

Real-life story - Pete Turner

Pete's always been interested in nutrition and wanted to work with people, so a career as a dietitian was his obvious choice.?



Pete Turner Specialist dietitian

Employer or university Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust

Salary range ?30k-?40k

How I got into the role

My degree in pharmacology was interesting but would have led to a career in a lab. I had an interest in nutrition and wanted to work with people so a postgraduate diploma in dietetics was an obvious choice for me.?

I worked as a ward dietitian and then as a research dietitian and it soon became apparent that nutritional support was the area I was most interested in. Nutritional support involves feeding very sick and malnourished patients, often through tubes and intravenous lines. I jumped at the chance when a specialist nutritional support post came up at Royal Liverpool University Hospital in 1995 and have been in the role ever since.?

What I do

I?m part of a multidisciplinary nutrition team with a pharmacist, nutrition nurse and doctor. Every morning we do a ward round of around 20 patients on intravenous feeding known as total parenteral nutrition. I monitor patients? progress and work out their requirements in terms of energy, fats, proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals which helps the pharmacist to devise a suitable feeding regime for the patient.?

In the afternoons I work on surgical wards or the intensive care unit. Surgical patients often need building up before their operation with food, oral nutritional supplements or tube feeds and usually need nutritional support to help them recover after surgery. Intensive care patients usually need to be fed through tubes and drips and I decide on the best feeding options for them.?

I really enjoy working as part of a multidisciplinary team and helping patients to recover with good nutritional care.

The best bits and challenges

I also lead a team of a band 5 and band 6 dietitians, undertake clinical audit [1] and educate hospital staff including nurses and doctors on the importance of good nutritional care. I am also chair of the committee that organises the British Association for Parenteral [2] and Enteral Nutrition annual conference, the UK's largest clinical nutrition conference.????

I really enjoy working as part of a multidisciplinary team and helping patients to recover with good nutritional care. Giving presentations to educate staff about the importance of good nutritional care is also very rewarding.

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Links

[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Clinical_audit

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Parenteral>