



Avril Barnes

Staff Nurse



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What is your job title, what does it involve day-to-day and how long have you been working in that role and/or at the Trust?

I'm a staff nurse on the female assessment and treatment ward at Clifton House. I have been qualified for nearly two years with Clifton House being my first post since my qualification in 2016.

My day to day roles include co-coordinating the shift, supporting service users and providing guidance to staff on the ward when management are not available. I am also the lead nurse to a service user on the ward. I work closely with other members of the ward team from other disciplines, as well as community services, to ensure that care remains consistent between services.

Why did you choose to work for the NHS?

Nursing was not a career I had considered until I was around 22. I started bank work for a private forensic hospital due to the flexibility of the hours and I loved it. I had never had a job where I woke up in the morning and it made me excited. From there I went to do my training and gained a qualification in mental health nursing.

I believe that access to high quality healthcare should not be based on social economic factors and should be free at the point of contact. For me, working within the NHS was the only logical choice.

What's your favourite part about your job?

My favourite part of my job is the small and seemingly insignificant daily interactions that I have with service users. Being admitted to a hospital ward can be a difficult adjustment due to the nature of the busy environment. Taking the time to talk to service users can ease some of their concerns and make the transition easier by building

therapeutic relationships with staff.

What's the most challenging part about your job?

The most challenging part of my job has been the constant need to adapt to change. Services can change quickly in order to meet the changing need of the client group and although this is positive, it can be difficult for the staff involved.

Tell us about:

a time you were really proud of your work

I had the opportunity to take over the care of a lady who had been in services for some time, and stay with her throughout her discharge and transition into the community. I had a conversation with her son and husband who both spoke at length about the meaning of having her home. At that point I knew as a team we had helped a family not just an individual.

your fondest memory of working at the Trust

It's hard to pick a single memory throughout my time in the Trust, but what is most apparent to me is the level of teamwork on the wards. As a newly qualified nurse it is vital to feel supported on the ward as you transition from student to leader. The peer support that I have received throughout this transition will really stick with me.

What do our values of integrity, simplicity and caring mean to you? How do you show these values in the work that you do?

These trust values are vital to delivering high quality person-centred care for service users within our hospitals.

These are reflected in my wider values of what nursing is, and can be captured within the nursing 6 C's of care, courage, compassion, competence, communication and commitment. These are the foundations of how I nurse on a daily basis.

What message would you give to inspire the future NHS workforce in your area of work or in general?

The NHS provides amazing opportunities for career development. Throughout the NHS there is a broad range of training and development in a wealth of areas. No two specialties, teams or wards are the same.

The NHS is constantly expanding and evolving to meet the needs of the public that it serves, being a part of this dynamic organisation allows you to evolve and learn as a practitioner. I cannot think of another organisation where this is the case.

How has the NHS made a difference to you/how have you seen the NHS help people?

The NHS has allowed me to train to do a job that I love and for that I will be forever grateful. It has given me the opportunity to grow both professionally and personally throughout my training and career so far.