

...with Cathy Foreman

Project Support Officer at CRN West Midlands, UK.

EDGE user since 2008. Contact: cathy.foreman@nihr.ac.uk

How and why did you move into clinical research?

Honestly, I didn't plan to! I had been made redundant from a FTSE 100 recruitment company after 18 years, so worked in various temping jobs to see what else the world offered. I applied for a part-time PA/Network Administrator position in Medicines for Children Research Network (MCRN) and 'blew them away' at interview. The rest is history, really.

What does your role as Project Support Officer at NIHR CRN in West Midlands entail on a daily basis?

Variety! It does depend on what projects I'm involved in and supporting as well as what arrives in my inbox during the day. One minute I can be setting up new Improvement Projects, answering questions or training users on Network systems (EDGE and the Google Hub platform), the next I can be negotiating venue prices for events and updating our databases and website. I don't have what is classed as a normal day but it's varied and great. I'm never bored!

How do you utilise EDGE in your everyday practices?

As I have a Network user role I utilise EDGE in a different way to other users. I am one of our Local Administrators and dip in and out regularly to request involvement and approve requests to our projects, assisting with users queries and of course, ringing my friends in the fab EDGE team. ;)



Which area(s) of EDGE do you feel most expert on, and why?

Hopefully all of it as I train users!

One personal habit or trick in EDGE that people might not know about:

I share all my hints and tips as widely as I can, so nothing to add here.

The quickest way to become an expert using EDGE:

Use it! Ask others how they use it and why, be a sponge. You get out of it what you put into it, add different fields to your reports to manipulate information.

One thing that you love most about your job:

There isn't one thing as I love all of it. It helps when you have a good team to work with.

Describe one of the greatest achievements at your network:

Rolling out EDGE to all of our trusts and having staff trained within a year!

One great thing that you think clinical research has achieved:

Discovering new treatments/medicines that help patients to live a better quality of life. Working towards prevention of cancer, dementia, and improving quality of life.

One hope for the future management of clinical trials:

To have an 'opt out' rather than an 'opt in', so that every member of the public has a chance to take part in a research study to help improve treatment and save lives.

Do you enjoy cooking? If so, what is your favourite thing to cook?

I make mean Chocolate Brownies and Lemon Drizzle Cakes.

Tell us something about you that most people don't know:

I have a tattoo on my coccyx - symbol of a Chinese Dragon as I was born in the year of the Dragon (Yorkshire lass and a dragon - no comments ha ha) and I'm a qualified Reiki Master/Teacher.

And finally, and perhaps most crucially, one piece of EDGE functionality that resembles your personality:

Reporting, as you can vary what and how much you get out of it!

