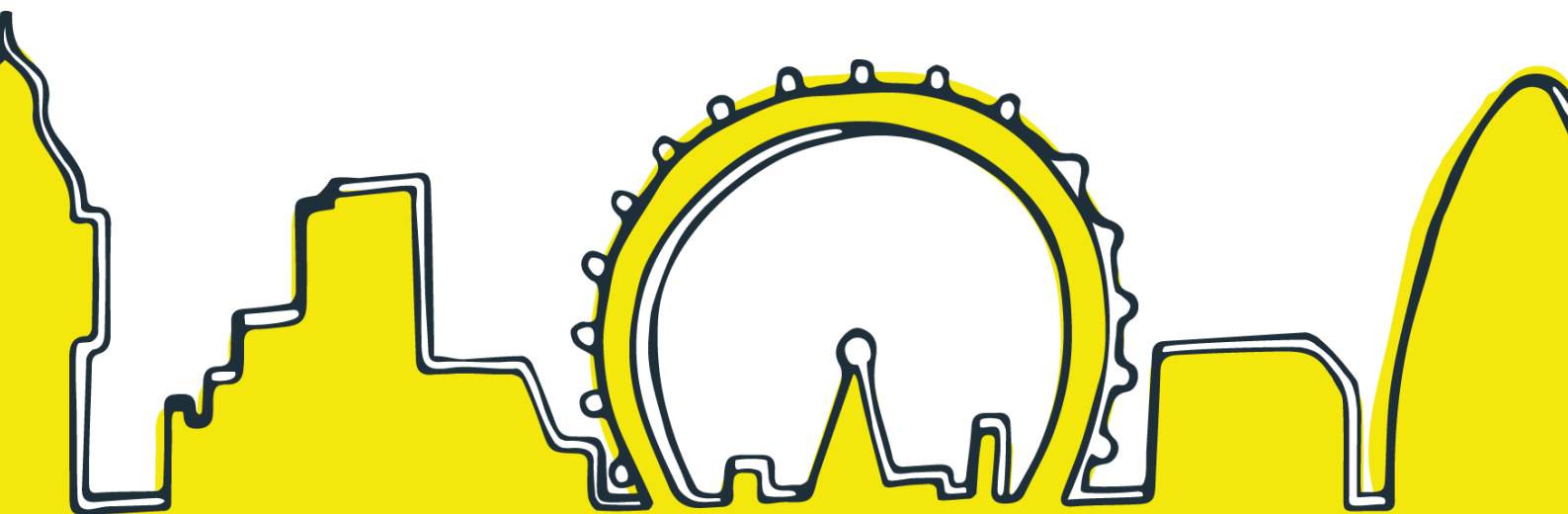


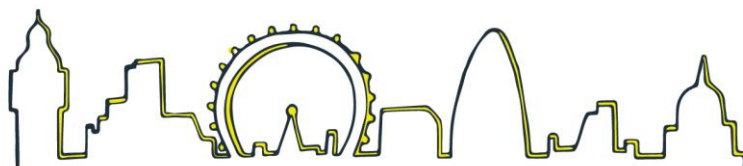
Rotations: Case Studies



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The following case studies show the journey of four different nurses and the impact of rotations on them and their nursing careers.



Owain, Charge Nurse, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (UCLH)

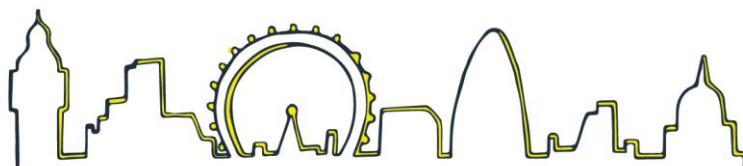
Owain started his career at St George's St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust in October 2013 and was initially offered a permanent job in A&E. When an opportunity came up after six months, Owain took it and moved to the Acute Medical Unit (AMU) for 7-8 months before returning to A&E for 18 months. Owain decided to move back to the AMU as he had enjoyed it so much; he stayed for two years. Although Owain had enjoyed his initial period in A&E as newly qualified nurse and found he was well supported, he didn't find it so helpful in consolidating theory, so the AMU rotation provided greater depth and knowledge.

Owain then moved to University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (UCLH) and elderly care for 12 months as a charge nurse as he wanted to move into a growing speciality, with scope to develop his career and innovation, particularly in community.

Owain believe the optimum length for a rotation is about eight months as it can take a while to get used to an area. While acknowledging the challenges for an organisation, Owain believes that rotations are beneficial to the individuals, as they give more idea of what is available and provide an opportunity to build a network of friends and colleagues in different areas that you can call on for advice and support.

In his current role, Owain is now looking to set up a rotation scheme through elderly care to provide newly registered nurses with the opportunity to experience the different aspects of elderly care through an acute setting and a community role. This will in turn provide better patient care and highly competent staff.

Owain's advice to a newly registered nurse is to start initially on a medical ward to gain a range of experience of general conditions before doing other rotations.



