



**Samantha
Gilmore**

Neonatal Nurse

What does your job entail?

I attended Queen's University Belfast straight out of school to read music but was very unsettled. I then took a year out and during that time worked in a nursing home, this is what made me consider nursing. I love helping and trying to 'fix' people as most nurses would testify to also!

How did you get into this line of work?

I work in the Neonatal unit located in the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald. This unit comprises of Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU). Within NICU we look after unwell new-born babies who usually require assistance with their breathing. We also provide nutrition through intravenous fluid administration to support them until they are ready to move to SCBU. Once in SCBU our babies are encouraged to feed orally and are ready to go home once they can tolerate full feeds and are putting on weight. One main aspect of my job is supporting the baby's parents. It can be stressful for parents when their baby is born unwell. We encourage skin to skin contact to promote bonding and empower parents so they are able to provide hands on care to their baby.

Outline your career to date

I qualified as a children's nurse in September 2020 and worked in the Neonatal Unit since qualifying.

Tell us about your qualifications and training?

I completed a two year part time access to biomedical science course at my local college. I was then accepted into Queens University Belfast for their Children's Nursing Degree. This degree differs from standard degrees as its 50% theoretical and 50% practical. It is generally broken up into 6-week intervals with 6 weeks in lectures then 6 weeks in clinical placements.

What qualities are required for your job, personal and professional?

To be a neonatal nurse you need to have good communication skills, be able to stay calm under pressure and have great interpersonal skills. It's important that a nurse is compassionate towards patients and their families while also providing excellent care. You need to be able to work well within a team and also speak up to advocate for your patient when they are unable speak up for themselves.

Who has inspired you most in your life?

My parents have always been a great inspiration to me. They have fostered children with complex needs since I was only 3 years old. They have shown unconditional love to any child who comes under their care and I strive to be as compassionate and caring as they are.

What advice would you give your 16 year old self?

If you are still unsure about what direction you want your career to take, don't be afraid to try something else. You can always go back to education at a later stage in your life and pursue your dream job when you know what that dream job is.