

# Real-life story - Rebecca Pinhorne

Rebecca always had a passion for science, but knew that she wanted to work in a role where she cared for others. After studying ionising radiation in medicine during her degree, she realised that healthcare was the right fit.

## Rebecca Pinhorne

### Clinical technologist in nuclear medicine

#### Employer or university

University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust

#### Salary range

£20k-£30k

Rebecca Pinhorne - healthcare scientist

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### How I got into the role

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I have always been interested in science and, after my A-Levels, where I studied physics, maths and graphic design, I attended Cardiff University to study astrophysics. I soon took an interest in ionising radiation within the field of medicine, and was fortunate to secure work experience in [radiotherapy](#) <sup>[1]</sup> and nuclear medicine.

As I wanted to work in radiation and also use my caring skills, I knew that healthcare science was my ideal career. I could use the knowledge that I had gained at university together with my customer service skills.

I applied to train as a clinical technologist in nuclear medicine, which involved two years training on the job. When I finished my training, my role changed to a permanent non-trainee role.

## **What I do**

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Most of my work is clinical; this includes carrying out diagnostic investigations and therapy procedures. I also perform quality control tests to check that equipment is working and I also perform data analyses, process images and support audits. As a clinical technologist, I am always learning, so time is spent conducting research and in training.

In addition to working with patients, I attend meetings. I was awarded a Clinical Practitioner Poster Prize for the poster I created for the national nuclear medicine meeting, together with a Certificate of Merit 'In recognition of the excellence of your educational exhibit'. I also gave a presentation at the regional nuclear medicine meeting.

## **The best bits and challenges**

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I enjoy caring for patients and making a difference to patients' lives and there is nothing about the job that I would change.

There are days that I find challenging. I care for patients who can be uncooperative, incapacitated or disorientated; some patients also have physical and mental disabilities and some are terminally ill.

As patients are sometimes scared of radiation, I focus on communicating with them, giving them all the information possible. I have regular training at work which means that I am confidently able to support patients.

## **Career plans and top tips for others**

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Training develops my knowledge and skills so I am keen to continue my studies further. My top tip would be to find work experience to discover if a role is right for you, and to see if you have the right skills, attributes and abilities. Being compassionate is central to the care of patients, and it's important to be enthusiastic and a team worker.

## Life outside work

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It is important to detach from work when I am at home. I enjoy cooking and scrap booking which helps me to relax, and I also play netball.

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### Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Radiotherapy>