

Nikki Smith

Nikki is based at South Warwickshire Foundation trust, read below Nikki's case study.

My role includes the planning and delivery of training to care home staff and to undertake nutritional assessments of care home residents. I work closely with Warwickshire care homes to support them with meeting the Warwickshire Nutrition and Hydration Standards. I develop resources and such as newsletters, e-learning and presentations regarding malnutrition. I am also a DESMOND lay educator, delivering group education session for patients with T2DM.

I have a degree in Human Nutrition however I have always been interested in extending my knowledge. The role of a dietetic support worker has allowed me to use the skills and knowledge gained from my degree as a foundation. Working with registered dietitians means I am learning every day which makes the role both exciting and engaging.

So far SWFT has supported me with lots of training including three BDA support worker courses. We have regular department education sessions and clinical support meetings which I find incredibly valuable. The mandatory training has given me skills in healthcare. All the training has allowed me to develop my skills and knowledge to help best support patients. Much of the training has also increased my confidence in practice.

I am extremely proud of the training we have delivered to care home staff. We worked hard adapting this training during the pandemic and finding other ways of delivering the information. We created an e-learning series and continued the training virtually via Microsoft Teams. This training has given care home staff the knowledge they need to help best support their residents in the prevention and treatment of malnutrition.

Working closely with AHP's is a great opportunity to gain knowledge and experience. These roles are a great entry into an area you are passionate about. It is never too late for a career change and to do a job you love! I feel very proud to be part of the dietetic team at SWFT, particularly over the last year and working through all the changes brought about by the pandemic.