



<i>Name</i>	Caitlin O'Donnell
<i>How long have you been a nurse?</i>	4.5 years
<i>What inspired you to be a nurse?</i>	I had my daughter at 15 and was supported by wonderful staff in nursing and midwifery. I knew I wanted to offer women the same support and opportunities that I had been given. I wanted to make a difference.
<i>How did you get into this career? What steps did it take since leaving school?</i>	After leaving school, I took a year away from education to spend time with my daughter before returning to study Level 3 Health and Social Care at college followed by a Bsc in Adult Nursing at UEA.
<i>Can you tell us a bit about the training you undertook for your role?</i>	As above, however experience in a range of settings such as palliative and end of life care, adult community and in the children's and young people's health service has helped me further develop skills. These skills include identifying, responding to, and evaluating health needs; liaising with various services; and communicating effectively with staff, service users and

	families. I currently work as a band 5 staff nurse.
<i>What's been the highlight of your career so far?</i>	In my first nursing post I was involved in planning a wedding for an end-of-life patient on the ward. It was an emotional day that I've never forgotten and was completely different to your average day on the ward.
<i>What do you like most about being a nurse?</i>	Feeling as though I have made a difference! Being part of a patient's journey, whether it's giving guidance to families welcoming their first child or providing comfort to adults during the end of their life. Nurses are present at the beginning of life, the end and everything in between!
<i>What's the most challenging part of being a nurse?</i>	Nursing can be emotionally challenging and at times stressful and demanding. You make a range of clinical decisions that you are accountable for. A supportive team and good coping techniques are vital to avoid burnout.
<i>What are the main skills needed to do your role?</i>	<p>Communication - builds rapport with service users and supports patients to make informed decisions about their care and treatment.</p> <p>Adapting a holistic approach to care - understanding that every service user has different health needs influenced by their unique life experiences.</p> <p>The ability to work as part of a team - playing a key role in the multidisciplinary team.</p>
<i>Do you have any advice for the next generation of nurses?</i>	You can't pour from an empty cup! Nursing requires a high level of emotional intelligence, and we spend lots of our time supporting people through the most challenging moments of their life. Making sure you have a good support system and prioritising your own health and wellbeing will be vital.
<i>My wish for the future of nursing is...</i>	For the role of a nurse to be better understood. Over the years, nursing has changed, we are degree educated, skilled

	<p>professionals that make important clinical decisions daily. The role of nursing has changed and developed meaning our skill sets have expanded.</p>
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