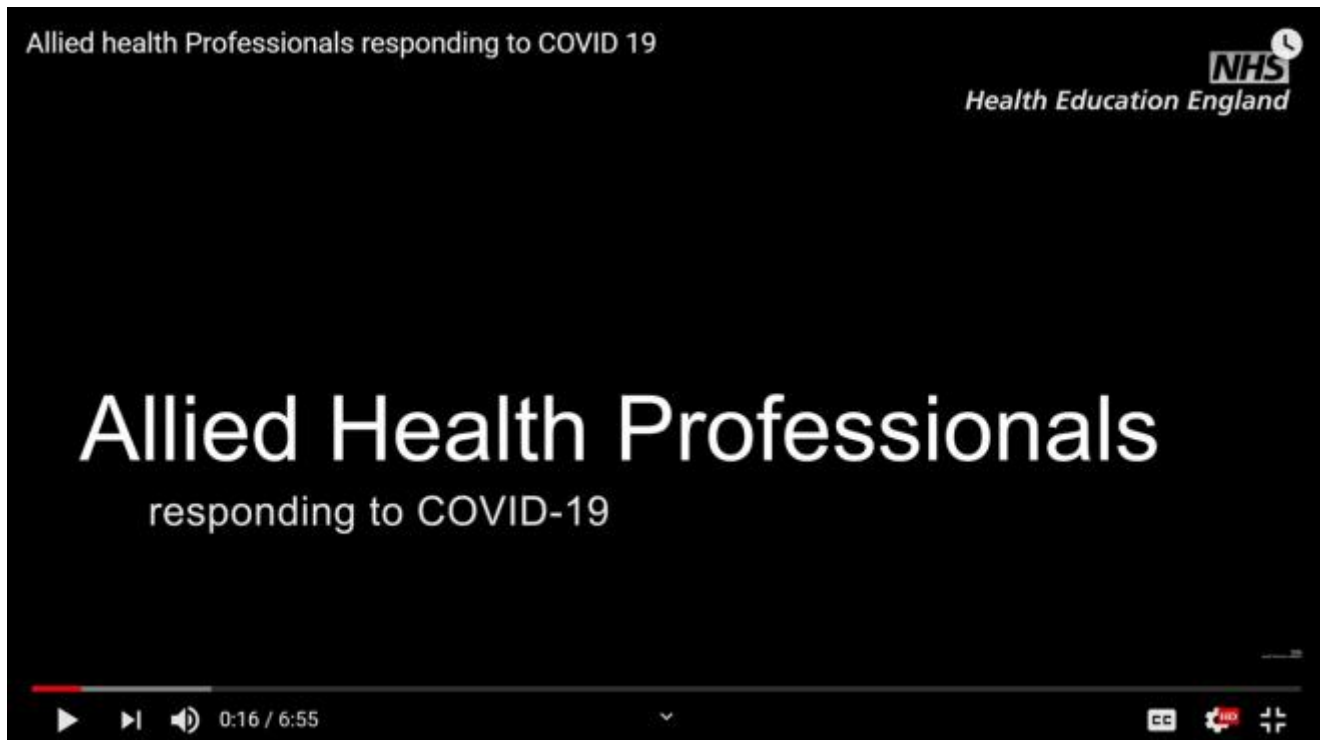


How have our Allied Health Professionals responded to COVID-19?

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As the virus surged throughout England the NHS asked for people to return to fortify the ranks of the health and care workforce to fight COVID-19 and provide excellent patient care. Many existing NHS and private care providers also answered the call and were redeployed, to contribute where their existing skills, experience and expertise would be best served ? one such group; the community of many Allied Health Professionals found themselves in new roles, new environments and shouldering new responsibilities that their training and practice have prepared them for.



[7]



Emma Sehusen, Structural and Cranial Osteopath at Elmstead Osteopathy, serving South East London / Bromley / Kent

COVID-19 response title: Clinically Experienced Worker at London Nightingale

What skills and experience have you brought to the new role?

When Patient-facing, my clinical reasoning and communication skills were hugely important and it was a joy to feel able to contribute so much. It was wonderful to be encouraged by the team to provide, and then see the results of osteopathic treatment for these very ill patients, which included support for patients' lymphatics and circulation, for breathing and in promoting joint/soft tissue mobility. Within the team it was hugely rewarding to help staff optimise their postural adaptations to the demands of the job, e.g., advice on lifting technique when proning and turning patients, and other postural and health advice to support their longevity through the long, demanding shifts.

