



Article “Introducing the role of a Pharmacist Inspector.”

Melanie Thomson recently joined the Jersey Care Commission as a Pharmacist Inspector. We sat down with Mel to discuss her career so far, what her role looks like with the Jersey Care Commission and the importance of safe medicines management.

What is your background in?

“I have worked in the community pharmacy sector for over 20 years and been a qualified pharmacist for the last 12 of these. I worked as a student in a local pharmacy before attending university to gain my master’s degree. I then carried out my pre-registration year in the UK before returning to Jersey. After qualifying I worked at Boots and then Lloyds pharmacy in a Pharmacist Manager role before joining the Commission in July as a Pharmacist Inspector.

I have been involved in various key projects over the past 12 years including the Sustainable Primary Care project and the development and launch of the mental health charity, Jersey Recovery College. I am also a member of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society Jersey steering group.”

This is a new role with the Commission so tell us more about what you are responsible for.

“The Commission identified the need to have a qualified pharmacist on the team. Previously they had the support of a pharmacist for a small amount of time each week but as the team has grown and the scope of the Commission has expanded it was decided to employ a Pharmacist Inspector. In this role I will be responsible for supporting the medicine side of the inspection process and providing advice on issues surrounding this.”

What does a typical day look like?

“Days can be very varied. Some days I work in the office; attending team meetings, discussing issues with colleagues, answering emails or developing inspection checklists. I also do some of these tasks at home. Currently I am on induction so I am learning about the inspection process and shadowing colleagues. We carry out pre-inspection research, we then go out to providers to inspect their services. We talk to staff and care receivers and look at the processes and policies in detail to gain an overall picture. My main area in the inspections going forward will be the medicines side. After the inspection there is more information collection before writing the reports. Based on findings we provide advice for improvement areas and celebrate areas of good practice and standards.”



What are the responsibilities of the regulation team and how do your skills complement?

“We are responsible for helping to achieve better outcomes in health and social care on the Island. We promote best practice and provide independent assurance. This is done by offering support to the sector and through the inspection process. My medicines-based knowledge complements the backgrounds of the other inspectors who come from nursing or social care backgrounds. We use our different skill sets to ensure the providers receive a well-rounded inspection and support process.”

Why is medicine management so vital in the delivery of safe care and how do you manage this?

“Medicines are a huge part of the health and social care sector. Almost all our regulated services have contact with medicines to some degree. Whether they are administering medicines or supporting people who take their own medication, it is vital that the processes are being carried out safely and in line with current guidance and regulations. Using these regulations and guidelines I will be developing a checklist for inspections that covers medicine related areas, including: storage, records and administration. I will be available to support medicine related queries from both my team and the providers. Overall I hope this will help to promote the safe and effective use of medicines and reduce errors, thus improving standards in the sector and overall patient care.”

To contact the Jersey Care Commission with any questions please call + 44 (0)1534 445 801 or email enquiries@carecommission.je.