

"I've worked my way up in different managerial roles in the NHS and have had lots of support, including studying for an MA in management studies."

Angela has worked in the NHS all her career, first as a secretary, then progressing to various managerial roles. She recommends others to research and try NHS different roles as there are so many options.

Angela Paice

Business manager

Employer or university

Seaford Medical Practice

Angela Paice

How I got into the role

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I've always worked in [primary care](#) [1] - GP surgeries and other community services - and had a number of commissioning and contract performance roles in clinical commissioning groups (CCGs).

I progressed to be assistant head of planned care at the CCG and then to a role as general manager for community services as part of East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust. I spent 18 months there managing district nurses, community rehabilitation services, the post-COVID assessment service, and a range of community services including [stroke](#) [2], bladder and bowel services covering east Sussex.

It was great to get such good experience in an operational role and during the COVID pandemic too. I met a huge number of healthcare professionals and we did some really good work.

After 18 months there, I got the job of business manager at Seaford Medical Practice and I'm delighted to be back in primary care [1]. I knew some of the staff at the practice through my previous roles and it's felt like putting on comfy slippers, even though primary care [1] has moved on enormously from when I first worked in it. For example, we now provide proactive health services and of course we've experienced the pandemic which has changed demand in terms of what patients need.

What I do

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I manage the practice to make sure it's adequately staffed and we have GPs available to see and speak to patients. I'm a jack of all trades so when's something broken, I get it fixed, or when food's needed for a meeting, I go out and get it.

A general practice is a business so I need to ensure it's financially viable and claiming everything we should be claiming. I answer questions when things aren't working as they should, and the team look to me for leadership and steerage.

I've also got a board director role working with the local GP Federation. It's an advisory role, looking at strategic direction and business development. It requires strategic thinking about what the local population needs and what GP practices need to support them. It's a different way of working in that I'm not operational or hands on, but it enables me to draw on my experience and knowledge.

The best bits and challenges

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I love that we're mostly working together in person again now rather than from home. I missed the interaction with people. But working at home some of the week is useful for getting things done – I'm here, there and everywhere when I'm in the practice!

It's very varied work and no two days are the same. I do lots of routine tasks looking after the finance and personnel for the practice, and I respond to complaints and write the staff newsletter. Today I've attended a webinar with the Care Quality Commission, and held

staff management meetings.

I have an amazing team. Some people have been at the practice a long time and some are fairly new. It's a really nice ^[3] place to work.

The challenges are connected to patients' demands and expectations. We live in the 'Amazon' era where things 'arrive tomorrow', and patients think things should be the same in general practice and hospital services. I have to work hard to manage expectations.

Managing our workforce is challenging, both recruiting and keeping who we need. The other thing is finding physical space at the practice. We don't have room enough for everyone so we juggle who can work at home and who needs to be in.

Life outside work

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I go to lots of gym classes which help clear my head and keep me on top of things.

And I have six noisy dogs, six sheep and three chickens so looking after them keeps me busy!

Career plans and top tips for others

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The NHS has provided a career for life for me. I left college at 17 and joined one of the health authorities as a secretary. I've worked my way up in different managerial roles in the NHS ever since in commissioning, provider and general practice, and have had lots of support, including being supported to study for an MA in management studies.

I'm three years away from being able to think about retiring now, at least partially, so plan to stay in my current role until then.

I'd recommend researching and trying different roles in the NHS so you get a good sense of what it's about; there are so many options within the NHS family. The best way to do that is scanning the NHS Jobs website ^[4]. It gives a really good indication of the kind of roles that are available.

The NHS very complex and can feel overwhelming so it's important to make sure you have good support. No question is a silly question!

Source URL:<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/management/roles-management/operational-management/administrative-management/real-life-story-angela-paice>

Links

[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Primary_care [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Stroke> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NICE> [4] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>