



Karen Jenkins

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What does your job entail?

My job has a great variety of work strands relating to professional nursing standards and governance. I work in partnership with the Divisional Leadership Team to ensure these are continuously reviewed and improved.

How did you get into this line of work?

Both my mum and my sister worked in the Health Service roles and I having an opportunity for some work experience in a hospital I knew that nursing was the right path for me.

Outline your career to date

Once qualified, I moved from working in a Belfast hospital to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust where I continued my journey to my current role. I worked in cardiology and general medicine as a staff nurse and during this time I was fortunate to be afforded the opportunity to job share as Trust Complaints Manager while continuing to work on the ward. I then moved to a ward sister post in Medicine with Specialities Stroke and Diabetes. My path then changed from an acute hospital setting to working in the community. Firstly, as Clinical Governance Facilitator then manager of Continence Service and finally settled into a post as Governance Manager working with all community division disciplines. I then moved back to my home in the acute hospital setting as Governance Manager and to my current role which incorporates both Divisional Nurse and Governance Manager roles.

Tell us about your qualifications and training

I am a registered nurse and hold an Honours degree in Health Studies, I have also Postgraduate Diploma in Corporate Governance and I am currently completing a Scottish Quality and Safety Fellowship.

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

My role is very busy and time-bound; I need to be very organised! I have a professional and leadership role working with the Division's multidisciplinary team and with others external to the Division. Also working with patients and family, listening to their experiences; and taking all opportunities to review and improve service that we provide.

What is the best advice you have ever received?

As a student a charge nurse once said to me "he who dares to teach should never cease to learn." This has stayed with me and is so true and can be considered in so many situations. NHS values is about how we work together, and through a culture of openness strive for excellence. We should "never cease to learn" if we are to continuously improve.

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself

I aspire to be a great gardener, but just now I am best suited to artificial plants, someday!!

Who has inspired you most in your life?

My family are my inspiration. They are my pillars of strength, supportive and encouraging to overcome obstacles.

What advice would you give your 16-year-old self?

Have the confidence to follow your dreams!