

A day in the life... of the Designated Clinical Officer for SEND (DCO)

March 2023

I'm Jennie, I've been a DCO for around 18 months. Before that, I was a Speech and Language Therapist and ran the Early Years Autism pathway in Stockport. I usually work from home, unless I have face to face meetings where I might see families or other professionals from health/social care/ education. I work 3 days a week. I have 3 children, one of whom has additional complex needs.



This is a diary of one specific working day. Every day is different, which is something I like about my job:

9am I log into my emails and check if any queries have come in. I usually have something

new each day, often more than one, about individual children or young people (CYP). This morning I have to find out about a young person moving into the area who needs health updates to his Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Most days I get sent updates to legislation which I need to read and understand, along with papers for any panels coming up. I save these to make sure I have them to read when I get time (usually in the evening when my kids are in bed!)



9:30 I take a telephone call with one of the therapy team leads, they have a query about an individual case and EHCP reports. We talk about statutory duties, capacity and what the young person needs. We reach a decision and agree I will provide some staff training in future to support the team.

10am Meeting- I have a weekly meeting with my team, the CYP Integrated Care team (ICT). Between us we commission and plan services for children and young people with MH needs, SEND, Learning Difficulties & Disabilities, Autism, complex medical needs and so forth. We discuss projects we have ongoing and any issues that may have come up that we need to be aware of/ support one another with. Today we discuss the launch of the Dynamic Support Register in Manchester which is happening at the end of the month.



11am meeting with a new team member in the adult ICT to introduce ourselves and talk about how we can work together.

11:30- I take a quick break for an early lunch as I have meetings from 12. I spend some time replying to emails.



12pm- tel call to NHS England about a young person who is moving into the area. His EHCP needs to be updated and he has significant health needs which we need to support in order to get him into school.

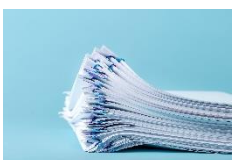
1pm- EHCP panel online meeting: I go to weekly panel meetings for EHCP and short breaks. I am on the panel that makes decisions about EHCPs and short breaks. I am the health representative so have to make sure all the health information is submitted and consider the CYP's health needs.

2:30pm- EHCP quality of health advice meeting: Online- I meet with other DCOs, NHS England representatives and Council for Disabled Children to talk about what goes into the health advice for an EHCP. We are working on a project to make sure health advice is good quality and is more consistent between areas.

3:20pm – I have to take a break for school run and drop offs.

4pm- back to work, I read some updated guidance for SEND and Alternative Provision then follow up on some email queries with health services and from the EHCP panel. This takes some time so I finish some of this by reading them before bed later on!

I end my working day, but sometimes I will read or listen to things online about SEND, because it's interesting to me and it affects my work and home life.



Thanks for reading.