



Interview with Scindia Whitehead

Pathway speaks to Scindia Whitehead, who joined Sonic Healthcare UK in December as Customer Service Manager.

With a varied and extensive career in customer service and departmental team management under her belt, Scindia Whitehead joins the Sonic Healthcare UK family as Customer Service Manager, a newly created role that sees her work with a number of departments.

Based in the Halo, her focus is on improving Sonic Healthcare UK's customer and client facing services. Having only started in December, she has already got stuck in, working with several departments. In a sense, Scindia says, this role "isn't one size fits all": there is no "one thing" that she targets daily, as each area has various customer service elements.

"The role is very diverse: today I could be doing one thing, and tomorrow I could be doing something completely different."

With the courier team, her work has been primarily focused on the telephonists, addressing areas like phone etiquette and tone to ensure optimal client relations. She also works closely with the management to look at ways to improve their processes.

Scindia has recently started working with the Laboratory Service Centre, which is a first port of call for clients wanting to contact the organisation. Again, she's looking at phone etiquette, and working with the head of department and seniors within the LSC department, focusing on training, implementing processes and overall productivity to ensure the team are working at their best and communicating effectively with clients.

Patient Reception at 76 Wimpole Street, as the organisation's only patient facing service, is another key area of focus for Scindia. She works with the management team to identify potential improvements across all aspects of the patient experience, from their entry into the building all the way to their discharge. This includes everything from the communication skills of the receptionists, to the look, feel and upkeep of the building itself.

All of this work is by nature ongoing, as any new processes need to be maintained and require check-ins to ensure everything stays on track.

Scindia goes into each department with neutrality, and she is keen to stress the collaborative nature of the role:

“I will meet with the management team within the departments, I will introduce myself to the team, and we will work together to understand the possible challenges that may currently exist, exchange ideas of any areas we feel we can grow the service we currently offer, with the aim to implement, always taking into account and asking the question, will this be manageable on a day-to-day basis for the team?”

Scindia spent 25 years working in hotels, before moving into private hospitals. Throughout her career, she has developed a confidence and an ability to adapt to new situations:

“Working in both hospitality and healthcare has given me a good understanding of what the customer and patient expects. In every role I’ve had I’ve adapted my management style and how I work with people.”

It’s this flexibility that has allayed any concerns about moving into an unfamiliar environment, alongside her eagerness to keep learning:

“This is a new role for me, as some of the departments I am working with are areas I have not been exposed to. I am very much open to these challenges, to continuing to learn and grow and ultimately make a difference in all the customer service areas within TDL.

“When this role came up, it was very interesting because I’d never worked in pathology before. It was mind blowing for me initially. I have now settled in and built great working relationships with my colleagues.”

With her fingers already in so many pies, and further projects firmly on the horizon, Scindia looks set to enjoy an action packed first year at Sonic Healthcare UK.

