

Clinical Scientist in Respiratory and Sleep Science

Emma Davies
Healthcare Science



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The role of Clinical Scientist in Respiratory and Sleep Science is a great mixture of science, technology and clinical work. This means that you get to stretch your intellect whilst seeing the benefit of your work and the direct effect it has on peoples' lives.

Working in respiratory and sleep means performing tests, interpreting data and starting treatment in patients with respiratory problems, whether this occurs during their waking lives or during sleep. The role covers a broad base and there are many areas to specialise or explore, including extreme physiology (e.g. prolonged water immersion, extreme temperatures, altitude, which is performed for the Forces, for explorers, and emergency services); exercise physiology (we perform cardio-pulmonary exercise tests, which is a test frequently used by athletes), sleep physiology, and research. The role also includes manipulating expensive, technical equipment, so it is an exciting and attractive role for many types of people, including budding engineers. Unfortunately, not many people know about the role, so miss the exciting opportunity that it provides.

I joined the profession by pure accident! I was a parent and wanted to undertake a degree that I could afford, offered me a career, and was close to my home. This degree was offered by my local university and the NHS supported funding. The role is a true hidden gem and it isn't widely known. This meant that I was able to get on the course without directly relevant A' levels as it was not oversubscribed. It was the perfect opportunity, at the perfect time.

Someone brighter than me said "If you enjoy your job, you'll never work a day in your life", and this is how this job feels.



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