

**Case study template: AHP support worker practitioner profiles**

Information provided here will be used as quotes/soundbites/mini-case studies within the materials produced to promote the role of AHP support workers in England.

Published examples are available via: [AHP Support Worker Case Studies | Health Education England (hee.nhs.uk)](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/allied-health-professions/enable-workforce/developing-role-ahp-support-workers/ahp-support-worker-case-studies)

If you are able to supply a photo to go alongside the case study, please email this at the same time your return the form to sue.wyburn@nhs.net

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| **Name** |  |
| **Role/job title** | Occupational Therapy Assistant (Apprentice) |
| **Contact phone** |  |
| **Contact email** |  |
| **Twitter handle (if relevant)** |  |
| **Employer** |  |
| **Line manager name and email address** |  |
| **Tell us about your role and the difference it makes to patient care** | As an Occupational Therapy Assistant based solely in the outpatient team at CAMHS, I work very closely alongside the qualified Occupational Therapist team to deliver care to young people under the age of 18. I liaise with other professionals, contact parents, arrange appointments, and create resources for the team to use in therapeutic sessions. I join in with some appointments, aiding with setting up and completing assessments, completing some work with the young person while the Occupational Therapist gathers more information from the parent/adult and sometimes helping the young person to feel at ease within the session, for example if their lead professional is a male and they feel more comfortable speaking to a female clinician. I am able to draw upon the experience I gained in my previous career to complete Education, Health Care Plans and to aide my colleagues with this, to complete school observations and liaise with school staff. If the intervention needed is more low level and short term, I complete this under the guidance of a qualified Occupational Therapist, meaning that the young person does not have to go back on a waiting list until an Occupational Therapist is free and can benefit from more immediate work closely after the need being identified. This work is often around strategies to help cope with anxiety, understanding a neurodevelopmental diagnosis or working with sensory processing difficulties. Each day is different within outpatients but seeing the improvements in young peoples’ wellbeing and quality of life is incredibly rewarding. |
| **Tell us about your career journey to date** | I studied drama and education studies at university with a view to becoming a qualified teacher. Following this, I completed a PGCE with a specialism in Special Educational Needs as I had a passion for working with young people with additional and complex needs. I was a primary school teacher for 6 years and was considering leaving the profession before I saw and decided to apply for my current post with the NHS. I had fallen out of love with teaching and was frustrated seeing an increase in young people with mental health difficulties and not having the time, resources or power to intervene in as meaningful a way as I would have liked. I have been aware of the fantastic work CAMHS have been doing for years and have seen first-hand the improvement that high-quality CAMHS intervention can bring about in a young person. I felt inspired by the potential that Occupational Therapists have within CAMHS, providing intervention to young people and possibly changing the course of their life by helping them get back into meaningful activities, engage with education and socialise with their peers. |
| **What attracted you to applying for a level 6 degree apprenticeship?** | I have always had a love of learning new things and really enjoyed my time at university. I was looking into leaving teaching but knew that I wouldn’t be able to afford to leave my job and go back to university to retrain. An apprenticeship that offered me the opportunity to develop new skills before applying to university and training alongside a full-time job sounded ideal for my circumstances. My role was intended as an “employ to train” post so I knew that this was an option available to me at the time of applying. Once in role and settled in, I applied for the level 6 and newly created level 7 Occupational Therapy apprenticeship courses at xxxx University, and I am beyond delighted to say that I was successful in my application. |
| **How has training and development in this role helped you so far?** | I am very fortunate to have landed in such an incredibly supportive team of Occupational Therapists. They have offered me opportunities to shadow their work and to learn first-hand what the world of Occupational Therapy looks and feels like within CAMHS. I have completed lots of training offered to me by my Trust on a range of subjects from conflict resolution to the psychology of sleep. Xxxx University in partnership with the learning and development team have ran a series of workshops and seminars that have been invaluable in preparing us for the application process, explaining what to expect from the course and offering support for juggling the demands of academic life, placement, and work responsibilities. My confidence in my job as an Occupational Therapy Assistant has grown with each passing week and the responsibilities and tasks delegated to me are carefully considered by the team ahead of time. I am now much happier with my carefully growing caseload and job plan and look forward to this continuing to develop alongside my professional skills. |
| **What are you most proud of in your role?** | I am proud of the skills that I bring to the team that allow us all to play to our strengths. This allows us to deliver the highest possible standard of care to the young people that we work with. I am also proud of myself for making the change away from teaching and putting my transferrable skills to good use. |
| **What would you say to others to encourage more people to become AHP degree apprentices?** | It might feel daunting at first, change is very scary. But from my experience the support is out there and there are teams who are willing to offer their experience and want you to succeed. If you don’t quite fit the criteria right now, they will signpost you and support you so that you will fit it in the future. If you’re waiting for the ‘right time’ to make the move, consider that there may never be a perfect time, so you may as well start the ball rolling now rather than looking back in a few years’ time and regretting it. |
| **Anything else you would like to say?** | I am proud to be an AHP and look forward to seeing how the community of AHPs continue to develop. |
| **Please confirm your consent for this profile to be used and published by HEE** | |
| **Staff member signature** *(typed or electronic signature)* |  |
| **Line manager or AHP lead** |  |
| **Date** | 23/03/22 |