

# **I AM... THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE**



# **RCN**



# **I AM...**

## **THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE**

IF YOU WANT TO MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S LIVES, THEN CONSIDER A CAREER IN CARING. YOU CAN TRAIN ON THE JOB STRAIGHT FROM SCHOOL OR COLLEGE AND YOU'LL FIND THAT NO TWO DAYS ARE EVER THE SAME!

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE RCN, YOU CAN BE SURE YOU'LL NEVER BE ON YOUR OWN. WE WILL ASSIST YOU WITH YOUR STUDIES TO HELP YOU PROGRESS IN YOUR CAREER, SUPPORT YOU IF YOU NEED ADVICE, AND MAKE SURE THAT YOU ARE ALWAYS TREATED FAIRLY.

TAKE A LOOK AT THESE STORIES TO GET A FEEL FOR WHAT BEING A CARER IS LIKE, AND YOU MAY DECIDE IT'S THE CAREER FOR YOU...



MY NAME IS **JOANNE**,  
I AM A  
**HEATH CARE ASSISTANT**



HI, MY NAME IS **KATIE**,  
I AM A **CARE ASSISTANT**



HELLO, I'M **AJAY**  
I AM A **CARER**



I'M **MIKE**, I AM A  
**HEALTH CARE SUPPORT WORKER**



# I AM AN HCA

(HEALTH CARE ASSISTANT)

HI, I'M **JOANNE**. I'M 18 AND I WORK AS AN **HCA**  
IN A VILLAGE GP SURGERY.

I GOT A SUMMER JOB AS A RECEPTIONIST  
HERE LAST YEAR. I REALLY LIKED IT, SO  
WHEN THE HCA JOB WAS ADVERTISED, I  
APPLIED, AND GOT IT!

YOU TRAIN ON THE JOB AND DON'T NEED ANY  
PREVIOUS CARE EXPERIENCE, SO YOU CAN  
START STRAIGHT AFTER LEAVING SCHOOL.



**MY JOB IS EXTREMELY VARIED...**

**I DO BLOOD TESTS  
MOST MORNINGS...**

**IN THE AFTERNOONS I DO HEALTH  
CHECKS, WHICH I REALLY LIKE.**

**THEY INCLUDE  
WEIGHING PATIENTS,  
CHECKING THEIR HEIGHT...**

**WHAT DO I DO?**

**...THEIR BLOOD  
PRESSURE...**

**...AND THEIR URINE...**

**I ALSO DO MORE COMPLEX  
THINGS LIKE ECGs WHICH  
MONITOR THE HEART, AND I  
LAY OUT EQUIPMENT FOR  
MINOR SURGERIES TOO.**

