

"I would advise anybody to take part in one of these schemes as it's a great step towards employment."

After two weeks of training and eight weeks of work placement, Paula became a facilities management assistant. She's learnt about the many different roles in the NHS and is now inspired to apply for a trainee nursing associate role.

Paula Dainty

Facilities management assistant

Employer or university

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust
Facilities management assistant

How I got into the role

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I was looking for work when the Sefton @ Work job coach told me about the NHS Step Into Work programme being run by Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust. I attended an open day at Southport JobCentre Plus where Mersey Care staff told us more about the course and job role.

We had 12 days of training with The Growth Company, which included health and safety, infection control and food safety, then eight weeks on work placement with the facilities management team in Southport.

What I do

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My day involves cleaning patients' rooms, clinical and ward areas, kitchen and dining areas, toilets and offices. I also handle waste disposal and am in charge of linen transportation.

I do basic food preparation, monitor fridge and food temperature, and also collect the food locker to serve food to the patients who are on inpatient wards.

I also run till operation and collect service user menu orders.

The best bits and challenges

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The best bit is knowing I'm helping the patients, staff team and visitors by keeping every area clean for them.

Lockdown started half way through the course so getting to placement was challenging sometimes due to reduced public transport. However, the team was very understanding and supportive about start and finish times. Social distancing in the workplace is also very strange but everyone understands how important it is now.

Life outside work

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I enjoy swimming, socialising and being with family and friends.

Career plans and top tips for others

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I would advise anybody to take part in one of these schemes as it's a great step towards employment. I am now employed in a facilities management assistant role and have learnt a lot about the different roles in the NHS since starting the course. In fact, I have been inspired to apply for a trainee nursing associate role.

If you're interested in working in the NHS, take the opportunity and stick with it! Listen and take advice from the tutors and staff as you learn a lot from them.

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