

FIND *your* FUTURE

**Name:** Lauren Marks

**Job title:** Genomics Policy Support Officer

**Current employer:** NHS England & NHS Improvement

**Course studied at UCL:** MSc Genetics of Human Disease

### What is the core purpose of your role (and typical activities)?

The NHS England Genomics Unit are the team who coordinate and oversee genomics across the NHS. This work covers many different areas including the completion of the 100,000 Genomes Project, direct commissioning of genomic testing and clinical genetics, and embedding genomic medicine across the NHS.

My role as a Policy Support Officer stretches across the team in developing strategy and policy in relation to genomics and personalised medicine. This includes:

- Producing briefings, including parliamentary briefings and responding to parliamentary questions
- Supporting overall coordination of the NHS genomics programme
- Coordinating and leading work streams across the team including informatics, pharmacogenomics, patient choice (consent), test ordering, bioinformatics and test evaluation
- Stakeholder engagement with partner organisations, the NHS and patient groups

Playing a varying role in embedding genomic medicine across our 7 Genomic Laboratory Hubs (GLHs) and the wider NHS

### What kind of person would this role suit?

Someone who is...

- Passionate about the NHS and improving patient care
- Organised and efficient
- Self-motivated but can work as part of a team (both small teams on projects and larger teams on shared team/NHS deliverables)
- Interested in national policy and strategy in healthcare
- Flexible and can adapt to changing priorities and deadlines

- Comfortable with and likes learning about new things/areas
- Interested in genomics and how genomics will be used in the NHS
- Keen on a role which involved a range of stakeholder engagement and working across organisations

### **What kind of people and clients do you work with?**

I work with a range of people and stakeholders, including:

- Genomics England
- The NHS Genomics Medicine Centres (GMCs) and Genomic Lab Hubs (GLHs)
- Department for Health
- NHS Digital
- NHS X
- Health Education England
- Public Health England
- Working groups made up of specialists in their area e.g. pharmacogenomics specialist groups, cancer specialist groups, patient stakeholder groups
- Clinical services across the NHS
- Royal colleges

### **What aspects of your degree and time at University do you feel were of particular benefit in securing work and in carrying out your current responsibilities?**

- A strong background and knowledge in genomics, genetic testing and pharmacogenomics
- Having to be well organised around competing academic priorities
- Engaging with external opportunities to meet with alumni and external speakers, especially those with experience in the NHS

### **Do you have any top tips for current students who may be interested in your career area?**

Just go for it! I didn't expect to get the role as I felt like there may be others with more experience than me, but having done a lot of research about the role and demonstrating my knowledge in the area and willingness to learn and contribute to improving patient care helped me prove I was right for the role.

I would recommend researching the role and team you are interesting in working in, contacting someone already in that area or team to help understand what your career might involve, and also be yourself and show the personal qualities beyond the technical knowledge – the NHS is ultimately about wanting to improve patient care and ensure we are offering the care people need so showing that you care about the core values of the NHS goes a long way.