



P&O Day 2021

Jana Middlebrook, Ottobock Orthotics Academy Clinician

I knew I wanted to work in some form of healthcare. When I looked up the AHP degrees the first year modules for P&O matched exactly to different modules across my AS-Level subjects so I went on to do work experience at both an NHS and private prosthetic centre and decided this was the way forward for me.

My current role with Ottobock entails product support, education and training. I work with mainly orthotists and physiotherapists, providing trouble shooting for complex neurological patient, training in advanced orthotics and FES and a whole range of other roles including attending conferences and speaking at education days.

No two days are the same and travelling across the UK, I get to experience multiple services and work with a huge range of clinicians.

Most of my time is spent with adult and paediatric neurological patients, however, not all the work I do is directly with patients. I also get to work with Musculoskeletal/neuro physiotherapists and orthotists who cover the whole spectrum of patient types as well interaction with clinicians from across the globe.

I started working as a graduate orthotist at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust; an excellent department who allowed me to develop in lots of areas of general and specialist orthotics; including paediatric orthopaedics, paediatric and adult neurology, diabetic foot and acute trauma bracing. A great start in a department of 10 orthotists and an onsite workshop meant I picked up lots of skills and could bounce ideas off of both clinicians and technicians.

I then moved on to a smaller NHS orthotics service which offered great multidisciplinary working, in spasticity clinic, diabetic foot clinic, rheumatology clinics and paediatrics. The department had an excellent working relationship with many consultants, ward staff, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and podiatrist. At Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust you always felt an integral part of the hospital and clinical team. It was a shame to leave such a rewarding centre however the current role as an academy clinician arose and it allowed me to follow my passion for sharing education with other clinicians. I've seen the wider world of orthotics and got a good sense of where the profession is currently and how different centres across the UK and Ireland are working to improve patient clinical experience and outcomes.

As an orthotist you need to be quite independent and flexible in your work to cope with the demands and challenges faced as a healthcare professional, looking back over 10 years of clinical practice, I wouldn't change my degree choice or career process if I had to start again.

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