Julie's confirmer story

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Julie is a social worker and the team leader of an integrated community mental health team. She has recently acted as the confirmer for her lead nurse, Hayley.

Background

Julie has worked in mental health social work for 27 years. As the leader of an integrated mental health team, Julie manages a mixture of nursing and non-nursing staff including mental health nurses, social workers and occupational therapists. Julie works closely with Hayley, the lead nurse within the team, and carries out her annual appraisal.

Preparing for confirmation

Julie was aware of revalidation but admits that she didn't know a lot of the detail.

> "Being an integrated team leader has its challenges in terms of working across two systems," she explains. "Approved mental health professionals working in local authorities have to go through a reapproval process and this didn't seem too dissimilar. But my knowledge of revalidation was quite limited."

Ahead of the confirmation discussion, Hayley suggested Julie take a look at the NMC website. She also shared the information for confirmers guidance document with her.

> "The information on the website is helpful because it isn't like there are reams and reams of processes; it is something you can dip in and out of," says Julie. "Once I saw that I can't say I found it particularly daunting."

The confirmation meeting

Julie and Hayley met a couple of times in the lead up to Hayley's confirmation, to go through the process and start looking through the evidence Hayley had collected. Their final meeting, in which Julie signed everything off, lasted for about an hour.

> "We went through the portfolio page by page, looked at the evidence in there and discussed it," Julie explains.

Because Julie isn't registered with the NMC, Hayley needed to have her reflective discussion beforehand with another nurse or midwife. She had this discussion with a community psychiatric nurse, and then took the signed reflective discussion form to her confirmation meeting as evidence that this requirement had been met.

Julie still had the chance to look through Hayley's reflective accounts, which she found particularly helpful.

> "This process puts the nurse in a position where they have to reflect on what they do, and that's no bad thing," she says. "It's easy to get caught up in the day job and not think about what you're doing and why you're doing it. Refocusing on that is very beneficial."

Role of the confirmer

Despite not coming from a nursing background, Julie was very happy to take on the role of Hayley's confirmer.

> "Hayley is one of my staff, so I do oversee her day-to-day work," Julie says. "Revalidation fits into the appraisal process really well. It's about reflecting on the job you do, looking back at the last few years, and looking towards future development. I don't need to be a nurse to appreciate that."

In terms of the work and preparation involved in taking on the role, Julie's advice is not to be daunted by it.

> "It does seem like it's a bit of work at first, but it's an important bit of work," she says. "It's not something

you’re doing for the sake of it. As Hayley’s line manager and supervisor this gives me more detail of what her progress has been over the last few years, and what she wants to achieve going forward.

"It was a very helpful experience and I am perfectly happy to do it again in the future."