BIOS BRITISH AND IRISH ORTHOPTIC SOCIETY

Contact careers@orthoptics.org.uk
www.orthoptics.org.uk

Orthoptic Careers Case Study

Meet Eleanor

Why did you choose orthoptics?

I did not choose orthoptics but luckily it chose me. I originally applied for optometry as I had never heard of orthoptics. However, my application came back with an unconditional offer for orthoptics. This was because I had spoken about the volunteering I had done with children and the elderly. I was unsure when I accepted however I now regard this as the best decision I have ever made. Now, I am passionate about raising awareness of orthoptics as a career choice.

What is a typical day like in your current role?

Well there is no typical day! In orthoptics the patients are split into paedaitrics and adults, which entails different approaches in itself. In the morning you might start off by assessing an infant for a possible squint followed by starting patching on a child with unequal vision. After lunch you may then be correcting an adult's double vision with a prism so they can read again, or doing measurements before botox or an upcoming surgery. Each day is different and that is part of what makes it so interesting!

Define your role in 3 words?

- Engaging
- Approachable
- Varied

What do you love the most about your role?

What to choose from! I love the constant chance for development into either extended or advanced roles as well as the interactions I have with patients, their families and other members of the ophthalmology team.

Currently my role is expanding to include monitoring uveitis, eye inflammation, in paediatrics. However, I feel the best part of my role is the balance of investigating and managing my own patients, while still having an active social life.

> ***Take time to research the role. Even better if you are able to contact BIOS and get work shadowing experience to really see firsthand what being an orthoptist is like.***

What is the most challenging part of your role?

With the recent pandemic there are now increased pressures on patient waiting lists. This means often managing patient expectations in terms of when the next available appointment is and what management options are available to them.

What skills do you find essential for your job?

People skills are essential in healthcare, particularly in orthoptics. Being able to listen to parental concerns, keeping the child engaged in the assessment and then being able to communicate your findings and management plan, are all skills used on a daily basis.

What do you look forward to in your orthoptic career?

This is an exciting time to join orthoptics because we are moving into new extended roles and areas of advanced practice. I am currently moving into paediatric uveitis, eye inflammation, as my extended role. Many colleagues are in other areas such as research, glaucoma, neuro-ophthalmology and much more! The opportunities for further learning and development are increasing, meaning once qualified you are constantly engaged.

Any advice you'd like to give?

Take time to research the role. Even better if you are able to contact BIOS and get work shadowing experience to really see firsthand what being an orthoptist is like.

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