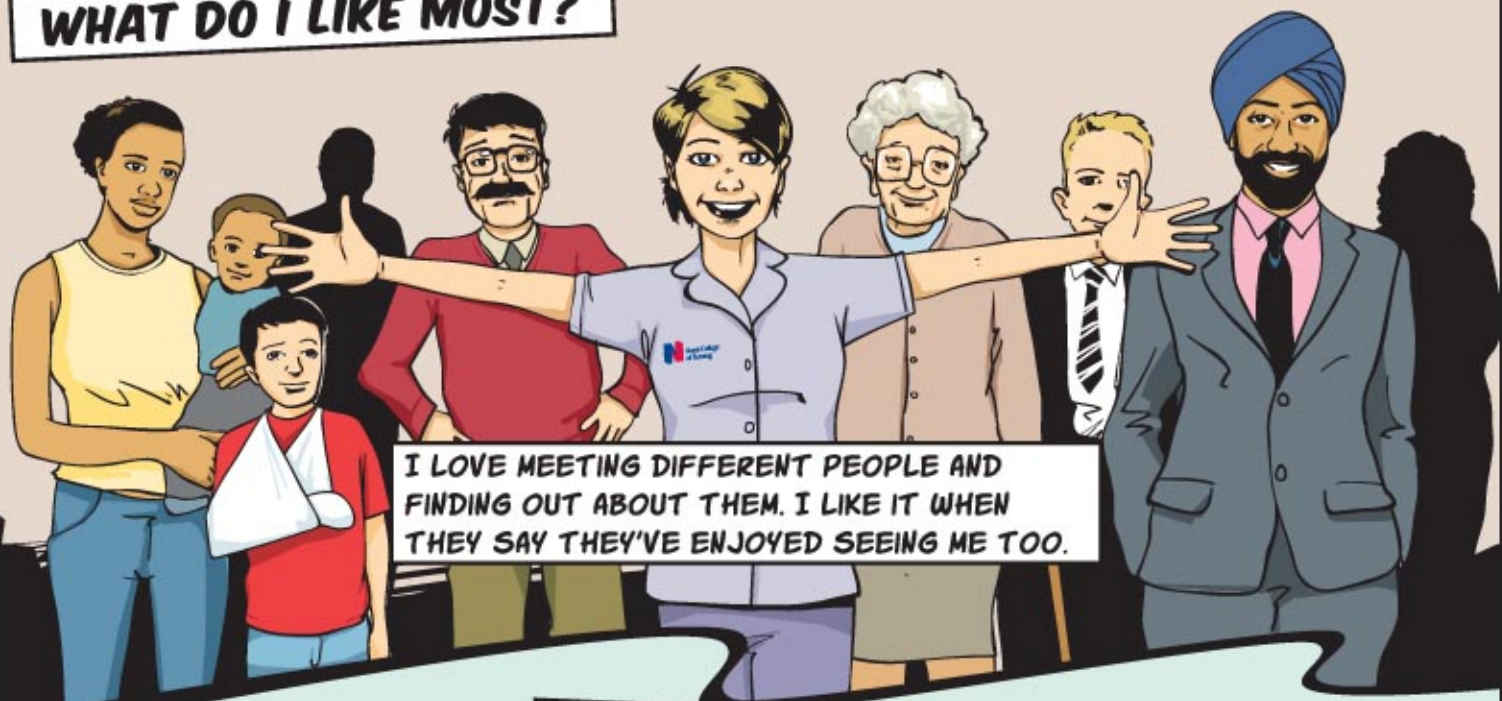
**...WHICH ISN'T AS SCARY  
AS IT SOUNDS!**

**I DO STOCK CHECKS, LOOK  
AFTER EQUIPMENT, AND CALL  
PEOPLE TO ATTEND THEIR  
APPOINTMENTS AS WELL.**

**TRAINING ON THE JOB MEANS I'M ALWAYS LEARNING SOMETHING NEW.  
NEXT IT'S HOW TO DRESS WOUNDS AND TAKE OUT STITCHES!**



## WHAT DO I LIKE MOST?



I LOVE MEETING DIFFERENT PEOPLE AND FINDING OUT ABOUT THEM. I LIKE IT WHEN THEY SAY THEY'VE ENJOYED SEEING ME TOO.

## WHAT DO I FIND THE HARDEST?



IT CAN BE REALLY BUSY SOMETIMES AND I HAVE TO MANAGE LOTS OF THINGS AT ONCE, BUT I'M GETTING BETTER AT IT.

IT'S DIFFICULT SEEING PEOPLE YOU COME TO KNOW GET MORE ILL TOO, BUT I REALISE THAT'S PART OF THE JOB, AND SEEING THIS HAPPEN HELPS TO MAKE ME STRONGER AS A PERSON.

## THE FUTURE

### WHERE DO I SEE MYSELF IN FIVE YEARS' TIME?



I'VE STILL GOT LOTS TO LEARN, BUT MAYBE IN A FEW YEARS' TIME I'LL HAVE TRAINED TO BE AN ASSISTANT PRACTITIONER, WHICH WOULD BE AMAZING!



# I AM A CARER

I'M AJAY. I'M 17, AND I WORK AS A CARER AT A NURSING HOME IN NEWCASTLE. IT'S MY FIRST REAL JOB, AND I'VE BEEN HERE FOR ABOUT FOUR MONTHS.

I GOT INTO CARE BY ACCIDENT REALLY... I WAS LOOKING AFTER MY DAD WHILE HE WAS REALLY ILL. I REALISED I WAS PRETTY GOOD AT IT, SO I DECIDED TO LOOK INTO CARING AS A CAREER.



