

Katie Hanagarth, Occupational Therapist

Katie Hanagarth is an Occupational Therapist (OT) registered with the Health Professions Council. She gained an honours degree in Occupational Therapy from Oxford Brookes University in 1998, and is a member of the British Association of Occupational Therapy, the Brain Injury Social Work Group and the British Association of Brain Injury Case Managers.

Katie has worked with children and adults with a wide range of medical, surgical, orthopaedic, neurological and progressive conditions within both the acute and rehabilitation inpatient settings as well as in the community and social services. She started her career working in Elective Orthopaedics, Stroke Rehabilitation and Acute Trauma and Orthopaedics at Dudley Group of Hospitals. This allowed her to develop core OT assessment skills and knowledge of basic equipment, along with specific neurology approaches and principals of group work. During this time she successfully completed a Post Registration Development in the OT Management of Neurological Conditions course through Leicester University.

In 1999 she moved to a more senior position working in Acute Medicine for Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals. She completed an audit of stroke services within the acute sector

and put forward a business plan for increased staffing. Following this post Katie commenced locum work and gained experience of working in Stroke Rehabilitation in Nottingham and Acute Trauma and Orthopaedics in Birmingham. She enjoyed the variety on the Trauma Wards and took up a permanent post for University Hospitals Birmingham until 2002. Katie was responsible for overseeing input in fracture clinic, admissions ward, orthopaedic wards and managing Head Injury patients. During this time she supervised staff, produced service guidelines and protocols, training programmes and gained her Thames Valley Test Company Cognitive Assessment administrator number. She also developed splinting for abnormal tone skills and attended courses on cognitive impairment.

So as to develop her skills within the field of Neurology Katie Richards moved into the Rehabilitation Sector. She spent the next three years working for South Birmingham PCT within Inpatient Rehabilitation and Community Rehabilitation teams working with patients diagnosed with neurological conditions such as strokes, acquired brain injury, spinal injuries, Motor Neurone Disease, Multiple Sclerosis and Guillain Barre Syndrome.

She gained extensive experience of treating both cognitive and physical dysfunctions, specifically using normal movement and motor relearning approaches. She was also required to be Key Worker for designated patients, ensuring goals were set, monitoring progress, chairing meetings and ensuring smooth discharges. This ensured a co-ordinated, interdisciplinary approach to the rehabilitation programme. Both adolescents and adults were on her case load.

Katie has also gained accreditation as a Fieldwork Educator and has supported two students on placement. She has been a mentor for a colleague embarking on the in-service route of training.

In order to fund a period of travelling she then took on short term locum posts for Worcestershire NHS Trust and Walsall NHS Trust within the Acute Medicine field. She then gained a two year contract with Dudley Social Services. She was responsible for completing rapid response assessments for adults and paediatrics who had a range of disabilities e.g. dementia, stroke, spinal injuries, amputation, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, degenerative neurological conditions.

She would work closely with equipment Representatives to ensure the most appropriate specialist equipment was provided. She also completed minor adaptation assessments for rails, stair lifts, external lifts and basic bathroom adaptations in line with local eligibility criteria.

Katie has experience of working closely with external agencies (state, private and charity) in order to ensure clients receive the most appropriate level of care. She is trained to complete hoisting demonstrations.

Following the end of this contract she gained a locum post at The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, Birmingham working on Elective Orthopaedic wards. She remained at this hospital and took a permanent post on the Paediatric ward in 2006. This complex post involved pre-operative and post-operative assessment of children with Orthopaedic conditions. This covered a diverse range of conditions (congenital, acquired and spinal, oncology) and involved close interdisciplinary working. Liaison with community support, seating and educational services was also essential to ensure safe admissions and discharges. She also provided team leadership and service development.

In 2007, Katie began work as a Rehabilitation Case Manager. Her experience has involved working with people who have sustained complex orthopaedic trauma, spinal injury and traumatic brain injury. She has carried a case load of both adult and paediatric clients providing independent advice for clients, families, insurers and solicitors.

She has sourced for cost appropriate private treatment providers and closely monitored progress within the rehabilitation programme. Close working with statutory and private vocational providers has been essential in the return to work aspect of case management.

This has ensured adherence to the guidance provided by The Rehabilitation Code and the Case Management Society of the UK. She began working for Bush and Company Rehabilitation LLP in 2008 and is completing Immediate Needs Assessments and reports along with ongoing Case Management of complex cases for both children and adults.

Katie is committed to continuing her professional development and has recently attended the annual Brain Injury Social Work Group conference which included presentations on legal implications.