

Becoming a trainee Nursing Associate



Andrew Jolley at Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP) talks about his journey to becoming a trainee Nursing Associate.

I started working at Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP) as a temporary receptionist at Wirral Drug Service in 2003. I really engaged with the service and the service users and successfully gained full-time employment within the team.

As I settled in I liked to connect with the clients; their stories and backgrounds. Most had been through traumatic events or struggles that had caused them to engage with CWP for help and support. I witnessed some fantastic care and some first class members of staff for whom 'going the extra mile' was standard.

Clinical support worker

I stayed as a receptionist for over six years and when a new Clinical Support Worker role was created I was told that I had the right personality for the post and would be an asset to the team. I learned new skills that helped me support clients, such as venepuncture, testing for blood borne viruses, syringe exchange, and delivering brief interventions and advice. I loved working alongside a team of Nurses who were so professional and caring.

Their clients were a group that were very much side-lined and ignored by the community, but the team looked after them so well and inspired me to want to be better at my job and deliver the best person centred care that I could. I wanted to learn more to be able to give more to our clients. I always had great support from my managers and other members of the team to develop further and further.

I was able to complete my level 3 apprenticeship in health and social care. I wanted to try to progress to the next level but due to the Public Health tendering process our service was moved out of the NHS and CWP. At this point I was asked if I would stay with CWP in a new project at an inpatient drug and alcohol detox unit. I took this opportunity and was able to develop a whole new set of skills and learn from other experienced staff and service users over the next two years.

Nursing Associate

Just as this project was coming to an end, the opportunity to apply for the trainee Nursing Associate programme arose. I had read about the new role in a journal several months earlier and had dreamed that one day I may be able to put myself forward to be able to take the next step.

I was amazed that after a tough round of interviews that I was accepted and able to be part of this pilot scheme, to enhance my skills and in turn deliver even better care to service users. I am humbled to have been chosen and proud that I will be able to work hard to inspire others in the future to develop their skills and provide better and better person centred care.

Andrew.