

Susie – returning physiotherapist



Susie is a physiotherapist based in Lincolnshire. Susie was a Band 6 in MSK Outpatients when in 2004 her husband's job took them to America. They lived in the USA for around three and half years and during that time Susie left the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) register.

After moving back to the UK with her family in 2007, Susie started her own business in 2018 running postnatal exercise classes for new mothers. It was at the start of the pandemic when she had to stop these classes, and Susie decided to return to practice as a physiotherapist. She now shares her experience on the leadership programme with us.

Why undertake the Leadership Programme

"I signed up to the Leadership Programme through an email that was sent out to me. At first, I wasn't sure the programme was for me as I hadn't really considered leadership as something that related to physiotherapy, and I didn't know an awful lot about leadership.

"What really appealed to me was the supervised hours towards my return to practice and that the programme was based at home – which was an easier option for me.

"It spiked my interest more once I looked into what HEE does and so I applied, and I haven't looked back!"

Susie's leadership objectives

"Prior to joining the programme, looking at the four pillars, I'd say that I was definitely thinking a clinical role was going to be what I returned to, but being on this programme has totally changed that for me - it's really opened my eyes up to such a broad spectrum of what I could do. Subsequently, my leadership objectives now are to seek employment in a leadership role."

Projects Susie has been involved in

"I have been involved in lots of things through the programme, the main project I have been involved in is the development of a whole list of resources, for example, courses, podcasts, webinars and so on - that returnees can access on SharePoint.

"I have also been involved in creating some webinars, the main webinar we've been working on is trying to get some case studies of returners experiences on the programme as we have all found reading previous case studies has really helped us when we found ourselves struggling – they showed us that other people were going through similar experiences to us."

Susie's Advice and experience

“This programme has been a positive and inspiring experience, it has opened my eyes to the other careers that I can do as an AHP, even if you end up going back to the clinical role afterwards, you can still take those leadership skills with you everywhere you go. The programme has also broadened my knowledge of just how the workforce get there in the first place and the facts behind that.

“As a group of returners, we have helped smooth the path for other returners, we’ve helped iron out some of the wrinkles that might have been there had we not piloted the programme.

“The programme has given me confidence in my skills and how I can take them forward - coming to the end of my programme I’ve applied to three jobs already through the encouragement of those I have been working with at HEE, something which I would not have done before.

“The coaching has been fabulous, and I have learnt an awful lot such as developing our personal resilience, looking at how the NHS has changed – for example new terminology that is now being used, through to action learning sets and looking at our employment laws and interview skills.

“The programme has really brought us up to date. For me this was incredibly helpful as I have been out of practice for 18 years so one of the main challenges for myself was really a lot of the language that is used now as it is very different to what I’d experienced in clinical environments.

“I have really enjoyed meeting everyone and the peer support I have received on the programme has been nice, we all knew that we were feeling the exact same way and we all stuck together and helped each other through.

“Through the programme I have met a lot of people that I can really look up to, they have really inspired me – that has been the most valuable thing to me as you don’t get that opportunity when you’re at home doing private study.”