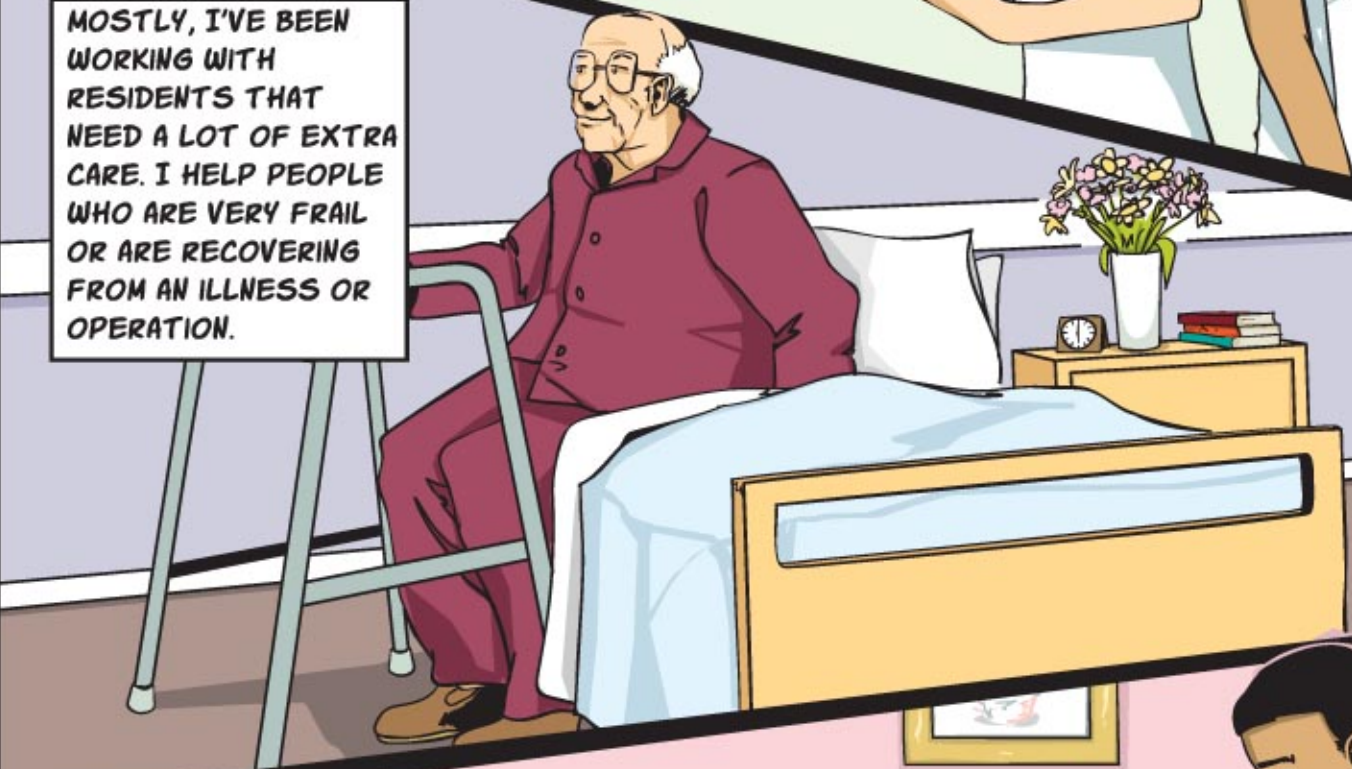


## WHAT DO I DO?

THE CARE HOME IS HUGE,  
SO I ALWAYS HAVE  
ANOTHER CARER WITH  
ME TO SHOW ME THE  
ROPES AND HELP ME  
FIND MY WAY  
AROUND. WE'VE  
BECOME REALLY  
GOOD FRIENDS!



MOSTLY, I'VE BEEN  
WORKING WITH  
RESIDENTS THAT  
NEED A LOT OF EXTRA  
CARE. I HELP PEOPLE  
WHO ARE VERY FRAIL  
OR ARE RECOVERING  
FROM AN ILLNESS OR  
OPERATION.



THEY NEED ASSISTANCE  
WASHING AND DRESSING, GOING  
TO THE TOILET, AND EATING.  
SOME OF THE RESIDENTS ARE  
NO LONGER VERY MOBILE, SO I  
NEED TO BE ON THE LOOKOUT  
FOR BEDSORES OR SKIN  
PROBLEMS, AND HELP TO MOVE  
THEM AROUND.





## WHAT DO I LIKE MOST?

I LIKE MEALTIMES BEST. IT'S REALLY SATISFYING SEEING SOMEONE YOU CARE FOR TUCK INTO FOOD, ESPECIALLY IF THEY'VE LOST WEIGHT RECENTLY. IT MAKES ME FEEL REALLY HAPPY.



