



Case study

Name: Kelly Arthurs

Job title: Deputy Sister

Coalville Community Hospital

What did your early career look like?

After qualifying, my first job was on the Acute Medical Unit. This is a fast paced admission ward and has a variety of medical patients and I learnt so much. I cried every shift for 6 months, not because I didn't like it but because I felt I didn't have enough knowledge. I had great mentors and support from others on the ward and I still have very fond memories of being on that ward. After 3 years, I gained a band six deputy sister role on the Acute Frailty Unit, again learning and caring for vulnerable frail older patients. I love this field of nursing. I now work as deputy sister on a Community Hospital Ward. It is a challenging area in different ways and no two days are the same. I have taken further studies and now have my Degree in Nursing.

How did you become a deputy sister?

I wanted to be a nurse when I was little, playing with doctors and nurses sets. When I finished secondary school I was accepted at Charles Frear School of Nursing but I wasn't very confident back then and was scared to start the course. I got a job in an office and stayed in office jobs for the next 12 years. I didn't enjoy working in an office and always regretted my decision. I often requested a prospectus for nursing and always became frightened to take the plunge. My GCSE grades were A-C and as nursing was a Diploma in Higher Education I had the necessary grades to apply for the course. Just before my 30th birthday, I was brave and applied to start my nursing career. I was thrilled when I was accepted and loved my training. At last I knew where I belonged.

What is a typical day as a deputy ward sister?

My shift starts at 7am and we begin handover of patients from night staff. I check that all patients are safe and check our staffing levels. We start our medication rounds and assist patients with washing and dressing and help with breakfast, assisting patients to eat and drink when they are unable. Around 9am we meet with nursing, therapy and medical staff and discuss each patient and plan for safe discharges. Often our patients are complex and we need to involve Social Services and request care packages and equipment to support them on discharge. Lunch is around 12pm and again we assist patients and do another medication round. Throughout the day we care for patients' needs, complete wound care, vital signs monitoring, other clinical skills, telephone calls and complete documentation. Evening meal and medication round is around 5.30pm. Then at 7pm we hand over patients to the night staff, giving them information on each patient and the plans for the next shift.

Do you have any words of encouragement for anyone thinking about a career in health and social care?

Nursing is the most rewarding career. One minute you could be holding the hand of a dying patient, next have a patient who is confused and agitated and wandering and you need to keep them safe. I have now been qualified for 10 years and to me nursing isn't a job, I am privileged to be able to care for people. I have learnt so much and every day is a new learning opportunity, you never stop learning in nursing which is something else I love. I have worked with so many inspiring colleagues and I am proud to say that I am a nurse.

To find out more - www.your-future.co.uk