

International Recruitment to the Community CASE STUDY

2022/#6



Interview with Kristine Medina, Band 5 working with District Nursing team

Originally qualified as a Registered Nurse in the Philippines in 2011. In 2014 I studied an emergency technician course, which is like a paramedic course in England. I had various roles in the Philippines, but I eventually found my niche in 2017 when I began working as a community nurse with the Department of Health. In the Philippines, one Public Health Team manages an entire city and the public health nurse will go and live in a village (borough) and deliver the public health in that area.

This post will cover vaccination, pre-natal and post-natal care, sexual health, long term conditions, nutrition, home care, epidemiology, environmental sanitation. They will deliver teaching sessions and seminars to the population. They are the main Primary Public Health provider to that village. We do go out to private homes, when necessary, but it is mainly clinic based. Therefore, when I applied to come to the UK to work in the community, I was already familiar with working as an autonomous practitioner working in a community setting.

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I made the decision to come to the UK in 2020, so I made myself familiar with the process required to work as a nurse in the UK. I studied for my IELTS, had my health screening, police clearance and applied for my visa without having a job in the UK. I wanted to work in the UK and researched what I could about community nursing in the UK. Then I was made aware of an agency who were advertising for nurses to come to work in the UK, so I contacted them, and I had an interview with the International Recruitment Lead from Central London Community Health Care Trust (CLCHCT) in July 2021 and I was offered a position and arrived in England at the end of August 2021.

I had to quarantine in a hotel for 10 days due to Covid-19 restrictions, which gave me time to get over jet lag and time to reframe my mind for working in a new country. After this, I was offered shared accommodation in a house; however, this was not with other Filipino nurses so after four months I left that accommodation and I now share a flat with other Filipino nurses and I am very happy.

I currently work with a District Nursing team as a Band 5 Community Nurse in North West London and have been with the team since I came to the UK in September 2021. I live a 30-minute bus ride from clinic, and I generally walk to the home visits unless it is raining, or I have a specific time frame and then I catch a bus. Once I passed my probation and received my NMC PIN registration, I was encouraged to carry out home visits on my own.

There are certain competencies that must be completed and I need to improve my confidence in areas such as

venepuncture and catheterization as these are skills that I did not perform in the Philippines. However, I do feel that my prior experience has been recognised and I am comfortable with assessing patients' needs, medicines management, diabetes, wound care and caring for patients with long term conditions. I am a good communicator, so I am happy having conversations with patients and working with them to provide solutions.

The main challenge for me has been how to look for and find places and patients' homes. I am given a postcode and a house number, and I must find my way. In the Philippines the nurses will memorise the entire village and we don't need house numbers. I am getting there, and the District Nursing team are always willing to give me directions.

I think the key learning since coming to the UK for me has been knowing that I had the courage to make this move. There are a lot of people who have a dream to work in a different country and I wanted to prove to myself that I could make the transition. I have, and it has been a smooth and quick transition and I have learnt this about myself. I enjoy learning about different cultures, the economy, politics and seeing how people live in this

country. I love listening to patient's stories; this also helps when I am assessing a patient.

If I was to give any advice to a newly recruited international nurse, I would say just to keep an open mind, persevere and do not take risks unless you are holistically ready. There is a lot of emotional and psychological implications moving to a new country and you must be patient with yourself as on occasions even the most headstrong person like myself can become overwhelmed with the different culture and processes and procedures, but don't give up. This is what I have told some of my colleagues in the Philippines and it has inspired them to come to the UK to work.

I am happy with the whole process since I was recruited to come to London. My District Nursing Team are famous for being a pleasant team, so I am very lucky to be working in such a supportive environment. I am very happy to be working in a field of nursing that I love and, in a place, where I always wanted to live – London.

I am still learning how the NHS works but I would like to do further courses and maybe enrol onto the District Nursing SPQ programme one day.

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