

Placement as an OR Analyst at the Department of Health, Leeds 2012/13



Department of Health

Amy Wilson, BSc Mathematics

Primary Medical Care

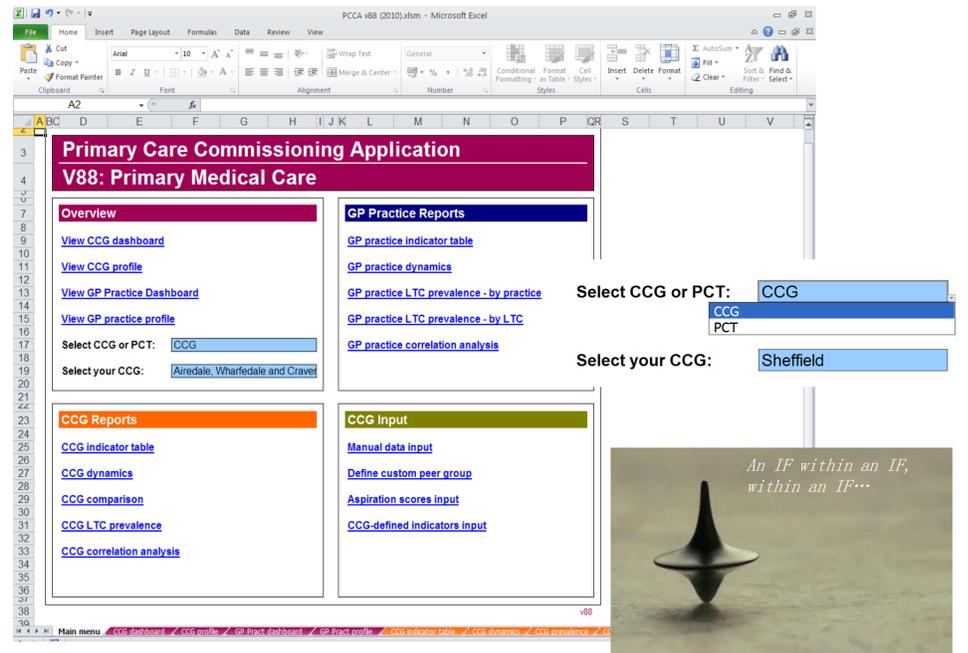


Trust Me, I'm a Doctor

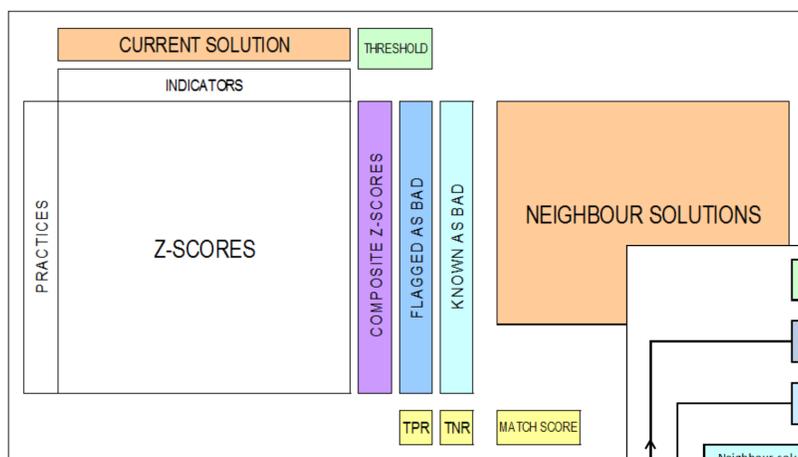
I joined the **Primary Medical Care** team, a small team of about 5 people. This team is part of a larger group of **30-40 analysts** whom I also worked with on a daily basis. Primary Medical Care's work is focused on all things GP related.

PMC's work includes things such as; negotiating **GP contracts**, analysing results from the **GP Patient Survey** and **developing models** to identify under-performing practices.

One of my main projects was to update the **Primary Care Commissioning Application (PCCA)**. This is a large Excel model that is published online several times a year. It is used to **monitor performance** at practice and regional levels and contains data on **almost 200 indicators**.



I had to update the PCCA to reflect the changes in the structure of the NHS. This involved **calculating data**, changing and **adding Excel formulae**, and adapting **VBA code**. I also had to use skills such as **project-management** and **customer engagement**.



Perhaps the most interesting work I did was an experimental project using a **simulated annealing algorithm** to try and produce a model that would identify under-performing practices. This was an Excel model that used macro's to run the algorithm.

In this project I quickly improved my **Excel and VBA skills**. I also developed **strong problem-solving skills** as I had to come up with and implement new ways to improve the model. I learnt how to produce a clear, coherent model and how **to analyse and present the results**.

Skills

My placement enabled me to develop a **strong skills in Excel and VBA**. I have also learnt how to **manage projects, develop mathematical models** and **present my results**. I have also improved in more general skill areas **like time-keeping, organisation, communication and professionalism**. This placement also offers invaluable guidance and **practice for applying to graduate schemes!**

Other highlights included;

- Working with the other placement students to organise the **Analysts Christmas Party**
- Attending many **analytical seminars** and two advanced courses in Excel and VBA
 - Visiting London** to attend the Healthcare Innovation Expo
- Organising an **Awayday** for my team
 - Interview practice** for the DH graduate scheme



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