

# **"In A&E I was shown how to cope with absolutely anything, and did things I never dreamed of."**

At fifteen Paul longed to join the RAF but needed an extra course to study at sixth form college. He chose a pre-nursing course, figuring he could always drop out but was almost immediately hooked.

## **Paul Malone**

### **Triage nurse**

#### **Employer or university**

East Midlands Ambulance Service

#### **Salary range**

£20k-£30k



- **How I got into the role?**

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On my pre-nursing course at college, the surgical nurses really inspired me with their expertise, pioneering work and dedication. Even the patients encouraged me! So, after my Level 1 NVQ, I

studied for my Adult Nursing qualification.

After five years in theatre and a year on a cancer ward, I felt increasingly drawn to the intensity of accident and emergency (A&E). When I made the move, it was amazing. I was shown how to cope with absolutely anything and did things I never dreamed of. I went out with the flying squad, attended major accidents, plastered, sutured, prescribed, learned how to recognise fractures and request X-rays, and became an independent practitioner.

- **What I do**

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collapse**

I'm a triage nurse based in the control room. Now I never actually see my patients, as I handle the 999 calls with less urgent coding: anything from abdominal pains to minor injuries. Specialist software helps us to make diagnoses by phone and determine the best course of action: GP or nurse referral, self-care advice, even an ambulance callout.

My responsibility is to give every patient gold standard care at the right level for them, and achieving that is so rewarding. It really puts my clinical skills to good use. Once I followed up a non-urgent abdominal pain call and, in under a minute, worked out that the patient had a very serious condition. An ambulance went out immediately and my diagnosis was correct. You never forget that kind of thing.

- **Going further -  
next steps**

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Right now I'm developing my teaching skills as part of a special project, training hundreds of ambulance service staff on child protection and vulnerable adult issues. But my ambition is to progress in front line emergency care. My next step? A degree in emergency care and more experience.

- **Advice and tips**

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The best thing about nursing is it opens up doors you've never even thought of. I love being able to try out new things and discover what I like best.

A lot of people say nursing is a vocation, but I don't agree – I see it as a career, one I really enjoy and get a lot of personal satisfaction from. It's so interesting as well: you get to do some pretty remarkable things and make the difference between life and death. That's unique.

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