

"My course was challenging but I learnt so much, especially from spending time with the midwives on practice."

Remembering her baby sister being born and the Step into the NHS career mapper quiz helped Lauren decide midwifery was the career for her. Read about how she's now qualified!

Lauren Naylor

Newly-qualified midwife

Employer or university

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust

Salary range

£20k-£30k

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**How I got into
the role**

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My baby sister was born when I was four. I can remember thinking that midwives had a really cool job and I would like to do it one day.

As early as year 9, I was thinking about a career in healthcare but was torn between nursing, medicine or midwifery. The career mapper quiz on the Step into the NHS website [1] really helped when it suggested midwifery.

I took my first steps by studying biology and three other subjects at A-level. In my second year, I dropped one of the subjects but still had enough UCAS points to apply for midwifery. Despite being interviewed by one university, I was unsuccessful and my A-level results weren't as good as I had hoped. I remember feeling disheartened but I was determined to fulfil my dream.

My sixth form were really supportive and allowed me to resit my second year which I passed with a B and two Cs. I also reapplied to university and was offered a place at Coventry University. I couldn't believe it and qualified in 2017!

My course was challenging but I learnt so much, especially from spending time with the midwives on practice. I worked days, nights and weekends which can be a struggle but it also offers so much joy and happiness. You feel you're making a real difference to families.

- What I do**

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My alarm goes off at 5am. I always put my hair up into a bun as infection control means that we cannot have hair touching our collars and mine is quite long. I eat breakfast before leaving the house and I actually don't mind the early start because it means I miss the rush hour.

I start work at 7am but I like to be there a little early so I have time to put my bags away and have a quick cup of tea. We have a handover from the night team which is when I get to hear about the ladies and babies we'll be looking after. I don't like to call them patients because the ladies are often healthy but of course sometimes our ladies are in hospital because they are poorly or having complications. We work closely with the doctors on this and it's really important that we work well together as a team.

My shift usually starts with observations and antenatal/postnatal checks. The rest of my day can be really varied. I could be giving out pain relief and medication, supporting mums to care for and feed their babies or discharging families. Documentation is important and must be kept up to date.

I always have a break, not only for me but to make sure that I am at my best when I am back on the ward. I grab some food and drink and call or text my family to make sure everything is okay with them. I leave the house before they are out of bed so it's nice [2] to have a catch up.

- The best bits
and challenges**

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Midwifery is super rewarding and worth every second, but that doesn't mean there aren't challenges. Working weekends, Christmas and New Year can be difficult when you know your friends and family

are together.

I am really proud that I became a midwife, especially overcoming the barriers I faced while at college. I told everyone that I wanted to be a midwife and now I can say that I did it!

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**Life outside
work**

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I volunteer as a leader at a local youth group. I like seeing the kids develop their skills and their confidence grow. Taking them camping also provides a great opportunity to relax in the great outdoors.

I'm still best friends with my friends from school and we try our best to meet up regularly. We have a Dungeons and Dragons role-playing game. After a few long shifts, there is nothing better than a bit of fun and escapism with my friends.

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**Career plans
and top tips for
others**

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collapse**

I would like to do Newborn and Infant Physical Examination (NIPE) training. All babies have a NIPE and midwives can speed up the discharge process for mums. I would also love to do a Contraception and Sexual Health course at some point so that I can support women with their family planning choices.

In the future I can see myself doing a Master's in Midwifery. I enjoy academia and want to push myself as far as I can.

My advice to anyone considering a career in health would be to get some work experience. I had two week-long work experience placements at my local maternity unit and saw what a midwife does. I also had the chance to ask all the burning questions I had.

To be a midwife, you also need to be caring, confident and knowledgeable. You can also follow me on Twitter @MidlandsNQM [3]

Source URL:<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/midwifery/roles-midwifery/midwife/real-life-story-lauren-naylor>

Links

[1] <https://www.stepintohenhs.nhs.uk/> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NICE>
[3] <https://twitter.com/MidlandsNQM>