

# Healthcare Support Worker Case Study

## **Please tell us your name**

Alia Shah

## **Tell us about your role, where you work and how long you have been in post**

I am a healthcare assistant at Great Ormond Street Hospital on a Haematology and Oncology ward. I have been in the role for 13 months.

## **What qualifications and experience did you have prior to coming into the role?**

I have previously been a Maternity Support Worker for over 5 years and had completed my foundation degree in Health and Social Care.

## **Describe a typical working day**

The shift begins at 07.45 with a 15-minute staff handover and then we all head onto the ward to get specific handover for the patients we are allocated, I will generally have 3 patients with a RN.

After handover, I will go and see all my patients to check how they are and to perform the safety checks for the patient and the equipment in the room. Once that is completed, I will read the patient notes from the previous shift and document that the safety checks have been done and let the nurse know if I have any concerns at this time.

Throughout the shift I will perform observations either 4 hourly or more regularly as their condition dictates and document their pain score.

Another part of my role is to keep an accurate fluid balance for each patient. This means checking with them regularly to document their intake and weighing any urine, stool or nappies. I will also take samples from these if required for any investigations.

I have recently started to learn how to do dressing changes for Central lines and how to insert Nasogastric (NG) tubes. To learn these skills, I will check with other staff to see if they have patients who require either of these and if they are happy to let me practice with them.

Spending time with families or keeping the patients occupied while a parent goes for a coffee or lunch is a particularly rewarding part of my day. It gives me a chance to get to know them and helps us to have good working relationships with inpatients.

Keeping the ward area tidy and free from clutter is also something I like to keep on top of, especially on very busy shifts as it can get quite hectic and it is helpful if notes are always in the correct drawer.

I am also asked to take urgent samples to the labs sometimes which I am happy to do and must find correct equipment if we don't have it available on the ward.

If at any point I have time, I will ask other nurses if they need help with anything and make sure that empty rooms are stripped and appropriate cleans are booked. This ensures smooth running of the ward.

Completing care plans for each patient is also an important part of my role. I will document everything that has happened with the patient and the care I have provided. The RN will then complete the documentation with any medications or chemotherapy that has been administered.

### **Describe how you make a difference**

I believe my role is important as it takes some of the strain off the registered nurses. This leaves them more time to focus on administering Chemotherapy and medicines. I usually have more time to spend supporting the families and children especially if they have been recently diagnosed and need extra time and attention while they adjust to the surroundings.

### **Tell us about the training, education and career opportunities you have**

I am always being offered various study days at work. I am hoping to be able to progress to a band 4 soon.

- **Did you complete any training to prepare for your role?**

No, I had experience and I was supernumerary for 2 weeks before I started.

- **Are you currently undertaking any education/training programmes?**

No, I am however, learning to insert NG tubes and doing dressing changes for central lines.

### **Thinking about your team**

- **Describe the support you are given**

I always feel supported by all ward staff, they are always helpful and help me if I am unsure of anything. I feel I can go to my manager if I am having any issues.

- **Do you mentor or support colleagues?**

Not currently.

### **What are your aspirations for the future?**

I would like to progress to a band 4 and am considering doing the new nursing apprenticeship if it becomes available and if I am supported by my trust.

**Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your role?**

I believe it is a vital role and that there should definitely be more support staff on each shift as we are limited to 1 HCA per shift.

**Thank-you for your participation**