

"If I can help out by talking with the patient and then going to talk to the dietitians if necessary, it frees up the nurses to get on with other things."

Lynn relished the challenge of being promoted from assistant to supervisor at a time of major change. She gets great satisfaction from the direct contact with patients and from working with nurses and dietitians.

Lynn Keeling

Catering zone supervisor

Employer or university

Wirral Hospital NHS Trust

Salary range

£10k-£20k



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What I do

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I'm in charge of 18 staff serving two hot meals a day. I supervise the food service and deal with any queries or problems. I check the food trolleys as they go up to the wards, oversee the cleaning and make sure we've got our full stock of cleaning materials, uniforms, cutlery and crockery.

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The best bits and challenges

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Our department takes a lot of pressure off the nursing staff. Some patients can be quite demanding about their likes and dislikes and patients on special diets are sometimes not sure what they're allowed to eat. If I can help out by talking with the patient and then going to talk to the dietitians if necessary, it frees up the nurses to get on with other things. And, of course, it makes my job very interesting and fulfilling.

For me, though, the best part is getting that elderly lady the egg roll that she really wants or some toast for a patient who's quite ill and just doesn't fancy anything else.

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How I got in

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When I was promoted from being a catering assistant, I knew it would be a bit of a challenge but there was no way I was going to say no. My new job came about when we moved to a new way of working – we now serve the food ourselves on the wards instead of the nurses. It's much more hygienic and it saves nurses a lot of time. We had to find our way a bit to see what worked best and it's turned out brilliantly. I think all of us – managers, supervisors and staff – have done really well.

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