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Kelvin Kamupira

Dental nurse

Employer or university

University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Kelvin Kamupira - dental nurse

How I got into the role

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I have always had an interest in dentistry since high school and saw becoming a dental nurse as a stepping stone. I trained for a year at Eastman Dental Hospital in 2013 and have been working there as a dental nurse ever since.

I am proud of having embarked on a course which was out of my comfort zone and achieving the dental nursing qualification, along with a career at the end of it.

What I do

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A typical day involves setting up the surgical chair, making sure all required patient records for the day are available, picking up any lab work, assisting chairside with instruments, taking note of records and making sure patients have the best experience all round. I also mentor trainee dental nurses and help them during their clinical placements.

I think the biggest myth is that most people think it's a female only profession which couldn't be further from the truth. We have male dental nurses from all walks of life in my hospital and most patients like the diversity.

The best bits and challenges

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The best bit is seeing a patient who started anxious or nervous, smiling and become more confident at the end of their appointment or treatment.

Also, working in a dental hospital involves being part of a big multi-disciplinary team, working with different specialists from all fields of dentistry. There is always help and support at hand and I work with fantastic people who are all very helpful and supportive.

Life outside work

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My main hobbies are playing chess and football. Chess is a game of patience which helps me unwind after a stressful day. I also try to keep fit and go to church most Sundays.

Career plans and top tips for others

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In future, I would consider doing a post-qualification to enhance my knowledge in dental nursing. There is an opportunity to become a dental hygienist or therapist. I'd also be interested in tutoring trainee dental nurses.

Becoming a dental nurse is a fantastic career opportunity whether you are male or female. Training is only a year long, which goes by very quickly. There is an opportunity to learn and earn at the same time. Any skills learnt from previous professions are easily transferable to dental nursing. Communication skills, IT skills and numeracy skills are just a few examples.

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