

Real-life story - James Moore

James runs a travel clinic, providing travel vaccinations, antimalarials and public health information for people travelling abroad. He also advises schools and companies on travel health, as well as teaching travel and expedition medicine. He works occasionally as an expedition medic.



James Moore Director (Self Employed)

Employer or university Exeter Travel Clinic and Travel Health Consultancy (private business)

Salary range Unknown

How I got into the role

My dad was a nurse and suggested I would be good at it. I had a year out working in care homes and loved it, so I applied for diploma in nursing training. When I qualified, the senior nurse in the Emergency Department was a major inspiration. I went through my career wanting to be like him; he was dedicated, great with patients, knew his stuff and was a brilliant team manager. I wanted his job. He was probably the main nursing role model for me. One of the emergency department doctors was another great influence. He got me into the expedition medicine setting and encouraged me to train and travel. We have been great friends and colleagues ever since, working together on many projects.

My career path has been influenced by my passion for travel and adventure. I have worked as a senior nurse in emergency care settings all over the world, and have provided medical cover for a number of expeditions. After my initial training I completed a diploma in tropical nursing, a diploma in travel medicine and a degree in emergency care. To augment my work I also obtained a mountain leader qualification. My practical experience, backed up with this range of qualifications, meant that I was in an excellent position to start my own business!?

What I do

I established and run a travel clinic, which provides travel health information, vaccines, antimalarials and consultancy for people travelling abroad. I also advise schools and companies on travel health policies. I teach travel and expedition medicine and work occasionally as an expedition medic.

At an initial glance, the role may not fit the classic definition of 'public health.' However, it does not take much scratching below the surface to realise how the health of UK travellers can have implications not just for themselves but also for others, whilst away or on their return. Illnesses caught whilst abroad and brought back home have the potential to impact the health of the UK public, for instance by spreading influenza, sexually transmitted diseases, or the much rarer but well-publicised Ebola virus.

I am self-employed and every day can be different. I might be seeing patients and providing clinical care, speaking about travel health, teaching around the subject, or in the depths of the jungle on expedition (perhaps sitting in a hammock listening to the roar of howler monkeys)!

I have a team of staff working in the clinic who are all fabulous and have their own areas of expertise. I also work closely with other colleagues depending on what I'm doing on a daily basis. For example, a close colleague and I have developed and deliver a postgraduate diploma in expedition and wilderness medicine. I have written and co-authored articles for books and journals and am an elected fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and a member of their medical cell.

Life is not a dress rehearsal. We do not know what is around the corner, so be sensible, but don't be afraid to take a few risks.

The best bits and challenges

I can think of lots of best bits, for example designing and launching the Diploma in Expedition and Wilderness Medicine, becoming an editor of the Oxford Handbook of Expedition and Wilderness Medicine, and authoring other publications. I am also proud of designing and running my own business and having worked with some of the best emergency department teams. One of the biggest challenges is managing and supporting staff. I wish I had more time for this.

Life outside work

Anything outdoors! I like a spot of carpentry, woodwork, bushcraft, driving my Land Rover in crazy places. As a family we are actively involved in village life. I am also an avid reader.

Career plans and top tips for others

As far as career plans go, the possibilities are endless. One of the beauties of being self-employed is that I have the freedom to pursue the various opportunities that seem to present themselves on a weekly basis. I love teaching, speaking and writing, and can envisage developing this side of my career. My work with the media continues to be exciting, and one particular area I would be keen to develop would be using these links to bring expedition and travel health more to the forefront of the public's attention in a fun an

accessible way. Perhaps there's a role for a Bear Grylls-style medic?who knows?

Academically, at some point I would like to obtain a higher degree, researching areas of expedition medicine. I just need to find a supervisor interested in this particular subject.

My advice to others considering changing or developing their careers would be just do it. Make a plan, a robust, carefully thought-through plan, then just do it. The absolute key is making sure you have the skills and knowledge to pull it off.?

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