



<p><i>Name</i></p>	<p>Dr Simon Butler</p> 
<p><i>How long have you been an AHP?</i></p>	<p>Operational site lead since August 2021 (CCS) Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP) since 2017 (CPFT)</p>
<p><i>What inspired you to do this role?</i></p>	<p>I wanted to help my local community and the country with the fight against Covid-19, so I joined the mass vaccination service as I thought this was the most effective way to reduce death and morbidity. I became an ACP as I enjoy the diversity of the role and the enhanced assessment and treatment skills I can offer patients.</p>
<p><i>What does your role involve?</i></p>	<p>The site lead role essentially involves ensuring that the large-scale Covid vaccination centres run effectively. This involves rota planning, ensuring that vaccines and supplies are ordered, staff leadership, welfare and support. The ACP role involves autonomously assessing patients suffering a wide variety of medical or traumatic conditions, making a diagnosis and providing treatments such as prescribing medicines or making a specialist referral. In primary care, the role involves ordering and interpreting different tests and acting on the results. In minor injuries, I interpret tests such as x-rays and, in most cases, provide treatment myself.</p>
<p><i>How did you get into this career? What steps did it take since leaving school?</i></p>	<p>I'm a good example of life-long learning! I left school with a handful of 'O' levels and joined the ambulance service when I was 21 (1983). I completed a degree in natural sciences (medical science, biology and chemistry) as I was and am still convinced that a science background is essential for autonomous practitioners. I then did master's degrees in medical science and another in education. I topped up my medical science master's degree with ACP modules including minor illness, minor injury and independent</p>



	<p>prescribing as I wanted to undertake an advanced clinical role. I later completed a doctorate at the University of Cambridge on research that combined endocrinology, neuroscience and psychology in adolescents. I'd advise young people who want to be a paramedic to work hard on their GCSE science and to study A-level biology and chemistry. Paramedicine and advanced practice are very much a science-based curriculum.</p>
<p><i>Can you tell us a bit about the training you undertook for your role?</i></p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p><i>What's been the highlight of your career so far?</i></p>	<p>The highlight of my career was passing independent prescribing with distinction. The training I did as an ambulance man back in 1983 was essentially advanced first aid. We had to take every patient to hospital as we lacked advanced assessment skills. Also, people usually called an ambulance because they were seriously ill or injured. Nowadays, the big challenge for paramedics is dealing with the many minor cases they get called to. They do this with very little, if any training in minor illness or injury or differentiating between what is minor and what could potentially be a serious pathology. I was the first NHS qualified paramedic in Cambridge, of which I'm very proud, attending the first course in East Anglia in 1987. The paramedic role was very didactic and protocol-driven at the time. I'd never have believed how far the profession has advanced over the years and that experienced paramedics can now train for advanced clinical roles.</p>
<p><i>What do you like most about your role/career?</i></p>	<p>I'm very proud to have worked in the NHS for what is approaching my fortieth year. In 2001, I introduced the first ever medical science-based higher education blended learning paramedic training programme in the country. The former East Anglian Ambulance NHS Trust was the first ambulance service in the country to exclusively train paramedics via a higher education route. I loved my job as course director of that programme. I like seeing patients face to face and having the ability to help them without referring them on in most cases, that is, providing definitive care myself. I'm very proud of my role in helping fight Covid as I'm with the fantastic LSV service team of which I'm a member.</p>



--	--