

The ROYAL MARSDEN
NHS Foundation Trust

Personal stories from research active clinicians

Sophie Alexander

Radiotherapy Research Superintendent Radiographer



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2003



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2005

Mum, I don't want to continue


This isn't the course for me

I want to work with people and do something that feels 'real'



Tip 1:

- Don't be too scared
- Follow your vision



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2005




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2008


2008 - 2016



- Clinical audits
- Department projects
- Partake in teaching
- Input to protocols
- Build relationships
- Learn management skills
- Build communication skills
- Develop clinical skills

Tip 2:

- Upskill
- Become an expert in your clinical area
- Be keen
- Be curious
- Get involved



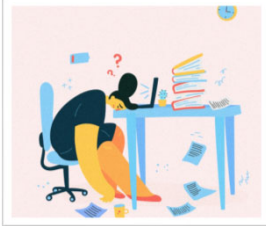
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2011

2011 - 2016

BACK TO SCHOOL




STRONG FOUNDATION



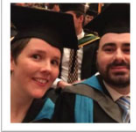
Tip 3:

- Seek opportunities available
- Study leave funding
- Free study days
- Journal club



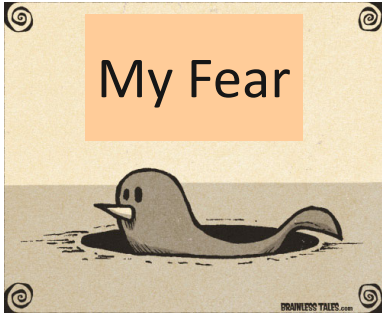

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2016 - Prostate IGRT Specialist Radiographer

- Lead radiographer for POPS trial
- Lead radiographer for the prostate fiducial marker service (+ on treat review)






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POPS Trial Radiographer

- Felt like another world!

Tip 4:

- Ask questions
- Take on new challenges
- Learn the language!
- Understand the process.
- Find teachers/advisors
- Build links beyond your department/profession



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Prostate Specialist



Clinical Practice

Knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to provide high quality healthcare that is safe, effective and person centred.



Facilitating Learning

Knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to enable effective learning in the workplace.



Leadership

Knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to lead and to fulfil management responsibilities.



Evidence, Research and Development

Knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to use evidence to inform practice and improve services.

Tip 5:


- Embed yourself in the MDT
- Connect with patients
- Evaluate your practice
- Share your work, write it up!



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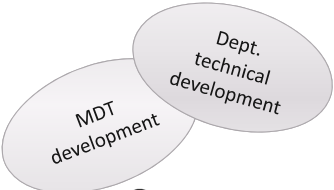

2020 Current role



RTTQA


Radiotherapy Trials Quality Assurance



Tip 6:

- Maintain clinical skills
- Keep abreast of current research
- Support others
- Be approachable
- Share your knowledge and experience



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2021

Stratifying patients for optimal benefit from novel adaptive radiotherapy and/or personalised preparation

ICR The Institute of Cancer Research | The ROYAL MARSDEN NHS Foundation Trust

Part 1
Technical Courses

- 05 General researcher development
- 06 Technical Skills for Researchers
- 08 Statistics support
- 09 Advanced computing skills
- 11 Science communication skills
- 13 Enterprise and intellectual property
- 15 Training for PhD supervisors

Tip 7:

- Pick a topic with longevity that interests you
- Dedicate research time
- Do practical courses; Word, Excel, statistics...
- Clinical writing skills

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PhD

Project proposal accepted

First year transfer viva

Thesis submission

PhD Viva

REALITY

[Big Data Science: Expectation vs. Reality - KDnuggets](#)

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Advice 8 – Positivity

Nobody has done it before...scary

Everything takes longer than you expect

Your work never ends

You don't always get the result you want

Your work is criticised

You must write it up/present work

Project proposal accepted

First year transfer viva

Nobody has done it before...how exciting


You have time

You are never bored

You are constantly learning and adapting

You accept and learn from criticism

You get to go to conferences 😊



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Advice 9 – Support network









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Thank you




Dr Alison Tree




Dr Helen McNair



Prof Uwe Oelfke



- MRL Radiographers
- MRL Physicists
- Rosalyn Westley
- Clare Ockwell
- Urology consultant Team
- Urology CNS/Support Team
- Urology Radiographer Team



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Route to Research

- Focus on the positives
- Do what interests you
- Find teachers
- Upskill
- Ask questions
- Be brave
- Evaluate your practice
- Connect with patients
- Seek opportunities
- Use tools to support you
- Build a support network

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