

Aimee Marshall, Orthotist, shares her learning from the Flying Start NHS programme

I undertook the programme when it was first refreshed, and have found that it has continued to have an impact on my career. The first year in practice, is a really overwhelming time, probably when reflection is most important but can get pushed aside because of everything else you are dealing with. The learning outcomes for the Flying Start programme ensure you are reflecting so this doesn't happen, which creates good CPD habits. It helped me most with directed reflection as it gives specific areas to look at and questions to consider, about a situation, it encourages you to look a bit further into things from all angles, which I have taken forward with my own CPD after Flying Start finished, because it's been over a year and half since I completed it.

Whilst undertaking the programme, it assisted me in my yearly Appraisal and for my CPD in my role as an AHP, as we could be asked to produce evidence for our registration body - HCPC, so through Flying Start and Appraisal I could evidence that. When I first qualified, I think I focused more on the clinical practice and evidence, research and development pillars, because you're trying to find your feet becoming a clinician and making sure your practice is in line with best evidence and trying to develop yourself and learn. Now I'm 2 and a half years down the line the other pillars are starting to come more into play.

Flying Start has given me a good foundation for the Facilitation of Learning and Leadership pillars and looking back, I took the most learning from the leadership pillar with self-leadership and strategies to help manage myself and the impact I have on other people, so I can regulate my actions dealing with different groups of people and situations. When I read through that part of the unit, it really stuck with me and it's something I have definitely taken forward. As a student you don't really have a huge focus on this, as you are looking at being clinically safe, getting things right for the patient. Whereas when you come into the working environment you realise you are in constant contact with colleagues, other departments, patients, so being able to manage yourself, as well as leading your patients is important, so this pillar has had an impact in making me more confident in my role, but at the time, when I was doing it, it wasn't my main focus. I guess I wouldn't have thought about that, if it wasn't for Flying Start.

Flying Start had a positive impact for me, I think it was possibly because it suited my learning style. The flexibility of the programme is good, whether you are AHP, nurse or midwife, we all work in really busy environments and not everyone has the same learning style, so it means you can go through it as is suitable for you. The programme is relevant to any new practitioner, regardless of their role, especially in their first year, as it encourages you to explore situations that you might not have looked at, especially as a young professional.