




<p><i>Name</i></p>	<p>Shagufta Dalal, aka "Sugar"</p> 
<p><i>How long have you been a Speech and Language Therapist?</i></p>	<p>I've been a Speech and Language Therapist since I graduated in 2009 and now work in Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust's (CCS) Quality Team as Deputy Clinical Quality Manager. I'm also one of the Trust's "Innovation Ambassadors" alongside my colleague who's also an AHP!</p>
<p><i>What inspired you to be a Speech and Language Therapist?</i></p>	<p>I thoroughly enjoyed and value my time as a clinician and am proud to call myself a Speech and Language Therapist and AHP. We have a lot of transferable skills, and I only truly appreciated the extent of these during the pandemic. I was redeployed to an operational lead role for one of the large-scale vaccination (LSV) sites which opened my eyes to the other job roles in CCS and our corporate services. I know I like detail and also the bigger picture, and how one fits into the other, and I love the varied challenges and learning opportunities presented in my current role in the Quality Team. It seemed like a big and somewhat scary but exciting transition, but I feel I've found my niche.</p>
<p><i>What does your role involve?</i></p>	<p>I now work in the Quality Team, in the Chief Nurse directorate. My job involves working with our amazing clinical services to learn, grow, adapt and improve to provide the best and safest care to the people we see. I undertake little projects and also am working with my colleagues to implement</p>



	the aims of the National Patient Safety Strategy.
<i>How did you get into this career? What steps did it take since leaving school?</i>	I studied science at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and science was always my first passion! I then went into research when I qualified but missed the interaction with people and started looking into other careers. My Dad pointed me in the direction of speech and language therapy (something I'd never even heard of!), and I started looking into it more and decided to go back to uni and took the accelerated course to get my degree. I graduated in 2009, worked as a clinician until the pandemic when I was redeployed and then moved into the Quality Team not long after.
<i>Can you tell us a bit about the training you undertook for your role?</i>	I have a BSc and then did a PGDip to train as a Speech and Language Therapist. I was fortunate to undertake several courses in my career and ultimately specialised in working with children with complex and life-long needs and dysphagia. I didn't do any additional training for my current job, although I'm learning lots. It can seem daunting to switch roles, but we already have the necessary skills and it's really about how we apply them that's different.
<i>What's been the highlight of your career so far?</i>	Working in the LSV sites and being redeployed was an amazing opportunity and I learnt so much about myself, other people and what we do as a Trust. The people I worked with, and the sense of community were amazing!
<i>What do you like most about your role/career?</i>	How diverse it's been, and how it's veered in new and exciting directions.
<i>What's the most challenging part of your role?</i>	Currently, it's trying to find a way to use the resources and information we have in the best possible way. It's not too different to my clinical role, where the biggest challenge was again using the knowledge and resources available to best meet the



	needs of the children and families I was working with.
<i>What's a typical day like for you in your role?</i>	It's so varied, but in general it involves meetings, discussions with services, looking at and analysing data to see what it's telling us, researching new things to see what it means for us as a Trust. No two days are the same, and each month brings something new to look into and learn from.
<i>What are the main skills needed to do your role?</i>	Good people skills, being adaptable in approach and style and being able to manage your time to juggle work demands. Being compassionate and resilient, ready to take on a challenge and not being afraid to ask questions.
<i>Do you have any advice for someone considering your career?</i>	Don't be afraid to try something new! If you don't like it, you can also try something different again but, you never know, you may find out you're where you're meant to be 😊