BIOS BRITISH AND IRISH ORTHOPTIC SOCIETY

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

Orthoptic Careers Case Study

Meet Veronica

How did your orthoptic career began?

My younger sister had treatment by an Orthoptist for amblyopia, which meant she had to wear an eye patch for a few hours evey day and I was interested by this but also because they had picked her eye condition up very late and so treatment was more limited. As I was choosing my A levels I knew I wanted to work with people, in a medically focused role and looked at a number of the allied health professions. On a visit to 2 local orthoptic departments I walked in and just knew this was the career for me. Even during those short visits the range and type of patients that I got to observe and the skills and knowldge of the Orhtoptist that I was shadowing were just amazing.

What is a typical day like in your current role?

Until very recently I have managed Orthoptic services and teams at a number of NHS organisations and my new role is very different as its entirely strategic and not operational or clinical. I am currently scoping the AHP workforce, the career frameworks and opportunities, non qualified and qualified practitioner roles, opportunities for AHP research and education with an aim to increase visibility, recognition and voice of the AHPs across the organisation. In my BIOS Chair role I could be attending national AHP or eye care board meetings, influencing decisions about the profession, supporting the education routes and progression of orthoptists and dealing with the financial and governance aspects of the professional body.

Define your role in 3 words?

- Challenging
- Fulfilling
- Diverse

What do you love the most about your role?

My BIOS role has opened up the opportunities to work with the national teams, orthoptists across the UK and Republic of Ireland, understand and influence the future of orthoptics and other AHP professions in addition to leading the Trustee Board ensuring a financially stable and robust professional association. I have been so fortunate to work with some wonderful people who do so much for the profession, often on a voluntary basis, driving the profession forward. In my day job I am still in an induction period and meeting the executives, strategic and operational managers, AHP leads and other key individuals who will support the development of the AHP workforce and this is extremely rewarding and exciting buidling these relationships.

Veronica Greenwood

Deputy Director of Allied Health Professionals and Chair of BIOS

What is the most challenging part of your role?

BIOS is a professinal body and trade union which relies heavily on orthoptists who volunteer their time and, like them, balancing the day job with a professional body role, even with some seconded time, can be challenging. It is a huge responsibility to lead a professional body and deliver key objectives but this is also a challenge in a very good way. As Deputy Director for AHPs trhe current challenge is understanding the organisation, linking national priorites and strategies relating to the AHP workforce to ensure AHPs are visible, recognised and championed in an effective way.

What skills do you find essential for your job?

As Chair of BIOS this role requires skills of being very organised, being able to think both operationally and strategically, knowing when and how to challenge appropriately and being a good communicator and advocate for the profession. Very often I have to prioritise initiatives or work and so having good time mangemnt skills is useful too! The skill set is very similar for my day job but I just have more professions to advocate for and represent.

What do you look forward to in your orthoptic career?

I have been very lucky that I have had a really fulfilling career to date with the opportunities in clinical work, clinical education, management and leadership and whilst I knew I wanted to lead and develop orthoptic teams I didnt expect that I would be Chair of the Professional Body. I will be very sad to finish my second and final term of office as Chair of BIOS in 2023 but look forward to my role in AHP leadership and the oportunities that this may bring.

Any advice you'd like to give?

Orthoptics is full of opportunities and these are increasing all the time. You can chose many routes through the career path whether that be clinical and the advancement of clinical practice or in education, research or management and leadership. Embrace all the positives of a full and challenging degree with the breadth and scope of clinical placements across the UK and beyond as this provides so many clinical and life skills. Take every opportunity that comes your way and don't be worried about taking leaps of faith - you can do it!!

BIOS | BRITISH AND IRISH ORTHOPTIC SOCIETY

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