## WHAT DO I FIND THE HARDEST?

I THINK HOISTING RESIDENTS INTO THE BATH IS THE MOST DIFFICULT THING, BECAUSE THEY CAN GET FRIGHTENED, EVEN THOUGH WE'VE DONE IT BEFORE. IT'S HARD SEEING SOMEONE DISTRESSED.



...BUT THEY DO ALWAYS FEEL BETTER ONCE THEY'RE WARM, CLEAN AND COMFORTABLE AGAIN.

## THE FUTURE...

## WHERE DO I SEE MYSELF IN FIVE YEARS' TIME?

I LOVE WORKING IN A CARE HOME... I FEEL LIKE I AM DOING SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT. NOW I JUST WANT TO GET BETTER AND BETTER AT IT.

IN THE FUTURE I MIGHT APPLY TO DO AN APPRENTICESHIP IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE AT OUR LOCAL HOSPITAL. THERE ARE SO MANY INTERESTING JOBS IN CARE, SO WHO KNOWS?







# I AM A CARE ASSISTANT

HELLO, MY NAME IS **KATIE**. I'M 19  
AND I WORK AS A **CARE ASSISTANT**  
IN A HOUSE FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES  
AND COMPLEX NEEDS, NEAR BIRMINGHAM.





**WHAT DO I DO?**

I HELP TO CARE FOR FOUR ADULTS WHO NEED SUPPORT TO LIVE IN A SHARED HOUSE. MOST DAYS I WORK WITH TWO OTHER CARE ASSISTANTS AND A SENIOR CARER.




I HELP THE RESIDENTS GET BATHED AND DRESSED...



...HELP THEM TO PREPARE AND EAT THEIR MEALS...

...HELP TAKE THEM TO THE DOCTORS OR TO HOSPITAL APPOINTMENTS...



...GO SHOPPING WITH THEM...



...OR ON OUTINGS AND TRIPS.

I JUST DO WHAT I CAN TO HELP THEM LEAD AS NORMAL A LIFE AS POSSIBLE.



**WHAT DO I LIKE MOST?**



I LOVE HELPING THE RESIDENTS DO THE THINGS THEY ENJOY. ONE LOVES PICKING FLOWERS THAT WE GROW TOGETHER IN THE GARDEN AND PUTTING THEM IN THE HOUSE. IT'S REALLY SATISFYING SEEING HIM GET SO MUCH PLEASURE FROM THIS.

SOMETIMES ONE OF THE RESIDENTS CAN HAVE A BAD DAY AND GET UPSET. THIS MAKES ME FEEL HELPLESS BECAUSE IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO REASSURE THEM, AND ALL I WANT TO DO IS MAKE THEM FEEL SAFE.



**WHAT DO I FIND THE HARDEST?**



THIS CAN UPSET THE OTHER RESIDENTS TOO, BUT I FEEL REALLY PROUD WHEN EVERYONE IS RELAXED AGAIN.

**THE FUTURE...**

**WHERE DO I SEE MYSELF IN FIVE YEARS' TIME?**



I WANT TO KEEP LEARNING MORE ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING DISABILITIES, BECAUSE I FIND IT REALLY INTERESTING, AND I'M UNDERSTANDING MORE ALL THE TIME. I LOVE STUDYING AND THINK I'D LIKE TO TRAIN TO BECOME A SENIOR CARER, OR MAYBE EVEN A REGISTERED NURSE IN A FEW YEARS.



# I AM A HEALTH CARE SUPPORT WORKER

(HCSW)



MY NAME'S **MIKE**. I'M NEARLY 20,  
AND I WORK ON A MEDICAL WARD IN A  
LARGE HOSPITAL IN WALES, AS A  
**HEALTH CARE SUPPORT WORKER**.

