



# A Day in the Life of a **CLINICAL SERVICE MANAGER**

**'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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**Location:** First Community Health and Care, Surrey

## **1. What's a typical day for you?**

Every day is different, first thing is to triage and prioritise the work for the day. Working with so many cohorts of vulnerable families, homeless, Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, Show People (GRTS), Asylum seekers and refugees, that planning needs to identify where the risks are, identify the most important cases, i.e. pregnant women and babies especially those who will not have had any routine pre and post-natal checks to identify any congenital conditions which require referral to further services. Sometimes we act as detectives piecing together records and information if NHS numbers do not exist or are different. Due to the clients not being known to services we are dealing with unexpected issues, which can be different to the normal HV team, where families are known to services. We also get a lot of phone calls first thing especially from the GRTS who we have built up relations with, who call from all over the country with health issues which need immediate advice and support.

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

Making a real difference to the 70 refugee women and babies who were relocated to Surrey by the Home office 6 months ago. We had little notice and the trauma that these women had experienced on top of being moved from London, where they had started to receive support was very challenging. But through collaboration, and taking on a system wide approach, the women are now in receipt of appropriate wrap around support from services and the community. The team also have been in receipt of very good support to enable them to provide the support needed as the last 6 months have been very challenging, but I am very proud that all those involved have improved the lives of such vulnerable women by meeting their needs.

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

They need an open mind, not make assumptions and to listen to what a person's needs and priorities are rather than tell them what they need. To take the experience of the community back into the acute setting, remembering that all people come from a community and small things can change a person's experience e.g., cultural sensitivities, offering an interpreter. To keep the lens of public health in whatever form of nursing they decide to do.

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

That we do not need to solve all of a person's problems, and we are just part of a puzzle and each person's experience is unique and there is no one size fits all solution. If I had understood that the community is the context in which we all live and that by seeing other communities through the lens that they do the provision of appropriate and culturally sensitive care is easier to deliver.

## **5. Any advice for aspiring community nurses?**

This is the most wonderful job in the world, and it is such a privilege to be allowed into other communities and I by giving them the opportunity to tell us what they need can help us learn so much. We are now known as the Gypsy nurses in Surrey as they now have ownership of us as they trust us and we listen to their needs.

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