

Orthoptic Careers Case Study

Meet Declan

How did your orthoptic career begin?

I graduated in July 2013 ready to take on the challenges of employment. My fondness for city life in Liverpool made it difficult to leave, with my first role being close by as an Orthoptist at Warrington & Halton NHS Foundation Trust.

I completed the MSc Orthoptics Clinical Tutors Module at the University of Liverpool. Further education prepared me for challenging roles. I developed the core skills and competencies of Orthoptics in my early year's, consolidating my theory and progressed to become a Specialist Orthoptist with extended roles in glaucoma and Retinal Disease.

Can you tell us more about your journey into Service Improvement?

My passion for Service Improvement led me to completing a Level 3 CMI

Award in 'First Line Management' whilst working as an Orthoptist. My project improvement idea was the relocation of Ophthalmology injections from a surgical theatre to an out-patient setting, thus creating additional surgery capacity in theatres whilst utilising available clinical space in out-patient areas. Following this I spent time completing a Level 5 CMI qualification in 'Growing as a Manager', followed by a Project Management and Planning qualification.

My ambition to further my career in a leadership and management role has not taken away from my commitment to promoting a career in Orthoptics, and I currently sit as Co-Chair of BIOS Retinal Disease Clinical Advisory Group and a BIOS Trustee member for the Northern Ireland region.

In November 2018, I made the decision to return home to Northern Ireland when I was successful in an application for the role of Ophthalmology Assistant Services Manager at the Belfast Health & Social Care Trust. There is a great feeling of comfort being able to use the management skills I have developed, and continue to expand on, in an area I am familiar with such as Ophthalmology. In April 2020, I commenced the role of Ophthalmology Services Manager on an interim basis.

My current role incorporates all skills and abilities developed to date. I feel this has brought my confidence in Service Management to new levels and I look forward to the challenges that lie ahead.



**Declan
McClements**

Head of Orthoptic Services
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Care Trust

