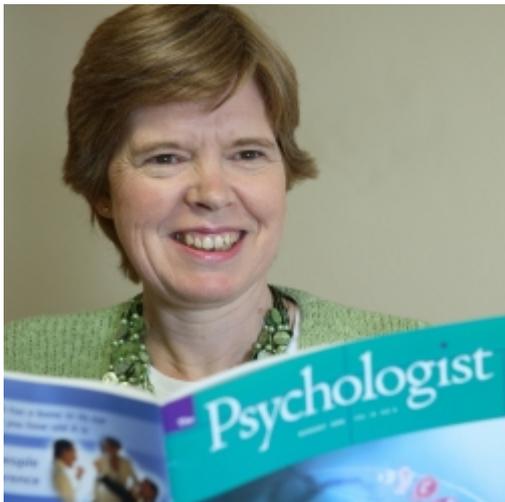


Real-life story of Louise Fountain

Louise has spent all her working life in psychology because she's fascinated by people and understanding the reasons for their behaviour.



Louise Fountain Consultant clinical psychologist

Employer or university Salisbury Community Forensic Service

Salary range Unknown

How I got into the role

After completing a BSc in psychology, I began my career by working for two years as a mental health social work assistant. I then undertook clinical training, completing an MSc in clinical psychology. After that I moved through different psychology services around the country when I had to move for family reasons.

What I do

I now work as part of a team, including social workers and doctors, that offers assessment and therapy to people who have committed offences and who have psychological difficulties linked to their offending. I also work with people with difficulties such as acute depression, severe anxiety or personality disorders.

Over a series of sessions, I aim to understand a person's difficulties and then to find ways of overcoming the problems. I get great satisfaction when therapy seems to work and a client grasps an idea, or way of doing things, that they find helpful.

One of the great advantages about working as a psychologist in the NHS, is that you can usually find job opportunities wherever you go.

The best bits and challenges

The NHS also makes it possible for me to continue my learning. I'm currently completing a doctorate in clinical psychology, researching how clinicians assess the risk of violence. I also enjoy teaching. I feel I have really understood something when I can pass what I have learned on to others.

Career plans and top tips for others

One of the great advantages about working as a psychologist in the NHS is that you can usually find job opportunities wherever you go, particularly if you are prepared to be flexible. Another is that you never stop learning and keeping up to date with advances in practice.

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