

"The role is at times challenging, it's made easier by working with fantastic colleagues."

Peter studied psychology in university and also undertook a doctorate in clinical psychology. Upon finishing his studies, Peter knew he wanted to pursue a career where he could help people with mental ill health.

Peter Beazley

Head of secure services inpatient psychology/consultant clinical psychologist

Employer or university

South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust
Clinical psychologist

How I got into the role

Expand / collapse

One of my favourite modules at university was clinical psychology so it seemed an obvious choice for me to pursue a career in this field after graduating.

During my clinical training, I was fortunate enough to have a specialist placement in a medium secure unit in London. Though I'd worked with patients with complex mental health problems before, this was the first time I'd worked with people with significant histories of violent behaviour. I absolutely loved my placement, especially because no two days were ever the same. After qualifying as a clinical psychologist, I was delighted to get a job at Brockfield House, a medium secure unit that is a part of South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust.

What I do

Expand / collapse

As head of secure services and inpatient psychology, a large part of my role involves managing a team of clinical psychologists to ensure that all the patients have access to, and are offered, appropriate psychological assessments and interventions.

Aside from the managerial role, I also conduct individual assessments and therapy with my patients. This involves me working with a range of people, many of whom have experienced significant trauma and adversity during development. Some people have had really horrific upbringings and early experiences that nobody should ever go through, and of course this has a huge impact on their lives as an adult – including of course their mental health.

I work in a multidisciplinary team so I regularly attend meetings with nurses, social workers, psychiatrists and occupational therapists to help better understand the patient's history and figure out the best ways we can help them.

The best bits and challenges

Expand / collapse

I'm really happy with my career choice and I wouldn't want to do any other job in the world! Though of course the role is at times challenging, it's made easier by working with fantastic colleagues; not just psychologists but a range of different professionals.

One of the best things about my role is seeing someone get better. During therapy sessions, sometimes people tell you things they've never told anyone else. Being the very first person they've talked to about their issues is a great honour.

Life outside work

Expand / collapse

Another thing I love about my job is that I have time for my hobbies. The NHS has generous holiday entitlements so I have time to travel and see interesting sights around the world.

Career plans and top tips for others

Expand / collapse

For anyone thinking of a career as a clinical psychologist, I'd say don't be put off by the competitiveness of the application process – it is not an impossible task!

The training process itself is by no means easy, but you'll have a fascinating range of experiences across a variety of services. That said, clinical psychology is not for everybody, and there are a range of other possible careers within the NHS that will make good use of your skills and interests.

Source URL:<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/psychological-therapies/roles/clinical-psychologist/real-life-story-peter-beazley>