Careers Service

Personal Statement – 1

Since leaving school I have maintained my professional development within the roles I have undertaken, upgrading my knowledge and skills at every opportunity with courses and supervision available to me. Through this development my interest in mental health nursing and the challenges that this role represented compelled me to undertake my mental health nurse training.

Throughout the past two and a half years the nurse training has enabled me to build on my confidence and further develop my communication skills, determining effective communication with patients, carers and colleagues within the multi-disciplinary team over a relatively short period whilst in placements. It has also enabled me to better understand the difficulties faced by service users and their carers.

During my training I have experienced varied placements including acute, elderly mentally ill, forensic, community, and child and adolescent mental health services. The diversity of these placements has provided me with an understanding of mental health problems experienced over the course of an individual's life and the importance of effective care delivery involving multi-disciplinary working at all levels.

Whilst working within the child and adolescent mental health services my interest in individuals with an eating disorder developed and was enhanced by one of the counsellors working in the team. This interest has developed into my becoming involved with a self-help group for eating disorders, a new group in Barnsley for individuals aged 16-24, which meets fortnightly. Whilst developing skills as a co-facilitator within the group it is hoped that it be developed further and become a leading service for individuals in Barnsley with an eating disorder.

As an enthusiastic, highly motivated individual who enjoys working as part of a team to maintain high standards of care for service users and their families, it is important for me to further develop my clinical skills and enhance my professional training.
Personal Statement - 2

I am currently studying in Sheffield towards a Postgraduate Diploma in Healthcare Studies with registration as an adult nurse. I am particularly interested in working in the area of cancer. Due to Western Park’s reputation as a leader in cancer care, research and development and the vast experience I would gain here I am keen to undertake my first post.

Previous to my nurse training I undertook a degree in Health Sciences at the University of Newcastle. During which my interest in nursing was sparked, specialising in subjects such as anatomy and physiology, health promotion and health psychology. Throughout my work experience I have worked with people of various ages and from a wide range of backgrounds. Working in a sales environment has meant the need to provide high standards of customer service – being approachable, polite and helpful. I have had varying positions of responsibility and have been involved in the training of new staff into similar roles.

Throughout my clinical placements as part of my nurse training I have gained valuable experience in the admission and discharge of patients and have been involved in their care while in hospital. During my medical, surgical and management placements I have had experience of co-ordinating the care of up to six patients. Effective written and oral communication skills have been gained through participating in the nursing handover and evaluating care given in the nursing kardex. During the development of my written work at Masters level I have used various databases, such as CINAHL, and nursing journals consequently I have developed an appreciation of what constitutes sound research. I am committed to providing quality patient care and have always attempted to link theory to clinical practice in an attempt to cross the theory-practice gap. To ensure that I am up to date with current issues within the nursing profession I am a subscription holder to “Nursing Times” enabling me to keep track of changes in clinical practice and policy.

I have had experience in oncology both during my medical and surgical placements. My medical placement was at a specialist cancer hospital in Manchester caring for patients receiving chemotherapy for various cancers including lymphomas. My surgical placement was on a gynaecological oncology ward and this enabled me to care for patients undergoing two of the treatment options available to cancer patients. I have continued my interest in oncology into my other placements by spending time with different oncology nurse specialists, for example an ophthalmic oncology nurse specialist, and learning about their roles within the multidisciplinary team. These experiences have enabled me to see the care of the cancer patient holistically as I have seen both physical and psychological care.

I currently work as an agency health care assistant in my spare time. This has meant I have had to be flexible with regard to my working hours. It has increased my ability to adapt to different working environments and methods of delivering care. Agency work has enabled me to have broad experience working in different health care environments. This has further confirmed my interest to work in the area of oncology. As a friendly and empathetic individual able to recognise my limitations, I hope you will consider me for a D grade post.
Statement 3

As a final year student, I believe myself to be responsible, committed and highly motivated towards developing my career in nursing. My qualities as an individual are that I am caring, understanding and approachable. At present I am at the final stage of my Advanced Diploma in Nursing Studies and reflecting upon this I can identify that I have an increased knowledge in the areas of clinical skills, health promotion and research for evidence based practice.

As I have taken on a variety of placements, including surgical, medical, elderly and community I have developed a wide range of clinical and interpersonal skills, learnt to adapt to new work places and to fit in as part of a team. This has also led me to act on my own initiative and feel more confident as a nurse. One particular placement was on a high dependency surgical ward in Northern General Hospital, containing an intensive treatment unit. Whilst on this placement I acquired skills that I do not feel I would have on other wards as it is a specialised regional unit. I managed my own bay of patients where I had to delegate tasks, prioritise and evaluate care. In addition to this I learnt the importance and use of the Glasgow Coma Scale and neurological observations. Later I went on to do a presentation to my group in the university on these two particular skills. By the end of this placement I was given the responsibility to care for patients on a one to one basis in the intensive treatment unit. I found this exciting and it was a real challenge for me, however I always had support from other nurses and I am able to recognise my limitations and seek advice when needed. As the patients I cared for were in a critical state, it meant that the family and relatives needed a lot of comfort and support, which is where I feel my interpersonal skills were very important.

