the four year degree Occupational Therapy course in the UUJ 1996 and graduated four years later in the first-degree class, of 1990.

Outline your career to date

I took up my first post after graduation at The Foyle Trust based in Derry. My post was as a basic grade OT, which was a rotational post, comprising community, hospital, day centre placements working with elderly, physical disability, and mental health clients. I then started a post in Belfast 1992 as a Senior 2 OT working in the community of North and West Belfast. I have been an OT Team Lead for 11 years based in Beech Hall Centre.

Tell us about your qualifications and training

After a four year Occupational Therapy Degree my qualifications are:
BSC (Hons) Occupational Therapy and DIPCOT...Diploma College of Occupational Therapy. In recent years, I also completed an MSc Occupational Therapy Masters Diploma.

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

The ability to communicate with fellow professional staff, clients, and voluntary/statutory bodies. Listening is an important aspect of the job and the ability to devise intervention and good report writing. Respect, fairness, and the ability to understand different points of view is a required quality and the ability to learn from mistakes.

What is the best advice you have ever received?

Treat others, as you would like to be treated yourself.

What do you like to do in your spare time

I am a devoted Man Utd fan and try to get over to “Mecca” a few times a year. I play five a side football, cycling and swimming. I am also an U15 football coach at Bredagh GAA and as a past player, manager, and Chairman, I follow my home team of Strangford FC.

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself

I have been to two World Cups Italia 90 and USA 94 following the Ireland football team. I have also been to Cuba three times taking part in a charity cycle around the island. I was also an extra in a movie “December Bride”.

Who has inspired you most in your life?

My mother and father now sadly departed.

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

Rejoice young man in thy youth. I would not change a thing to be honest. Life to date has been a blast and as Frank Sinatra once sang...“Regrets I had a few but too few to mention”.