

International Recruitment to the Community CASE STUDY

2022/#7



Interview with Noritta Mpala, Adult Nurse (with an 18 month post qualification in paediatrics)

Noritta is a newly recruited nurse from Zimbabwe. She has only been in the UK since 6th February 2022 (6 weeks). She qualified as a Registered Nurse in 2016 and then studied paediatric nursing from 2018 – 2019. She loves being a nurse and her reasons for coming to the UK were multifaceted, one to be able to care for patients in a holistic manner and have the adequate resources to support their care.

In Zimbabwe it was very sad to see patients dying without the relevant resources to support their end-of-life care. Also, the cost of living in Zimbabwe is very high and the wages are low, so coming to the UK will hopefully give Noritta a better standard of living. Noritta has left her husband and son behind but hopes that her husband will join her later and they can set up home together in the UK. Noritta has found this separation difficult and says that it can be lonely but with social media and Wi-Fi she is able to communicate with her family daily.

Noritta's journey to the UK was seamless. It began when she contacted an agency about coming to the UK. She had an online interview with representatives from Central London Community Health Care Trust and following a successful interview the agency sorted the documentation required to enter the UK. Because

Covid restrictions were still in place at the beginning of February, Noritta was met at the airport by a driver who took her to a hotel in Central London where she had to quarantine for 4 days. She welcomed the rest as it was a long flight, and these days gave her an opportunity to recharge her batteries. After the fourth day she was taken to her accommodation in North West London by one of the Practice Development Nurses from the Trust. Noritta is now living in a self-contained flat with a bathroom, and she shares a kitchen area with other nurses. There is another nurse from Zimbabwe who lives opposite, so this gives a feeling of home.

On Monday 14th February 2022 Noritta began working in West London with the Health Visitor Team. The team have been very welcoming and accommodating and Noritta is very happy there. When Noritta worked in the Community in Zimbabwe she worked in a paediatric unit and was involved in vaccination clinics and child development. Visits to the home were not the normal practice and this only happened if a child was malnourished, or child abuse was suspected. Then a referral would be made to the non-government organisations to follow up.

In the UK visits to the home are normal practice and Noritta is getting used to this way of working and understanding the role of the Health Visitor has been a huge learning curve, but she is enjoying learning these new ways of working. Noritta is shadowing the Health Visitor and will not visit on her own until she has successfully passed her OSCE. Every Friday she attends the Academy at CLCH for training and this will continue for 12 weeks. During her induction Noritta was introduced to the policies and procedures of the Trust, but there is also an online platform whereby she

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can refresh herself and gain up to date information. The training can be updated online also.

Some of the key challenges for Noritta have been the travelling time to work. Even though her accommodation is only approximately 7 miles from where she is working, this takes her 1.5-2 hours by public transport as she begins work at 9am and finishes at 5pm which is peak time for traffic.

The other key challenge was setting up a bank account. Because Noritta has only been in the UK for 6 weeks she does not have any household bills or credit score to give the bank, so for the moment she has opened an online bank account and after 3 months she will apply again to one of the main high street banks.

If Noritta was to give advice to any new internationally recruited nurse it would be to prepare themselves for a culture shock. Also, the feelings of loneliness and missing family is huge, so make sure new arrivals have excellent Wi-Fi connection to keep in touch with family. Also Noritta says that coming from a tropical climate, the weather in the UK can be very gloomy!

If Noritta could make any suggestions it would be to ask the Trust to consider covering the rent for two months, as she found it difficult to make ends meet with only the first month being paid. Just having this buffer would have helped her with her finances. She does appreciate however everything that the Trust have done for her as they have provided the accommodation, provided her with a laptop and a phone. Noritta is very happy with the Health Visitor Team she is working with and is looking forward to learning how the NHS system operates.

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