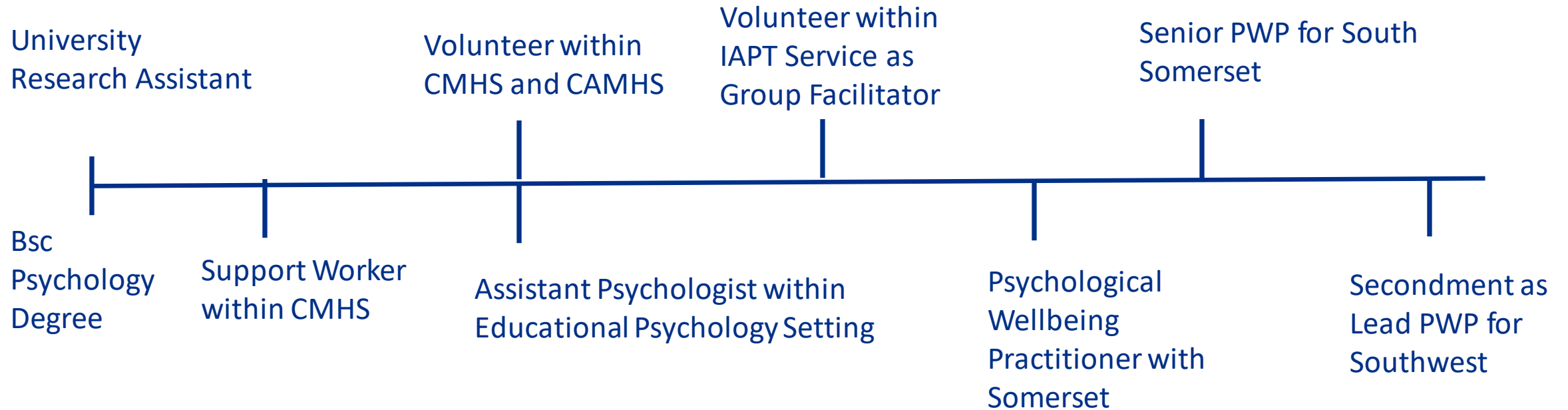
A large, stylized graphic of many small blue birds flying in a curved path across the top left of the slide. The birds are arranged to form a shape that resembles a large, open letter 'C' or a wide, sweeping arc.

Career Pathway of a Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (PWP)

outstanding care
listening and leading
working together

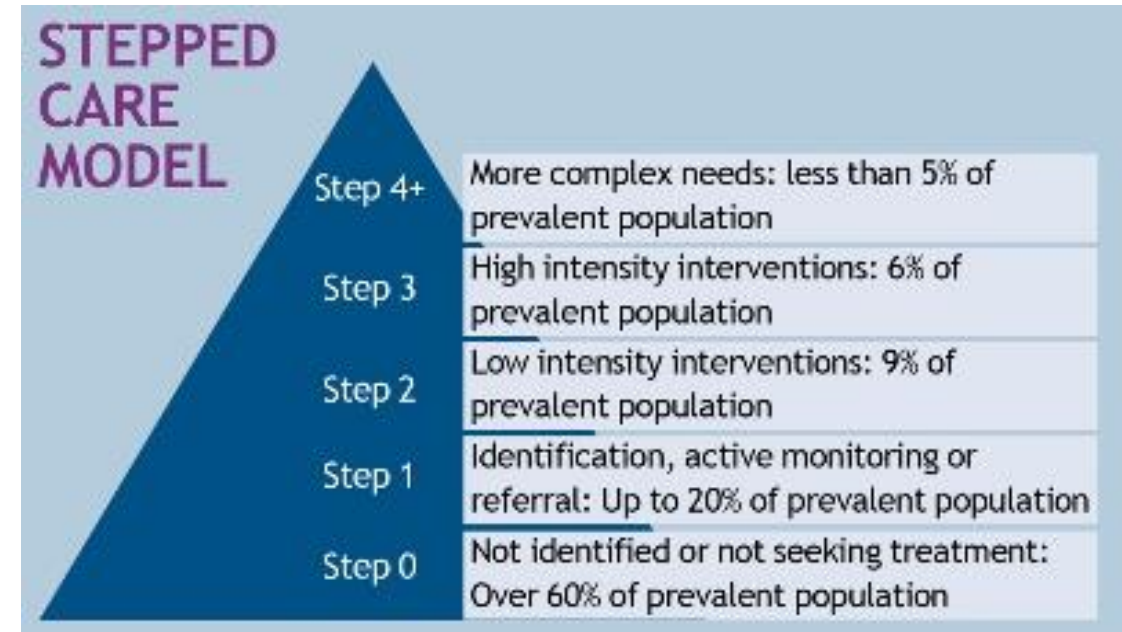
Sophie Strange
Senior PWP for Somerset Talking Therapies
PWP Lead for the South West with NHS England

