

Reflecting on a Graduate Traineeship

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My name is Amy Clancy and I have recently completed my 15-month graduate trainee post at Greater Manchester Mental Health and Cheshire Wirral Partnership.

Before I began my role as a Graduate Library and Knowledge Services Trainee, I had never heard of an NHS Trust, an NHS Library, and had little library experience aside from working as a library assistant at my local library. For me, 2019 was a whirlwind introduction to both of these things and much more! There is far too much to fit into one blog post, so in this post I will be reflecting on some of the highlights of my experience as a graduate trainee.

One of the key features that made my graduate trainee post beneficial was being split between two NHS Trusts. Working between GMMH and CWP, I was able to experience two different types of working; working within a larger team at CWP and working more independently at GMMH. At GMMH, I was given responsibility for customer service from the start, and was able to improve my initiative and decision-making skills. At CWP, I was able to develop my team working skills, particularly learning the importance of picking up and handing over tasks with other members of the team. Due to the differences between the two services, I was able to experience aspects of the role that I wouldn't have if I was based in only one of the two services. While the commute to Chester and Manchester was gruelling at times, it was definitely worth it as having the two sites to gain experience from enriched my experience.

One of the highlights of my role was creating a social media strategy for GMMH LKS. The service's Twitter account was one of the first things I worked on in my role and was a great introduction to the various offers of the service through promoting them. The full strategy included a strategy document which detailed each aspect of the service to be promoted, as well as a bank of tweets and images which could be used to save time while posting consistently. The implementation of this strategy significantly improved the service's engagement and has since been shared with five other Trusts. This was a great experience in taking ownership of an aspect of the service.

Another key experience was a project at CWP in which I assigned all non-library members of staff a journal contents subscription based on their role and sent promotional emails to each staff member. This was a good introduction to the various staff roles within an NHS organisation, as well as to the various journals suitable for mental health professionals. Alongside day-to-day tasks, projects such as these provided context to my understanding of the role of an NHS librarian and the various ways to support healthcare professionals.

One of my favourite experiences from the role was my involvement with The Better Information Programme at GMMH. The Better Information Programme is a health information literacy training programme delivered by GMMH LKS, available to anyone working in health and social care in the city of Manchester. I was fortunate to be involved with the project from its infancy,

and my role included assisting with the development of the content of the programme as well as booking and facilitating each session. This was an invaluable experience and taught me a lot about what goes into training provisions in LKS, something which will no doubt be beneficial in the next stage of my career. Meeting people from various health and social care organisations across Manchester and hearing how they have used the training in their practice was highly rewarding. This experience cemented my interest in teaching and encouraged me to seek out a role in which teaching is a key aspect.

As well as my work with GMMH and CWP, I have been fortunate to meet lots of LKS staff members from across the NHS. Regional meetings in the North West such as Mental Health Librarians, Clinical Librarians and LIHNN, and conferences such as CILIP Conference, International Clinical Librarians Conference and It's Great Up North were a great opportunity to meet and learn from other professionals. Presenting the key note at the [LIHNN Christmas Study Day](#) was an amazing opportunity to speak to lots of the people who had helped and shared advice with me over the course of the year.

Overall, this has been a great experience which I'm very grateful for. I'm looking forward to finishing my masters degree and moving forward with my career in librarianship using the skills I've learned from my graduate trainee post.

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