

CAREER SPOTLIGHT

Jane Philippou | Occupational Health Manager



Tell us about your career at Saint-Gobain so far

I started working for British Gypsum in 2004 as an outsourced Occupational Health Advisor. In 2006, I was approached to work for British Gypsum directly as an Occupational Health Manager.

Tell us about your role

Occupational health is a specialist branch of medicine that focuses on the physical and mental wellbeing of our employees in the workplace. The aim of occupational health is to prevent work-related illness and injury by monitoring the health of the workforce and supporting management with sickness absence. I also support management by ensuring that health surveillance is legally compliant. Occupational Health has a wider range of services as we like to ensure that the employees feel they matter and are cared for.



Occupational Health is **diverse, stimulating, challenging** and I feel that **I make a difference to people's lives**. If you want to care for people but also want to look after the interests of the company, then this is a career to consider.



What made you want to work in Occupational Health and how did you start your career?

I am a general nurse and midwife; I first worked in a hospital setting as a Nursing sister, and thereafter as a Midwife for several years. I felt I needed a change and worked with the District Surgeon in South Africa, dealing with prisoners, indigent people, rape cases, immunisations and port health. This led me to venture into Occupational Health nursing. I obtained a degree in Occupational Health in 2003 and worked in numerous Occupational Health settings. I worked for a carpet company in South Africa and was part of a very successful and rewarding team. We won numerous awards, particularly relating to AIDS management, which was a major challenge for companies at that time. I emigrated to the UK in 2004 and have thoroughly enjoyed working here. Occupational Health is diverse, stimulating, challenging and I feel that I make a difference to people's lives. Early detection of disease can change the course of someone's life and I find my role in this process very fulfilling and purposeful.

What advice would you give to someone hoping to start a career in your profession?

Occupational health makes a real difference to the health and wellbeing of people at work. Good health is good for business and better workplaces have better overall financial results for both the employee and British Gypsum. If you want to care for people but also want to look after the interests of the company, then this is a career to consider - it straddles both worlds! Being part of a team that enables people to get back to work after being ill has its own rewards.

Tell us about the SEQOHS accreditation

This accreditation means our colleagues can be assured of a Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Service (SEQOHS). Our service has been audited by an independent, impartial and objective body and we have demonstrated our competence through obtaining the SEQOHS accreditation. Obtaining this accreditation involved lots of hard work such as writing policies and procedures and ensuring conformance across all the sites. As a team we identified good practice and we were diligent in pursuing standardisation. Working with different people across the organisation who have varying priorities is always a challenge and it is a credit to the line managers throughout British Gypsum who assisted us in successfully obtaining the accreditation. I am proud to be part of a team that has worked hard to obtain this recognition.



What's your favourite thing about working for Saint-Gobain?

Well, first and foremost, Saint-Gobain values align with my own. I've been in nursing for many years and British Gypsum has always been an industry leader in innovation and a company that espouses community friendly standards.



Early detection of disease can **change the course of someone's life** and I find my role in this process very **fulfilling and purposeful**.

