

“If it wasn’t for the NHS, I wouldn’t be where I am now. I’ve had so many opportunities and gained so much experience – I know I can handle anything that comes my way.”

Meet Khawuleza Gloria who shares her experience as an international nurse.

Khawuleza Gloria Mnqanqeni

Children’s Nurse (Safeguarding Advisor for Children & Young People)

Khawuleza Gloria has been working for the NHS for over 20 years, having moved to England from South Africa. Over time, she’s trained and developed to specialise in her passion and now works as a Children’s Nurse at Lewisham Hospital.



How did you get into working for the NHS?

I was recruited through a private company, so when I first moved to England, I worked in a private hospital. I think it gave me a good understanding of the British culture and helped me to learn more about what it's like to live in this country. After six months, I moved into the NHS – that's where I'd wanted to work from the very start.

I started out working in sexual health and I was given the training and support I needed to make sure that I had the right knowledge for the role. I was in a managerial position and I felt like there was lots of opportunity for development, and I was able to gain new skills and experience.

How did you get to where you are now?

Working with young people is my real passion, so I chose to specialise in that area. I started out as a teenage pregnancy nurse and with time and development I was able to move into the role I'm in now.

I had to undergo a lot of safeguarding training to get to my current position. The NHS offered me the training I needed to progress, and I ended up going to university to study safeguarding children. They helped to fund my course and provided a mentor to support me through it.

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**What
healthcare
experience did
you have before
moving to
England?**

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Before coming to England, I was working with HIV and AIDS patients in South Africa. I was really interested in developing my skills and learning more about the treatments and therapies available to HIV patients as we didn't have anything like that in South Africa at the time.

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**Do you have
any advice for
someone
looking to work
as a nurse in
England?**

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Firstly, try and learn a little about England before you move here. It's a good idea to talk to someone who's lived here before so you can understand a little about what life might be like.

The application process can be a little tricky at first – you’ll need to make sure you have some money saved before you move and you’ll need to apply to the UK Nursing and Midwifery Council. But don’t be afraid. There’s a lot of support available to help you through your application.

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What kind of support is available for international nurses?

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There’s a lot of support available to help you through your application and once you arrive. For example, I’m the chairperson of the South African Nurses Association, and we support others who want to come here, helping them to understand what’s expected of them and how to apply.

There’s also the NHS Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) network – they’ll help to locate someone from your country who’s already working here and they can help you once you arrive.

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What’s the best bit about working for the NHS?

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I’ve always found that I’ve had a lot of support from my colleagues and managers, especially during particularly difficult times. At first, I really missed my son but my team at the time helped me through that. There’s also a close-knit team of other South African nurses, and they’ve become like family to me. We come from all over South Africa, but here in England, we are one – I never feel lonely because I know I’ve always got their support.

Find out more

Sign up to receive more information to support you on your journey to nursing in England

Start your journey [1]

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[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/we-are-the-nhs/nursing-careers/international-recruitment/we-are-nurses-we-are-nhs/start-your-journey-new-life-england/start-your-journey-new-life>