

# Community Learning Disabilities Nurse

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Nursing



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As a learning disability nurse, I work in partnership with people of all ages promoting their autonomy, choice, citizenship, and social inclusion. Every person is treated in a person-centred manner and in doing so, we get the opportunity to help those accessing our services meet individualised goals and empower them. I really enjoy the blend of clinical and managerial skills that the job offers, supporting people in terms of the 'whole person' within a biopsychosocial framework.

At present, there are a number of flexible routes into the profession, particularly for those already within healthcare settings, which are very appealing. I'm not someone who thinks a good academic student necessarily makes a good nurse. Personally, I think if you are someone who takes pride in what they do, has a good personal ethos and value base, and you like the idea of working with people to achieve positive outcomes, you would make a good learning disability nurse. The irony is, whilst you have a great skill set as a learning disability nurse, the most useful and widely used skill is being just being human and having the ability to listen and treat others accordingly.

I've been working in health care for almost two decades. I left the NHS in 2007, having not found a career that suited me and undertook what I thought was my dream job and a fairly successful career within the music industry; however, a lack of work life balance and a poor sense of job satisfaction drew me back to working with people in care.

I then discovered learning disability nursing; I was captured by the sheer impact these nurses had upon a person's quality of life. And I was taken aback by the quality of therapeutic relationships they had built with the people accessing their services. The quality of care that I witnessed being provided was amazing, nurses working towards true equality within the healthcare system and being agents of change; I think that is what really drew me in, it was only later that I discovered the breadth of knowledge and skills that you acquire within the role and that solidified my choice.

Whilst working as a Healthcare Support Worker, Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW) gave me the opportunity to study a part-time, level 4 qualification alongside full time employment; successful completion of this course enabled me to later study full-time for two years to attain my nursing registration in 2019.