



Preceptorship facilitator

Catherine Gideon

Preceptorship facilitator
Royal United Hospitals Bath



I am proud to be a part of the Royal United Hospitals Bath as a preceptorship facilitator. The RUH NHS Foundation Trust employs 4,800 staff and is a 627-bedded acute hospital that serves a population of around 500,000 people in Bath, along with the surrounding towns and villages within North East Somerset and Western Wiltshire. Our preceptorship programme is accessible to all newly-qualified Allied Health Professionals, midwives and nurses, including those returning to practice.

Your role as a preceptorship facilitator

I work in a diverse multi-professional team of four preceptorship facilitators. Our team has brought together a wealth of knowledge and expertise to review, support, design and deliver our new multi-professional preceptorship programme. As part of our COVID recovery, as a team we reviewed and redeveloped our preceptorship programme. We are currently offering two versions: a five-day preceptorship programme to be completed anywhere between six to 12 months, and another programme for NQPs who joined the trust during the pandemic as it was recognised that their preceptorship experience was purely digital. The 'PANs Preceptorship Workshop' consists of a one-off condensed workshop with similar objectives as those covered in the five-day preceptorship programme.

What has the impact of preceptorship been on you personally?

As an overseas nurse from India, setting foot in the NHS in the 2017 was one of the biggest decisions I have had to make. The preceptorship programme when I initially started my career in the NHS was a boon for me as a preceptee.

I found that it helped me to settle into my role during what was an overwhelming experience. It provided me with support at a time when I was balancing learning with experiencing working and caring for people who belonged to different ethnic groups and cultures than mine.

This positive experience as a preceptee influenced me in my career as I then applied for my current role, as I pride myself on being able to see beyond the horizon and wanted to cater to the needs of newly-qualified professionals beginning their healthcare careers, similar to the support I received. I confidently believe that preceptorship is the key to unlock an individual's potential and what a difference it can make to a workforce, improving the staff experience right from the start of a person's career.



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Advice for a new preceptee?

A preceptee needs to be aware of what the employing trust has to offer in relation to preceptorship and what their programme content covers. The preceptee will need to apply learning provided during sessions into clinical practice and take personal ownership to complete the preceptorship programme. During their time on the programme, the preceptee should effectively utilise the allocated preceptor, protected time and the resources available, thus becoming a confident and capable member of the healthcare team.

Advice for a new preceptor?

Becoming a preceptor requires a voluntary commitment to effectively carry out the role and be compliant with the preceptor training needs within the organisation as it evolves. A preceptor needs to act as a role model and be an approachable person to create a nurturing environment where the preceptee can develop and gain full potential. One of the key components as a preceptor is to keep abreast of current knowledge and best practice within their working environment, whilst also empowering NQ staff.



I strongly believe that preceptorship is an essential service for all patient-facing newly-qualified professionals to have positive experiences during the start of their career in a healthcare setting. This will enable overall professional development by nurturing budding leaders, improving multi-disciplinary team working, and enhancing effective communication between patients, families and staff, which will improve patient care and experience resulting in a secure and adept workforce. The value of preceptorship will not be fully realised until you have experienced it.



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