

CAREER EDUCATION – WRITTEN Q&A: Hannah Spellmoore

1. What is your job role and organisation?

I work for AstraZeneca, a global, science-led, biopharmaceutical company. My job title is 'GxP Network Specialist and Revalidation Manager'.

2. What do you do in this job?

I am in the Global GxP team. GxP is short hand for 'Good Practice' and is a set of international standards that pharmaceutical companies must adhere to ensure patient safety. I am in the commercial side of the business, which works on medicines that have already been approved.

The key areas we cover in my team are quality management systems, clinical studies, patient safety, manufacturing, distribution and regulatory. As the GxP Network Specialist I ensure that other teams working in these key areas have access to effective platforms and communications meaning that they follow the 'Good Practice' standards. For this, I manage the GxP tools, resources, communication channels and deliver live training sessions.

One of my key projects is owning a global website for an AstraZeneca medicine. The site I work on provides patients and healthcare professionals access to key information and the ability to submit adverse event reports or request medical information. My role is to ensure effective roll out of the site to all countries receiving AstraZeneca supply. I work with cross functional teams, in each of the countries, to understand and implement their requirements on their local site. This is part of the product release process, so it plays an important part in ensuring patients receive the medicine.

I am also AstraZeneca's revalidation manager. In the UK, doctors who wish to maintain their licence to practise medicine must be assessed yearly (called appraisals). At AstraZeneca, we have a number of physicians and I manage the appraisal system for them. I onboard new starters, ensure appraisals are kept up to date and am the point of contact for any questions or concerns that our physicians may have. I complete the NHS quarterly and annual reports and maintain working relationships with external revalidation managers.

3. Why did you choose this career?

I have always wanted a role where I could help people. I had considered becoming a doctor but really enjoyed Chemistry, so the thought of making the medicines became an excellent idea. At university I really enjoyed laboratory work and learning new things, so thought a career in research would be good for me.

After my two year research graduate scheme, I decided that my skill set was actually best suited to a project manager type role and also that I wanted to be closer to the patient. In the commercial side of the business where I am, I can see the impact of our work on patients which is something I am very passionate about.

4. What background education or training do you have?

I went to Hills Road Sixth Form College, where I studied Chemistry, Biology and Maths. I then went onto the University of Leeds where I got a Masters in Chemistry with a year in industry.

I am still doing training now! I am working towards the Certified Associate Project Management (CAPM) qualification.

5. What has your career path been?

I left Hills Road in 2013 and decided to take a year off studying. During this time, I worked at Kings College as a waitress and Cambridge Baby, a small independent baby clothes shop, as a picker and packer.

I started my four year course at the University of Leeds in 2014. During my third year, I was able to secure myself an industrial placement at GlaxoSmithKline in Worthing. This was an excellent opportunity and allowed me to experience work at a pharmaceutical manufacturing site.

Once I had graduated, I joined AstraZeneca as a summer intern in the analytical chemistry group. I then joined AstraZeneca's two-year research and development graduate scheme, with this I was able to do 3 eight-month rotations in different research groups.

Towards the end of the scheme, I realised I did not want to be a laboratory based scientist anymore and wanted to do a project management type role. I started my current role in 2020.

6. What does a typical day involve?

Typical activities in my day include:

- Meetings with internal AstraZeneca colleagues and/or external collaborators (for example, Adobe)
- Monitoring the progress of projects and chasing people to complete their actions
- Writing and sharing communications to our Global Network, including internal news articles
- Providing support to AstraZeneca's physicians, usually via email
- Maintain our tools and resources, identify areas for improvement and implement these changes
- Organise and host training sessions

7. What is your work environment like?

Since leaving the graduate programme, I am now completely office based however I haven't actually been into the office (due to the pandemic) and have therefore not met any of my team face to face! Fortunately, everything I do can be done at home.

I work in a Global team and therefore spend a lot of my time communicating with people all over the world. I work with a range of different people and job roles depending on the project, including people working in clinical trials, patient safety, manufacturing, regulatory, IT, project managers, and more!

My supervisor is a strong advocate for a good work-life balance. This means I have the flexibility to continue with lots of my hobbies such as hockey, running, dog walking and horse riding. I find

these activities very important to help me wind down and end up making me more productive at work!

8. What aspects of your job are most challenging?

In lots of my projects, I have high levels of responsibility and people rely on me to do the work to a high standard. For example, in certain countries before people can start taking our medicine the website must be live with their local content. It is my responsibility to work with these countries and stick to specific deadlines, if there is a delay this could impact the patients. The pressure can sometimes be challenging, but it is still very rewarding.

9. Can you give an example of a project or piece of work that you have been most proud of?

The project that I am most proud of is the work I have done on a medicine for COVID-19. The pandemic has impacted everyone all over the world, so when the opportunity came to be part of the company's response, I was eager to take it.

The project has been very fast paced. This has helped me to develop of a number of my skills such as leadership and problem solving. I have had high levels of responsibility and worked with very senior people in the company.

But most importantly, it is the first project I have worked on where I can directly see the benefit to patients. This is incredibly rewarding.

10. How do you hope your career will progress?

I love working for AstraZeneca, so would like to stay here. I really enjoy learning new things and working on different projects so am open for future opportunities. At one stage I would like to have a role where I am directly involved with clinical trials.