

Rotations

What should you expect?



What is a rotation?

A rotation programme is a number of placements in different areas, usually within the same organisation. Although these are typically in clinical areas, some offer an opportunity for non-clinical rotations including research and development.

Each rotation lasts for several months and represents one part of a learning pathway towards becoming a multi-skilled professional.

Rotation programmes are available to all nurses and offer an opportunity for development and growth in the role.

Why a rotation programme?

A rotation programme offers exposure to a broad range of clinical skills, ways of working and experiences. For those who are unsure of their future career, rotations provide a route into discovering your passions and interest.

In developing experience in different areas, you have the opportunity to explore where you may want to be in three years' time.

How long are rotations?

Each organisation offers different rotation programmes. A typical programme will be around 18-24 months long and each rotation will be around six months although this may vary.

How many rotations?

Most programmes offer two or three rotations, some may include a short rotation into a non-clinical area.

What are the benefits?

A rotation programme offers many benefits to including:

- developing confidence and competence in different areas
- clarifying future career pathways prior to making any decision
- developing into a flexible and dynamic employee
- building resilience and developing leadership capabilities
- providing an opportunity to explore and gain an understanding of different areas
- developing a strong skill set.



Lauren's story...

Lauren joined a London hospital after training in Hampshire. Her 18-month rotation programme involved placements in the transplant unit, cardiology and intensive care. Although not an area she had initially considered, Lauren really enjoyed her time in the transplant unit and accepted a permanent role at the end of her rotation programme. Lauren's advice is to take the opportunity of a rotation programme as it is one of the best things you can do to grow in confidence and gain experience.

Types of rotation programme

While some organisations can offer bespoke rotations, a typical rotation programme will include different clinical settings, which may include community and primary care. Some organisations may offer a non-clinical rotation or a placement in a different discipline, such as mental health.

Rotations may be effective in developing a variety of career pathways for the newly registered nurse or a nurse with experience looking to change direction. Other benefits may include insights and secondments.



Vanessa's story...

After starting her nursing career in Spain, Vanessa moved to the UK in a role as a cardiac nurse. She found she didn't enjoy it as much as she had hoped and took the opportunity of a rotation programme with three placements in paediatric general, oncology and neurology. Vanessa found she enjoyed the neurology placement so much that she stayed for a number of years! She is now working as a matron in paediatrics.

Next steps

If you're interested in undertaking a rotation programme, please contact the preceptorship lead or practice educator in your organisation who will give you more information about the rotation programmes available to you.

Learn more

To find out more about rotation programmes and read more case studies about other nurses' journeys, please visit www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/capitalnurse/our-work/rotations

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