DR HELEN PARKER

SENIOR POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW

CANCER RESEARCH SCIENTIST

"I love that the work I do might save or improve the lives of people suffering from cancer"

Academic profile

Degree

Bsc Biochemisry 2:1

Post grad

PhD in genomic profiling of haematological malignancies

Qualification/achievement you are most proud of

My PhD

Subjects you enjoyed at school

Science, History, Languages

Career Summary

After completing my A-levels in biology, chemistry and psychology, I did a BSc in biochemistry. Then I worked as a research technician for 6 years in the Leukaemia Research Cytogenetics Group. Whilst there I studied for my PhD, looking at the genomic profiles of patients with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. I then got a position as a postdoctoral research fellow in the University of Southampton's Cancer Genomics Group and have been there ever since (12 years!). I work on the identification of genomic defects in patients with Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia- they can help us chose the most appropriate treatments and identify patients who are less likely to do well. I get to develop and use cutting edge technologies in my work. I also teach, present, publish my work and get to travel.

What inspired you?

From as early as I can remember I knew I wanted to work in science or medicine in some capacity. At college, when I first learnt about genetics, inheritance and disease I realised I'd found a subject I really loved and wanted to have a career in. I am now 20 years on and I have lost people I love to cancer- this is a constant motivator to keep going and hopefully help find a cure.

Describe your job

Fun

Interesting

Varied

Life-saving

Did you know .....

If you stretched out all the DNA from inside all of your cells, it would be 67 billion miles long!

Top tip

You spend most of your life at work so choose a career doing something you really love

Best thing about my job

I love going into schools and LifeLab to meet with young people and try to inspire them to think about careers in science

Find out more

- https://www.facebook.com/cancergenomicsgroup/?epa=SEARCH_BOX