



Case Study 6: College Students

NHS Western Isles Work Placements

Student, Health, Social and Childcare Studies at Lews Castle College.

I am currently studying Health, Social and Childcare Studies at Lews Castle College. Previously I worked as a qualified hairdresser but after raising my three children I decided to have a career change. The course is excellent and my tutor organised a 1-week placement in a care environment for each student.

My placement was at the Western Isles Hospital in Medical 1 ward. The ward manager made me feel welcome at once as did her colleagues. The experience was fantastic. It enabled me to help care for service users by assisting with duties such as toileting, bed bathing, feeding and engaging in relaxed conversation. The ward was incredibly busy but all nurses, student nurses, auxiliaries and domestic staff worked harmoniously as part of a team.

Reflecting on my placement, I found it a valuable experience as it gave me a clear insight into the role of the nurse and the duties and responsibilities undertaken on a daily basis.

This placement confirmed for me that I do indeed wish to pursue a career in nursing.

Case Studies – Moray College

D, Student, Intermediate 2 Incorporating SVQ 2 in Health and Social Care at Moray College

I applied to Moray College to gain qualifications to become a nurse as this is a job that I would really like to do. I was accepted into the Health and Social Care course, to work towards my SVQ level 2. To gain my SVQ I go on placement two days a week for sixty days.

Prior to starting my work placement, I was already working at a Care Home as a Care Assistant, so going to assist the elderly wasn't too worrying for me as I already had some experience. Although I did worry that I would have to go and work with individuals who have disabilities. Before I was told where I would be put on placement I had discussions with my student adviser about my concerns and also told her I would prefer to go to my place of work for placement as I would feel more comfortable there. So this was arranged for me.

My student adviser and college lecturers were very supportive and made me feel more at ease about the placement. Classes in this course provide me with the knowledge and understanding and I feel it is very beneficial to gain hands on experience.



Some aspects of care can be very daunting to people who have never cared for anyone before.

Some of the activities as part of my placement include ways of interacting with service users who may be deaf, blind or suffer from dementia.

Other students in my college course work with individuals who have learning disabilities in care environments other than care homes. It's great to hear how they are enjoying the placements that they are on. I now feel from hearing about their good experiences that I would like to come out of my comfort zone and work in different care environments as they seem to enjoy their placements very much.

Therefore I feel work placement for me was nothing to worry about. It's great to gain hands on experience and a good eye opener to real life situations. There is always support from college staff so any problems that do arise can be discussed. I enjoy working with the elderly and would like to widen my experience.

Next year I would like to broaden my knowledge in health and care to working with people with learning disabilities and my career goal is to become a nurse.



E, Student, Intermediate 2 Incorporating SVQ 2 in Health and Social Care at Moray College.

I'm a single mum and I decided that I wanted to go to college to better myself and make a better life for my son. When I was told that what I had to do was go on placement in a community care home, I was very apprehensive. The fear of the unknown was the worst part as I walked through the door. I was introduced to some of the staff and service

users. It felt extremely daunting to be speaking with strangers for the first time when you are unsure if there will be any common ground between you. The staff were all really nice and tried to show me as much as they could.

If I am honest I was scared to speak to the service users for the first few days. I struggled to see any common ground and didn't know the best way



to initiate a conversation with them. As I watched the way the other carers behaved towards the service users I began to construct my own opinions and decided the best way to speak with the patients without being patronising was to be myself.

After my next few days at the placement I began to build relationships with the staff and service users. My confidence was increasing and I felt a great deal of pride in myself.

Some the activities I am required to do on placement include supervised bathing of service users, assisting them to use the toilet and maintaining hygiene. I have learnt the importance of referring to service user care plans for important information about day to day care.

Doing my placement has helped me become more aware and open to my career options in health care, and I am learning skills and developing confidence that will serve me in future work placements or jobs. I am interested in next exploring opportunities in Youth Work in Health or Social Care.

When I think of the fears that I have managed to overcome by coming on this college course and going out on placement, I am truly amazed at the strength I have in myself. I would never imagine one year ago that I would be doing this and actually growing to enjoy my placement. This experience has been one of the most life changing events for me.