Route to Becoming a PWP



What is a Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner

- Specialised registered mental health practitioners with skills and knowledge highly transferable and employable. Trained to Post Graduate Degree level in evidence based Low Intensity CBT Interventions and work at Band 5 upwards within the NHS.
- Offer patient centred Assessment and Treatments within IAPT Services and make up about 60% of workforce within IAPT
- Working with a range of common mental health difficulties, using evidence-based interventions based in CBT principles designed to support and empower the patient in the self management of their recovery and personal goals.
- Trained to work in a high volume low intensity framework at the Step 1 or Step 2 level of care



PWP Treatments

- Provide a range of one to one psychological interventions, online psychological treatment programs (Computerized CBT) and psycho-educational groups and workshops using an evidence based approach
- Liaise with other agencies and work in a multi disciplinary manner to provide outstanding care
- Conduct outreach community work and signpost to other agencies as appropriate.
- Trained to deliver telephone, online and face-to-face support to patients from a variety different backgrounds and diverse needs.

PWPs are trained to offer treatment to the below presentations:

- Depression
- Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD)
- Specific Phobia
- Panic Disorder
- Agoraphobia (with or without Panic Disorder)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Mental Health Difficulties in the context of a Long Term Health Condition or Medically Unexplained Symptoms



PWP Training

- Trainee PWPs start a Band 4 and are employed by an IAPT Service to undergo funded training at a local training provider, upon successful qualification they are employed at Band 5.
- Trainees undergo: PGCert/GradCert Psychological Therapies Practice (Low Intensity Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) course for 9 months (typically x2 days p/week university study and x3 days p/week in service).
- Cohorts typically start in September (roles advertised on NHS Jobs Website during May – July) and March (advertises out from December – February).
- Since COVID-19 teaching days have been delivered remotely, this will be reviewed for future cohorts once guidance has been received. Services will have their own requirements for office based or remote working specific to their local need.

<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/psychology/pgcftp licbt/#main-col>



Entry Requirements for PWP Training

- Options for Study: Degree Apprenticeship, Grad Cert or PGCert
- PWP Training is offered at both final year undergraduate degree level (GradCert) for those who can demonstrate having studied at least at the second year of a degree or equivalent, or at postgraduate level (PGCert) for those already holding a degree.
- PWP Degree Apprenticeship: Requirement for Level 5 qual + L2 Maths + English
- GradCert: evidence of L5 study for Grad Cert
- PGCert: degree or level 6 equivalent
- Subject of previous studies does not matter however, some services will prefer this to be related to health care and demonstrating a year of substantive related experience within a mental health setting or working extensively with patients with mental health difficulties is a requirement.



Career Progression at Step 2

Clinical

- LI CBT Supervision
- Co-Morbid Mental Health Disorders and Long Term Health Conditions/Medically Unexplained Symptoms
- Peri-Natal Mental Health
- Band 6 Senior PWP roles (leadership, management and supervision specialisms)
(PG Dip in the planning stage specifically for Senior PWPs)

Operational

- Band 7 Step 2 Deputy Manager roles
- Band 8 Service Manager roles
- Operational and clinical roles often combined

Academic

- PWP training course programme director/lecturer/tutor roles
- New Lecturer Practitioner roles equivalent to Band 6
- Many PWPs combine a clinical and academic role



Challenges of the PWP Role

- PWP Training can be intensive
- Work is high volume, PWPs hold a large caseload and see a high level of patients per day
- Working with complexity or co-morbidity
- IAPT Service is not a general mental health service
- Role within the mental health field, involves potentially emotive work and risk assessment and management.
- Trainees have significantly reduced caseload whilst on course
- Personal Tutor & wellbeing services at university and supervisor in service.
- Preceptorship Programme to enhance clinical practice in adapting to diversity.
- Weekly case management supervision, group clinical skills supervision, monthly line management supervision, reflective practice sessions
- Use the evidence base to focus on what can be changed at Step 2, recognizing that recovery and benefit are different and work can still be meaningful at a low intensity level.
- Use supervision to recognize limitations of both IAPT or Step 2 and support access to more suitable services
- Use supervision to support your work-life balance and build personal resiliency.
- NHS Services have their own internal EAP programmes for staff, staff can also access IAPT as needed.



A large graphic composed of many small, light blue bird silhouettes flying in a circular pattern, resembling a stylized 'S' or a flock. The birds are scattered across the left and top portions of the slide.

For further information
please contact me at
Sophie.Strange@nhs.net