

Francine Maclachan, Adult Nurse, discusses her journey from student to registered professional during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Transition from student to registered professional?

My first post as a newly qualified nurse (NQN) was within the stroke unit. Here I found my transition from student to NQN very well supported, with management understanding the necessary provisions to make the transition run as smoothly as possible. Each day had its own challenges, new patients and new decisions and questioning yourself whether the correct decision is made in each circumstance. However it is all a learning process for the development of my skill set and becoming a safe, competent, efficient and effective practitioner.

Prior to this post and during my final placement as a student, I worked as a Band 4 for six months. This position was very beneficial in helping me to develop a more holistic approach to nursing and take a step back from the clinical side. I knew that on completion of this placement I was ready to take on the challenges of a Band 5 nurse, as I felt my skills were more adaptable and could combine both holistic and clinical approaches to care.

Impact, learning and support – joining NHSGGC during pandemic

I felt confident to commence employment as an NQN during the pandemic. I did consider my family knowing the risk of Covid but having their unconditional support made it an easy decision. I did have concerns that learning opportunities may be delayed or unavailable to me as there were course cancellations at the beginning of my employment. However I have since completed IV medicines administration, Immediate Life Support (ILS) and relevant training to safely administer Covid Vaccinations.

As a newly qualified nurse, one experience that impacted upon me was when one of our patients had a sudden onset cardiac arrest and died. The gentleman was due to be discharged from the ward within the week, he had been with us for months receiving rehabilitation after a stroke. I saw first-hand just how quickly someone can deteriorate, how quickly medical staff are required at the scene and the importance of having the correct medical equipment available. I'm also more aware of the emotional strength required to stay calm and organised whilst caring for the other patients and relatives. It is at such times one can truly appreciate the importance of teamwork within an acute healthcare setting.

Flying Start learning outcomes

I have achieved the learning outcomes for Flying Start and will continue to develop upon these.