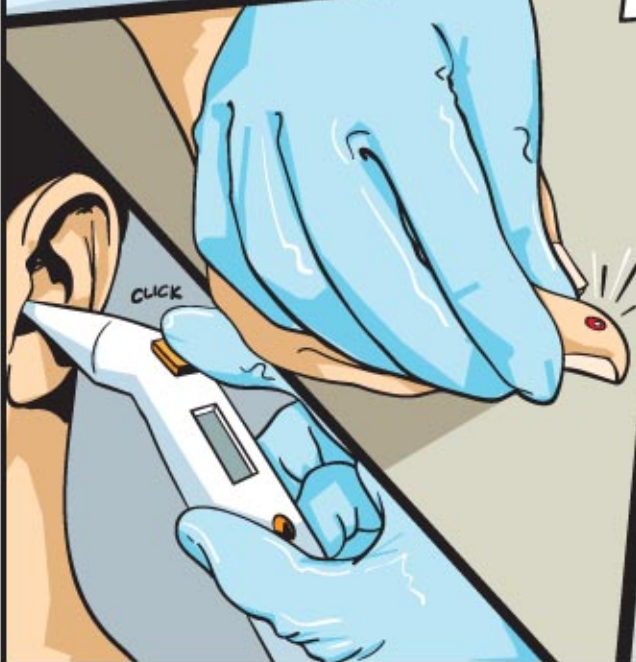


## WHAT DO I DO?

I'M PART OF THE NURSING TEAM. I WORK ON THE WARD WITH OTHER HCSWs AND STUDENT NURSES, AND SOMETIMES WITH ONE OF THE NURSES. THINGS CHANGE ON THE WARD ALL THE TIME, SO WE HAVE A HANDOVER AT THE START OF EACH SHIFT TO MAKE SURE WE KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON AND WHO WE'RE LOOKING AFTER.



DAY SHIFTS USUALLY START BY GIVING PATIENTS THEIR BREAKFAST, THEN HELPING THEM WASH, GO TO THE TOILET AND DRESS, THEN WE CLEAN AND TIDY THE BEDS. I TAKE PATIENTS TO X-RAY AND DO THE OBSERVATIONS TOO; THINGS LIKE TAKING BLOOD PRESSURE AND TEMPERATURE, AND CHECKING URINE OR DOING FINGER PRICK TESTS FOR DIABETIC PATIENTS.





## WHAT DO I LIKE MOST?

WITH THIS JOB, YOU LEARN SOMETHING NEW EVERY DAY. THERE'S A REAL VARIETY OF WORK, SO I NEVER GET BORED.

I LIKE THE CHANGE IN ROUTINE OF WORKING NIGHTS WHEN IT FEELS LIKE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT JOB AND I OFTEN HAVE A CHAT TO THE PATIENTS BEFORE THEY GO TO SLEEP.



## WHAT DO I FIND THE HARDEST?



SOMETIMES THE PACE OF THE WARD IS TOO HECTIC, AND I CAN'T SPEND THE TIME I WANT TO WITH A PATIENT WHO MAYBE DIDN'T GET ANY VISITORS, OR WAS FEELING LOW...



...BUT IT'S GREAT WHEN WE DO HAVE TIME TO CHAT AND LAUGH WITH THE PATIENTS.

## THE FUTURE...

I'VE ALWAYS FOUND THE IDEA OF WORKING IN A+E REALLY APPEALING AND KIND OF DRAMATIC...

BUT ALSO I KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAS JUST TRAINED TO BE A PLASTER TECHNICIAN, WHICH SOUNDS PRETTY GOOD TOO.

THAT'S MADE ME REALISE: THERE ARE A LOT MORE JOBS IN HEALTH CARE THAN I FIRST THOUGHT.

## WHERE DO I SEE MYSELF IN FIVE YEARS' TIME?





**FIND OUT MORE...**

text 'World',  
your name,  
and your  
email address  
to 88020\*

Menu

2 abc

def 3

5 jkl

mno 6

7 pqrs

8 tuv

wxyz 9

0

#

\* STANDARD NETWORK RATES APPLY



# I AM...

# THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

**IF YOU HAVE FOUND THESE STORIES INSPIRING,  
A CAREER IN HEALTH CARE COULD BE RIGHT FOR YOU.**

TO FIND OUT ABOUT A CAREER IN HEALTH CARE, VISIT  
**[WWW.RCN.ORG.UK/IAMCARING](http://WWW.RCN.ORG.UK/IAMCARING)**

OR TEXT '**WORLD**', YOUR NAME, AND YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS  
TO **88020**\*

YOU CAN SPEAK TO SOMEONE AT THE RCN BY CALLING  
**0345 772 6100**.

THE RCN IS A UNION FOR HEALTH CARE ASSISTANTS AND NURSES, WHICH LOOKS  
AFTER YOUR RIGHTS AND NEEDS AT WORK, AND GIVES YOU SUPPORT IN YOUR  
LEARNING AND CAREER.

\* STANDARD NETWORK RATES APPLY



Royal College  
of Nursing



PUBLICATION CODE: 003 997  
PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 2011