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Alumni profiles - Gillian Hornzee

MSc Clinical Oncology, part-time 2011

Cancer Trials Team Leader, Imperial College

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How has your career developed since graduating from the University of Birmingham?

I had previously been working as a trials coordinator, but after graduating I was promoted to Team Leader, heading up a team of 5 people and running all the cancer trials run at St Mary's Hospital site of Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust.

What is the best thing about the job you are doing now?

I enjoy speaking to patients about trials, discussing with the clinicians which trials should be opened at the hospital and making sure that all trials data is accurate and medically correct.

Why did you originally apply to do your chosen course at Birmingham?

One of my colleagues had done the course and recommended it, especially as several of the lecturers are at the cutting edge of cancer research in terms of developing the vaccine for cervical cancer.

What did you think were the best points of the course and the University?

I loved the fact that clinicians were lecturing us about what happens in the real world of treatment of cancer. Also it was great to have lectures on the latest research into cancer. It fit in really well with my job too, because having lectures condensed into a week-long block made it possible for me to attend a course which was a long way away from where I work, but was better than other courses available locally.

What advice would you give to current students studying on the course?

Make the most of all the learning opportunities as they will stand you in good stead for the future.

How did you grow as a person by studying at University? Did it change your life in any way?

I became more confident, especially in dealing with the clinicians and professors making important decisions about recruiting to clinical trials.

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