



# CONFERENCES

## Radiation therapist (RTT) poster award

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### *What does this award mean to you?*

It is thrilling to have our work recognised in this way. Changes to sexuality and intimacy are a common consequence of cancer treatment and evidence shows that patients who have the opportunity to discuss sexual issues experience reduced sexual morbidity. However, many patients do not receive the information they need from their oncology providers and there is a lack of knowledge and communication skills training for oncology professionals creating barriers for discussion in this area. So developing a therapeutic radiographer led Sexual Care after Radiotherapy clinic was to address this gap in service provision and to provide information, specific suggestions and support for sexual dysfunction as a result of radiotherapy treatment. I hope that receiving this award will raise awareness and encourage more oncology professionals to speak openly with their patients about the sexual consequences of cancer treatment.

### *What is your next challenge?*

I am now working in Health Education England for the Centre of Advancing Practice, looking at how we can transform services across the NHS in England and maximise the skills of the workforce to better serve the needs of the population.

### *What have been the highlights of your career?*

Setting up the sexual care clinic has been an absolute highlight of my career. When we identified this gap in service provision and the need for patients to be supported with their sexual issues after they had finished their treatment, we were unsure how and whether we would be able to address this very under-resourced and misunderstood consequence of cancer treatment. Being able to develop the skills and knowledge to run this clinic and then to be able to set it up and provide the service has been hugely satisfying.

### *Did your parents encourage you in your career, or would they rather you had done something else?*

My family still doesn't really understand what I do, even after 30 years!

## ***What has been your involvement within the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO)?***

I have been attending ESTRO meetings for many years. My husband is a medical physicist, so we often attend congress together. I am involved in other work with ESTRO, such as development of the European skincare guidelines, and I have been fortunate to make many friends and meet many colleagues through the organisation.

