

## **Speech and Language Therapists**

Speech and language therapy changes lives. The 11,500 practicing speech and language therapists (SLTs) in the UK work with children and adults to help them overcome or adapt to a vast array of disorders of speech, language, communication and swallowing. These include helping young children to access education, working with young offenders to enable them to access the programmes designed to reduce reoffending, reducing life-threatening swallowing problems in the early days after stroke and providing essential support to adults with a range of acquired neurological communication difficulties to help them return to work, and their roles in their family and society. Appropriate early intervention can lead to considerable long-term financial savings. Whether in acute hospital and community settings, mainstream and special schools, or increasingly in the secure estate, SLTs make a huge difference to individuals and their families.

## **Radiographers**

**Diagnostic radiographers** employ a range of techniques to produce high quality images to diagnose an injury or disease. They are responsible for providing safe and accurate imaging examinations and increasingly also the resultant report. Diagnostic imaging is a component of the majority of care pathways. Radiographers are also key team members in Breast Screening and Ultrasound monitoring of pregnancy.

**Therapeutic radiographers** play a vital role in the treatment of cancer. They are also responsible as the only health professionals qualified to plan and deliver radiotherapy. Radiotherapy is used either on its own or in combination with surgery and/or chemotherapy. Therapy radiographers manage the patient pathway through the many radiotherapy processes, providing care and support for patients throughout their radiotherapy treatment.

## **Prosthetists and Orthotists**

**Prosthetists** work as a member of a multi-disciplinary clinical team usually based in a specialized centre for the rehabilitation of amputees or patients of all ages with disabilities. Their clinical knowledge enables them to design, select and fit the most appropriate prosthesis for each patient on an individual basis. They are key members of teams supporting the rehabilitation of injured military personnel.

The primary role for **Orthotists** is the assessment, fitting and patient education of patients requiring orthotic support. The range of people requiring support is wide and includes both the elderly and children.

## **Podiatrists**

Podiatrists provide essential assessment, evaluation and foot care for a wide range of patients with a variety of conditions both long term and acute. Many of these fall into high risk categories such as patients with diabetics, cerebral palsy, peripheral arterial disease and peripheral nerve damage where podiatric care is of vital importance. Many podiatrists have become further specialised into either the area of biomechanics or surgery. Biomechanics is often associated with treating sports related injuries but spans across a wide range of conditions including children and the elderly. Podiatric surgeons offer surgical interventions in all aspects of foot health management. Podiatrists work in both the community and acute settings and while many are employees of the NHS many podiatrists now provide healthcare services in the private sector.

## **Physiotherapists**

Physiotherapy uses physical approaches to promote, maintain and restore physical, psychological and social well-being, working through partnership and negotiation with individuals to optimise their functional ability and potential. Physiotherapists address problems of impairment, activity and participation and manage recovering, stable and deteriorating conditions - particularly those associated with the neuro-muscular, musculo-skeletal, cardio-vascular and respiratory systems - through advice, treatment, rehabilitation, health promotion and supporting behavioural change. Physiotherapy uses manual therapy, therapeutic exercise, the application of electro-physical modalities and other physical approaches in response to individual need. Physiotherapists work

across sectors and settings, including acute, community and workplace settings, and with a large number of population and patient groups including children, the working population, and older people at all points of an individual's health care journey.

### **Paramedics**

Paramedics are the senior ambulance service healthcare professionals at an accident or a medical emergency. Often working by themselves, paramedics are responsible for assessing the patient's condition, giving essential treatment and making appropriate referrals for care. They use a range of high-tech equipment, such as diagnostic ECG monitors, defibrillators, airway management devices, spinal and traction splints and intravenous drips, as well as administering a wide range of drugs including those for pain relief and resuscitation. They work across the spectrum of patient needs from primary care environments to critical care requirements.

### **Orthoptists**

Orthoptic clinical practice encompasses both diagnosis and treatment and is wide ranging. Orthoptists help premature infants with retinopathy of prematurity, children with reduced vision due to squint, adults and children with eye movement defects due to diabetes, hypertension, endocrine dysfunction, cancer, trauma and stroke. Extended scope Orthoptic Practitioners now work in high volume ophthalmic specialities such as glaucoma, cataract and age related macular degeneration. Orthoptists undertake the diagnostic and therapeutic roles formally provided solely by medical staff leading to the potential for major financial savings while continuing to deliver highest quality patient care. They work in acute hospital and community settings in health and education often as part of a multi disciplinary medical, nursing and AHP team.

### **Occupational Therapists**

Over 28,000 Occupational therapists work in the NHS, Local Authority social care services, housing, schools, prisons, voluntary and independent sectors, and vocational and employment rehabilitation services as well as in education and research. Occupational therapists (OTs) work with people of all ages with a wide range of problems resulting from physical, mental, social or developmental difficulties. OTs support people with a range of interventions to enable them to return to or optimize participation in all the things that people do; for example, caring for themselves and others, working, learning, playing and interacting with others. Being deprived of or having limited access to any or all of these occupations can affect physical and psychological health and hence OTs positively impact upon the well being and rehabilitation of patients in most care pathways and in the broader public health and social care environment.

### **Dietitians**

Registered Dietitians (RDs) are the only qualified health professionals who assess, diagnose and treat diet and nutrition problems at an individual and wider public health level. Uniquely, dietitians use the most up-to-date public health and scientific research on food, health and disease, which they translate into practical guidance to enable people to make appropriate lifestyle and food choices. With a commitment to enhancing public health the dietetic workforce is essential to making change happen in hospitals, care homes and the wider community.

### **Arts Therapists**

Arts Therapists (Art, Music and Drama) work with all age groups and utilise both the psychological and social potentials of the arts to support patients with a wide range of physical, communication and mental health issues. Primarily working in a community setting Arts Therapists are uniquely placed to integrate pathways from acute services into the community thus creating wide ranging efficiency savings. Looking at the wider public health agenda Arts Therapists contribute to the overall well being of communities and reduce the social stigmata that often accompanies mental health issues.