



A Day in the Life of a NURSE PRACTITIONER

'A Day in the Life of' is a series written by experienced community nurses for student nurses to see what life in the community is like.

Personal details

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1. What's a typical day for you?

A typical day is planning a client case load and a 'to do' list which will change throughout the day. Why does this change? Clients who are homeless often need nursing care which requires a flexible approach with boundaries to ensure their immediate health needs are at the forefront, however at the same time having an opportunistic approach to promote health, making every contact count. A working day in the community is either assessing rough sleepers on the street or those hidden behind bin chambers within a housing estate. My day also consists of running clinics in a hostel/a day centre or visiting hotels which have been commissioned to accommodate people experiencing homelessness during the Covid 19 pandemic.

2. What has been your proudest moment in nursing so far?

It is hard to choose the proudest moment in my nursing career. I say this because there have been so many rewarding experiences such as, working amongst multidisciplinary teams saving immediate life or supporting the dying and those most close to them. Working in the community for the past 8 years has been a privilege; constantly increasing and advancing my knowledge and clinical skills within primary care. A key proudest moment is when I became an independent prescriber as I am able to assess, diagnose and treat the patient using advanced skills, working within my professional competence as a nurse practitioner.

3. What skills set would you expect a student nurse to bring to the role of community nursing?

Communication skills both verbal and non-verbal are essential in the community. Knowing the phases of wound healing and applying clinical skills; an understanding of the signs of a skin infection and how this relates to the patient symptoms and the anatomy and altered physiology of the presenting complaint. Lastly, assessment skills without the use of electronic medical devices such as, being able to take blood pressure manually.

4. What do you wish you'd known before you started working in the community?

I wish I had known how big the community was as a whole. This would have helped me network with other departments more seamlessly. I was also unaware of how many fields and professions there were. The only service I knew was district nursing (DN) but there are so many amazing nursing roles who make such a difference (as well as DNs).

5. Any advice for aspiring community nurses?

My advice for aspiring community nurses is not to feel you are not capable or you do not have the right experience to enter this amazing speciality. I joined the community from the London A&E departments and was inspired by seeing so many individuals who were homeless enter the door to then leave the same way against medical advice. I wanted to be more involved in their health journey but could only do this by moving into the community to make a difference. Community is huge and your skills can be transferable like mine were from A&E. Community nursing brings its own challenges as every day can be different. Some practical advice is to wear comfortable shoes as you will be moving amongst the streets/clinics within your locality. There is ample growth and opportunities in the community, but you need to seek these by being confident, professional, patient led and resilient.



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