

Professional Background and Experience

Jo Sweetland BSc Hons OT

Jo Sweetland qualified as an Occupational Therapist (OT) in July 1998. She has worked in different areas of physical acute care and community based care and has specialised in Neurology.

Jo is currently working as a research OT based at the Institute of Neurology and the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery (NHNN), Queen Square London. She is currently working on her doctorate (University College London) in vocational rehabilitation for people with multiple sclerosis (MS). She initially ran focus groups with people with MS asking them what they would want from a work focused service. With the information gathered she developed a vocational rehabilitation service and trialled the service in the outpatient department, this service is listed as an example of best practice on the Department of Health website and data gathered from this research published in medical journals. She is now running a randomised control trial evaluating a proactive vocational rehabilitation service working with people newly diagnosed with MS; part of this trial is involving the development of a new vocational rehabilitation outcome measure. Jo is actively involved with teaching within the NHNN; plus other London based and national forums including work with the MS Society; speaking at their national conferences and contributing toward their employment related publications. In recognition of the work she has done in this area Jo was awarded 'Researcher of the Year' at the MS Society's annual awards 2009.

From August 2003 - June 2005, Jo worked as the Specialist OT on the Stroke Unit at St. Thomas' Hospital, Westminster. Jo developed the OT service to ensure it was goal orientated and utilised functional assessments to underpin intervention. During this period Jo provided private assessments and therapy for Harrison Associates' clients on a consultancy basis.

From May 2002 Jo worked in the NHNN's outpatient service; assessing patients who presented with a wide range of neurological conditions. Jo provided specialised goal orientated treatment programmes, and gave advice and information to patients on a wide variety of issues and referred them onto appropriate community services or inpatient facilities. From May 2000, Jo worked on a new acute brain injury service at the NHNN, establishing and developing the role of the OT within a strong interdisciplinary team. Prior to this for two years Jo worked in the acute care setting at the Whittington hospital in Highgate, London.

Further to successfully completing training in the Assessment of Motor and Process Skills (AMPS), Jo joined the AMPS teaching faculty in 2003 and taught for four years as an assistant teacher, this included attending the international AMPS symposium in Australia. In October 2004 she successfully completed the School AMPS training course.

Jo now regularly teaches with Harrison Training.

2009