

Real-life story - Richard Montague

A chance meeting with an ex-colleague who was studying towards a health visiting qualification inspired Richard to find out more about the role.?



Richard Montague Health visitor

Employer or university Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust

Salary range ?20k-?30k

How I got into the role

I met an ex-colleague who was studying towards a health visiting qualification. He was one of only a few men on a health visiting course and his passion for the role really inspired me. I was working as a psychiatric nurse and ward manager so I did some work experience with a health visiting team to see what it was like. After this, I knew it was the career for me. I qualified as a health visitor in 1995 and haven't looked back.

What I do

Health visiting is a complex but rewarding career which is vital to the health service. It is a wide-ranging role that involves a variety of tasks, such as new birth visits, protecting and safeguarding vulnerable children and educating new parents on issues such as breastfeeding and oral health. I am one of the very few male health visitors in the area so I also offer specialist support to fathers and promote fathers as positive role models in a child's upbringing.

I get to work with a variety of people, including other highly skilled and motivated healthcare professionals and agencies. The nature of my role means I might need to refer a mother with post-natal depression to a psychiatric counselling service for example, or a child with a learning disability to an early years' centre providing specialist services and support.

Lots of people dread going to work but I can honestly say that I love my job.

The best bits and challenges

Where I work is very deprived so I deal with many families from poor socioeconomic backgrounds who often feel vulnerable and isolated. By assessing their health needs, I can provide advice on accessing various services within the community or signpost them to specialist workers.

Lots of people dread going to work but I can honestly say that I love my job. The positive contribution I make to a family's physical and emotional wellbeing is really satisfying, particularly when they need that extra support they wouldn't receive without us.

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