Real-life story - Deenesh Khoosal

I made up my mind at an early age that I wanted to be a psychiatrist. As soon as I qualified as a doctor, I began my postgraduate training. I have been a psychiatrist at a time of tremendous change.

Deenesh Khoosal Consultant psychiatrist
Employer or university Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust
Salary range Unknown

How I got into the role

When I started my career, old-style Victorian institutions were still commonplace. They have been closed and replaced by modern residential services. The big change has been in the development of communitybased services, where we aim to see patients in, or as close to, their own homes as possible. Some of the changes have been made possible by the advances in our knowledge. For example, when I started, only a few drugs were available. Now, they are much better and have fewer side-effects.

What I do

My work benefits from the involvement of the multidisciplinary team with which I work. The team consists of psychiatrists, community psychiatric nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, pharmacists and many others. This is a positive step as no single person can hope to meet all the needs of patients.

It can be a challenging job, for example, sometimes I have to detain a patient against their will. Training and experience gives you the confidence to balance the patient's interests with those of the public.

I need to have good listening skills and empathy, as I work with patients who have a wide range of problems. Another thing I like in psychiatry is that diagnosis is based on talking to people – skills and

knowledge count because you can't call for a blood test to help you!

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The best bits

The most satisfying part of my job is to see patients improving. It is so rewarding to see this happen and to know that you have been able to make a difference to their lives.