What part of your redeployment did you find most rewarding?

Treating osteopathically, and seeing the results in such sick patients in the ICU environment was hugely rewarding. I thoroughly enjoyed learning many new clinical skills and processes and found the practical, enthusiastic and professional 'calm under pressure' approach to patient care led by the NHS both impressive and motivating. As an Osteopath I felt warmly welcomed to the team; the 'flat hierarchy' approach supported open communication and learning and helped to integrate Allied Health Professionals with NHS staff to form a unified front and enhance patient-centred care.

Will this experience change how you approach work in the future?

I really valued the flat-hierarchy, teamwork approach of the NHS Management Team as I felt it optimised staff unity and patient-centred care. This will inspire my management approach as a Principal Osteopath as I take on future Associate Osteopaths my private practice. The experience invigorated my passion for working in healthcare, particularly as it involved helping patients so critically ill, where every second counted and your contribution was so important. It has inspired me on to further work with the NHS? response to Covid-19 and I'm currently working as a Clinical Contact Caseworker to support current cases and help prevent further transmission of the virus. Over the longer term, apart from supporting my own private work, my NHS/Nightingale experience has sparked an interest in working as an Osteopath within the NHS and I am excited about future opportunities.



Laura Purvis, Occupational Therapy Student

COVID-19 response title: I am a final year Occupational Therapy student at Northumbria University, after completing all placement hours I have been able to receive my temporary HCPC registration to practice, I was recruited by Alnwood Children's Mental Health and Learning Disability Unit due to having previous experience, completing a placement and casual employment here last year.

My role: Working with vulnerable young people diagnosed with a mental health problem and / or learning disability and are often under mental health sections as a result of the criminal justice system (forensic). Assisting the Occupational therapy team to conduct assessments, activities and therapeutic interventions to The Young people of Alnwood. I am required to use my creativity, personality and Occupational Therapy skills/training to conduct and engage young people in several sessions throughout the day to benefit their health and wellbeing.

What skills and experience have you brought to the new role?

Due to having already experienced working at Alnwood I could easily re-join the OT team having a good knowledge of the roles, responsibly and expectations. I have brought creativity and charisma to the team at Alnwood, I am always keen to try new things and explore each patient's interests and curiosity. I think it is essential that all young people have a creative outlet.

I have been able to work well within a team, attending meetings and feeding back information to other members of the team. I have good communication with members of the MDT and also with patients. I have been able to build up strong therapeutic relationships with a lot of the young people at Alnwood, enhancing their engagement and motivation.

What part of your redeployment did you find most rewarding?

- Conducting core OT interventions and assessments
- Working within a multidisciplinary team
- Conducting my own caseload/sessions
- Bringing joy, purpose and meaning to patients days
- Assisting with the rehabilitation of various young people at Alnwood.

Will this change how you carry out your usual role when you return:

Due to now finishing my degree I will be starting a new role elsewhere in a month or so outside of this service. I have learnt a great deal throughout my time at Alnwood which will help and support me throughout my new job and career.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time working within the OT team and with the young people of Alnwood. It has often made me reflect and reconsider my practice and the future of occupational therapy. I have been exposed to a whole new environment and service that I had never worked in before, this has been an often challenging experience but also very rewarding.

?Laura is a third-year occupational therapy student who had previously been a student at Alnwood Unit - Inpatient CYPS. She demonstrated skills in developing therapeutic rapport with patients and her knowledge of the occupational therapy process at Alnwood was easily developed. Recently there have been OTs absent from work due to periods of sickness, so Laura has been invited to return to Alnwood to support occupational therapy input at Alnwood.

With the current absence of the education team due to the coronavirus pandemic, Laura has contributed significantly to providing structured day sessions and meaningful activities for the young people. She has eased the workload and stressors within the occupational therapy team by taking on a caseload which is supervised by the Specialist Occupational Therapist.?

Beth - Occupational Therapist

Laura has been a fantastic help throughout a challenging and busy period for our team. She immediately got involved both working directly with the young people and assisting with the workload of meetings, safety checks and office based work. She has built great rapport with the patients and the staff alike, and has kept us all smiling with her wonderful enthusiasm, hard work and her genuine care and compassion for the young people here at Alnwood.

Rosie ? Occupational Therapy Assistant

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Links

- [1] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work>
- [2] <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/>
- [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/>
- [4] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/news-blogs-events>
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