




<p><i>Name</i></p>	<p>Jen Elliott</p> 
<p><i>How long have you been a rehabilitation technician with the acquired brain injury (ABI) service for?</i></p>	<p>18 years nearly 19 years, overall, I've worked for the NHS for 23 years.</p>
<p><i>What inspired you to be a rehabilitation technician?</i></p>	<p>I worked as a support worker for a private company for 5 years but felt working within the NHS would provide more financial stability. A role for a support worker in a new stroke service became available and I was one of the first support workers to be employed. I spent 5 years working with nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) and then a role came up on the ABI team which I jumped at as I had previous experience working with behavioural head injury clients.</p>
<p><i>What does your role involve?</i></p>	<p>My role since being in the ABI service has developed over the 18 years. I've built up a good relationship with outside organisations who support patients of working age to explore volunteer opportunities and return to work.</p> <p>I support patients to structure their week, support with paperwork such as appointment letters, teaching new skills like using mobile phones to set reminders which enable them to be more independent, support to explore new opportunities, groups such as the gym, swimming, walking 4 health, support with attending return to work, support to attend college, Headway, applying for benefits, liaising with GPs, social workers, care agencies. Support with fatigue management and anxiety management.</p>



<p><i>How did you get into this career? What steps did it take since leaving school?</i></p>	<p>I moved away with my partner at that time and got a job as a bank worker for a private rehabilitation trust, they put me through training NVQ level 2 and in surface training. From there I went to the NHS.</p>
<p><i>Can you tell us a bit about the training you undertook for your role?</i></p>	<p>So, I completed an NVQ level 2 with the private firm, when I started on the NRT I completed a level 3 NVQ with additional credits. I also completed the care course required for working within the NHS, neurology training and conferences. I've also attended conferences around sexual relationships within brain injury patients, and I'm now a mental health wellbeing champion for our services.</p>
<p><i>What's been the highlight of your career so far?</i></p>	<p>Seeing patients getting back to some sort of normality even back to work or starting a new venture in their lives.</p>
<p><i>What do you like most about your role/career?</i></p>	<p>Working with a full range of different people you never know who you're going to meet next, it can be a highflyer in London or a drug and alcohol dependent. All of them have a story and that's what I enjoy.</p>
<p><i>What's the most challenging part of your role?</i></p>	<p>I'd say working with younger working age people as they have families and following their brain injury, they've had a life changing injury. It puts added pressure on young families and children, and often I see family breakdowns which is sad. Working with patients who have suicidal thoughts and knowing how much support you can provide and that they may not be around the next day can be hard as you start questioning could I have done better.</p>
<p><i>What's a typical day like for you in your role?</i></p>	<p>I start with a team huddle which is good to chat to others. I have 1-3 visits per day as I cover all of Bedfordshire. I then complete notes and emails and chase people who have not got back to me regarding funding PA (personal assistant) or training carers and PAs.</p>



	Getting back to relatives to answer their questions and concerns.
<i>What are the main skills needed to do your role?</i>	Compassion, empathy good sense of humour to be able to get along with people who you would not normally get to know in a lifetime, that's what makes my job interesting.
<i>Do you have any advice for someone considering your career?</i>	Go for it, it's very rewarding even when you do hit a wall with some patients. Get some experience of caring for others, help to support with shopping, phone calls. It's a rewarding job if it wasn't I wouldn't still be working for the NHS for the past 23 years.