To expand my nursing experience I work as a care assistant during my holidays and any spare time I have. This involves working with patients with psychiatric disorders. I have worked on wards that range from EMI to acute to challenging behaviour. This has given me a widened knowledge of the different type of client groups within the health system. Most of my experience is with EMI patients on G2 at Stamford General Hospital. This ward provides psychiatric and physical care to clients suffering from dementia and Alzheimer’s. Working on this ward has given me the opportunity and experience of offering emotional and psychological support and developing my negotiation skills. Having this experience is very beneficial to me as I can and have illustrated these skills on a general ward, such as my elderly placement, however this can be transferable to all areas of nursing. Also in my spare time I am involved in organising the Graduate Ball for our cohort as I am a class representative. I have enjoyed this as it has involved a lot of teamwork and research for the event. As well as this I enjoy socialising and travelling.

Prior to my nurse training I attended Stamford Institute were I studied a course called A-levels for Nursing, which consisted of sociology, psychology and geography and included two weeks work experience on an orthopaedic ward. Whilst studying these I took the opportunity to do my St John Ambulance first aid which I successfully completed and passed. However, due to being accepted into nursing I did not complete my A-levels. Additional to studying I worked as retail assistant in a popular and busy clothes shop. I had the responsibility of the cash tills and merchandising stock. On occasions I had the responsibility of training new staff on these skills. This gave me experience in using good communication skills and teamwork which I have now been able to demonstrate within my nursing career.

I have yet to do my management placement, which is on Infectious Diseases. I look forward to this as I hope to increase my management skills, implementing and evaluating patient care and hopefully co-ordinating the ward. Communicable Diseases is ideally the area I would like to work as a staff nurse, as its diverse areas such as Genitourinary Medicine, Infectious Diseases and Tropical Medicine are of great interest to me. I feel the role as a staff nurse to be both challenging and rewarding. With my enthusiasm, experience and ability to work under pressure I am sure I would be an asset to the ward.
Statement 4

Whilst undertaking the Advanced Diploma in Nursing Studies I have had a variety of clinical placements in primary, acute and tertiary settings. These placements have complemented the theoretical elements of the course and enabled me to develop the skills and knowledge required to practice as a staff nurse. The nursing process has been a core component of my training and therefore I now feel competent in assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating nursing care. In undertaking this process I always include the patient and their relatives/carers where appropriate as it aids accuracy, enables them to feel involved and facilitates the growth of a therapeutic relationship. Throughout my training I have had increasing responsibility for groups of patients. This has incorporated time management, prioritising care delivery, completing written documentation and giving verbal reports to colleagues. In delivering patient care I always practice in a manner that maintains patient confidentiality, dignity and rights, and I respect patient individuality and choice. I believe these factors are crucial to facilitate trust between the patient and the nurse as well as important components of professionalism. Also I realize the importance of policy adherence when performing nursing procedures and administering medications, and I am able to recognise the scope of my capabilities and seek advice when I require it. As well as being able to practice autonomously I also work well as a member of the multi-disciplinary team. I respect other professionals and value the knowledge and support they can offer and when working with new and temporary staff I welcome them as members of the team too.

During my placements opportunities to teach both patients and junior staff have arisen which I found I enjoyed. Whilst on a placement on a rehabilitation ward I actually took on the task of producing a work pack about mouth care as this had been identified as an aspect of patient care which needed improvement. The ward now uses this pack to facilitate teaching sessions. As my educational profile shows, I also enjoy learning and am therefore committed to participating in lifelong learning. I recognise that an aspect of this learning derives from reflection and reflecting on my practice has enabled me to monitor how it is progressing and recognise where I can enhance it in order to benefit patient care. One particular placement which has had a great impact on both my personal and professional development was at St Luke’s Hospice. Providing palliative care required supporting and comforting both patients and their families, and building a rapport with them was necessary to facilitate this emotional care to be given effectively. I feel my interpersonal skills have been vastly strengthened as a consequence of this experience.

Skills I gained from previous employment and work experience have been easily transferable to my career in nursing. For example as a community care assistant I often had to negotiate and prioritise care duties with clients and be resourceful as special equipment was not always available in their homes. As a trainee programme co-ordinator during a work placement as part of my BTEC course I also organised outings and planned and executed group activities. These experiences taught me communication, teamwork and leadership skills and showed I can cope with responsibility.

In my spare time I take the opportunity to participate in my hobbies, such as playing the piano, an activity for which co-ordination and concentration are required. I am a member of the International Students Society at University, which has helped me value and learn about cultural differences. I enjoy reading, both for pleasure and to gain knowledge and am a keen walker. Last year I participated in a 17 mile sponsored walk in the Peak District to raise money for the Imperial Cancer Research, which required a lot of stamina and determination!
The role of newly qualified staff nurse is one I now feel competent, ready and am highly motivated to take on. I would like to do this at the renal unit as it incorporates medical and surgical nursing and in-patient and out-patient care, so has variety. It will be both challenging and stimulating to support patients with a condition that undoubtedly has a significant impact on their life. Additionally as well as being a place where I can consolidate my training, the unit will offer me the opportunity to gain more specialised skills and knowledge. Finally on a visit to the unit I found it a welcoming and pleasant environment that I feel I would enjoy working in.