

Trainee Nursing Associate Case Study

Please tell us your name

Beatrice Tripp

Tell us about your role and where you work

I am currently working on a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Tier 4 unit in Plymouth. I have been working as a Trainee Nursing Associate here since September 2017 and was a Health Care Assistant (HCA) on the unit for 18 months before that.

What qualifications and experience did you have prior to coming into the role?

Before coming to the role, I have had experience working on a wide range of Acute Mental Health wards, as I worked for NHS Professionals. Before this I completed a degree programme at Plymouth University but in a completely different subject.

What is it like being part of a national test programme?

It's quite exciting being a part of the national test programme as it is a new role which we are helping to shape. There were some concerns as staff were not 100% sure on what we should and shouldn't be doing on the wards, but this has been cleared up with the release of the Draft Standards for Nursing Associates.

What has been easy and what has been challenging so far?

It has been challenging to find time for studies and completing competencies around working full-time. Whereas nursing students are supernumerary on the wards when they have placement we are counted in the numbers which can be hard work when you have a busy ward or are short staffed.

Finding time to write essays and revise is also difficult and it usually means having to go to the library or study on days off.

The easier side of the role is that we already know our placements and patients, as we already worked our wards before starting the course, which has helped.

How are you finding the education/training component? (for instance, day release etc.).

We have a university day once a week and this has been easy to fit in as our ward manager was aware of this before we started the course. They have also been helpful in releasing us for other training and placements.

What new clinical experiences have you had?

I have currently had experience on an Older Peoples Mental Health ward and will soon be having experience in community settings as well as in a General Hospital setting, which I am looking forward to.

Describe the support in practice are you receiving?

We receive support from the university where we are studying, from our organisation, our workplace and our tutors. Everyone has been extremely supportive!

What has been the response of people you are working with?

My colleagues have been very supportive, and I have not had a negative response that I have heard some other Trainee Nursing Associates have had.

How do you see the relationship between the NA role and the registered nurse?

My perception is that the registered nurse takes on the most complex cases and the NA's are there to support them in taking on the less complex cases.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your role?

Thank-you for your participation