Viorica, Staff Nurse, Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust (RNOH)

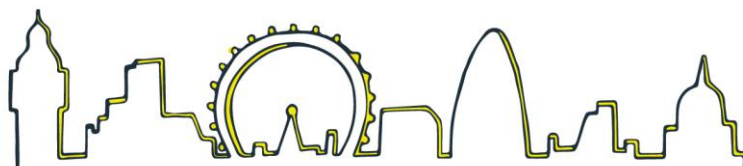
Viorica started her career with Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust (RNOH) six years ago as a healthcare assistant while completing her Diploma in Health and Social Care. She then took a secondment with RNOH which enabled her to complete her nursing degree at Middlesex University. Her last placement during her training was with the short stay unit, where she spoke to her matron and found out about rotations.

After finishing her degree, Viorica returned to RNOH as a staff nurse and began her first placement in short stay which was for six months. Her second rotation took her to the spinal surgery unit for six months before a series of shorter rotations in recovery and high dependency unit (HDU). This was followed by one month in research, during which she combined shifts with the research team with working on a ward.

Viorica found her background as a healthcare assistant helped and the six-month rotation was about the right amount of time, as she felt ready to move on. She admits that it does cause anxiety moving on after a rotation; however, she believes it is important to look at the bigger picture, appreciating the experience, skills and knowledge each rotation brings. She now feels able to transfer her skills from one place to another and the rotations have given her confidence to face most situations and handle different patients with different conditions. She feels confident in making decisions and putting patients first.

The rotation opportunities have meant that Viorica has met a lot of people, built a good network of contacts and expanded her knowledge of other areas and different equipment. On the downside, she acknowledges it is difficult to plan ahead and you do need to be committed, flexible and willing to keep learning.

Viorica's advice to a newly registered nurse is to take rotations if your personal goal is to learn new skills, knowledge, have new experiences and develop confidence. It helps to find out whereabouts you want to work and although rotations aren't for everyone, they are amazing!



Vanessa, Matron, Evelina London Children's Healthcare

When she was 18 years old, Vanessa moved to the UK from Spain to study nursing at Kings College London . After finishing her nursing diploma, she joined Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust in paediatrics (now Evelina London Children's Healthcare), where she started a series of rotations, each for six months.

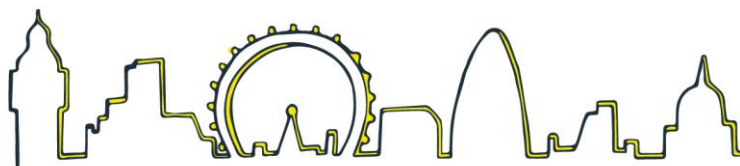
Vanessa completed rotations in paediatric general medicine, oncology and then neurology. Despite having no prior interest in neurology, she found she really enjoyed it and stayed in the specialism for 12 years, achieving her band 6 after two and a half years.

Vanessa did a secondment and completed her degree while working full time as a band 6. After a few years she got itchy feet and moved on to work as clinical nurse specialist in Neurofibromatosis (NF), still in paediatrics. After a few years, Vanessa decided she wanted further development and moved back to Evelina, where she has worked as a matron for 16 months.

Vanessa has enjoyed every single role and would definitely recommend rotations to others, as she feels it opens up new experiences and helps newly registered nurses to have different perspectives and an understanding of different services. The responsibilities of a staff nurse are different to those of a student and, quite often the area students think they want to go into turns out not be what they thought it would be. Vanessa had wanted to be a cardiac nurse but did not enjoy it at all, while some of her nursing colleagues have found the same.

Vanessa thinks it takes three to six months to learn the job, gain a better understanding and to consolidate experience and knowledge, so it is advisable not to make decisions about an area immediately.

Vanessa's advice to a newly registered nurse is to take rotations and see them as an opportunity to develop. The more experience you have, the more opportunities you have for development and the greater your value to an organisation as a skilled, flexible, competent nurse.



Lauren, Senior Staff Nurse, Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS Foundation Trust

Lauren trained at Bournemouth University and, on graduation in 2016, she joined The Royal Brompton Hospital in Harefield. She had initially wanted to go into a cardiology department but was offered a rotation programme and decided to take it as a way of gaining experience.

Her first rotation was the transplant unit, where she enjoyed her first six months. She then moved to cardiology and, subsequently, intensive care for six months each. At the end of her programme, she took her permanent role in the transplant unit, as she had so enjoyed her first rotation there, although it was not an area she had previously considered.

Lauren believes the optimum length for rotations is around six months, although it may be beneficial to have longer in specialist areas, particularly at the beginning when there is so much to learn. For example, Lauren found she was unable to be fully effective until she had completed some of her training, especially intravenous (IV), and was unable to immerse herself fully. She acknowledged that it is difficult to move on from a rotation sometimes, particularly when you absolutely love an area (she loved transplant). However, Lauren chose the rotation scheme as she knew it would give her a broader experience.

Lauren believes that rotations provide clinical skills, the opportunity to work in and understand different areas, which has given her so much more confidence in herself. She also believes it opens up your eyes to more opportunities and areas you may never have considered working in. For organisations, rotations help to develop a skilled and experienced workforce and brings positivity and fresh approaches to a department.

Lauren's advice to a newly registered nurse is to take the opportunity to do rotations, as it is one of the best things you can do to grow in confidence and gain the experience which you may not do otherwise.

