

"Experiencing the birth of a baby as part of your day job is incredible."

Eleri graduated with a fine art degree but wanted a career with a more caring capacity. She chose midwifery and hasn't looked back.

Eleri Bates

Midwife

Employer or university

University College London Hospitals (UCLH) NHS Foundation Trust

Salary range

£20k-£30k

Eleri Bates photo

How I got into the role?

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I was a little overwhelmed by how much there was to learn when I started my midwifery degree, but the further I progressed, the more I became sure it was a good choice for me. After my training, I was offered a job at the hospital where I trained but chose UCLH in the end because I wanted to expand my experience. For the first year, I worked on rotation which included the labour ward, birth centre, triage, close observation bay, high dependency unit/recovery and community midwifery. That gave me a brilliant overview of all the departments in the maternity unit and I'm now permanent on the labour ward.

What I do

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Our unit has a birth centre for low risk births so on my labour ward we mainly have the high risk women who have existing medical conditions, complications with their pregnancy or babies where problems are anticipated. I generally have one woman to look after at a time throughout her labour and birth. Because we do 12-hour shifts, you get to know the mums quite well and that's a very rewarding part of the job.

Labour and birth can include anything from self-hypnosis and birthing pools to epidurals, drips and operating theatres. A key part of the job is trying to accommodate individual plans and requests which can be challenging!

The best bits and challenges

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Experiencing the birth of a baby as part of your day job is incredible. But there are other rewarding moments throughout the day too like sharing some advice or information that is important to that particular individual; it gives you that feeling that you've improved things for someone, whether in a big or small way. I also like the combination of scientific knowledge with the emotional/physical care and a bit of creative thinking all at once.

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