

Carol's revalidation story

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Carol is a registered nurse who manages a care home for 80 residents on the west coast of Scotland.

Preparing for revalidation

Carol admits that when she first heard about revalidation she had concerns. She wasn't sure what she would have to do, and as a manager of other nurses she knew it would be important for her to understand the process so that she could lead by example. She started to prepare by putting together a portfolio.

"I already had a folder that I kept my certificates from training in but they were in no particular order," she explains. "I'm not that great on the computer so I just set up a folder with some dividers, all my bits of evidence and the NMC forms."

Practice hours

As a home manager Carol doesn't have timesheets, so she used her pay slips and P60 as evidence that she had done her 450 practice hours.

"It was all quite straightforward, really," she says. "I've heard nurses saying before. 'Oh gosh, I hope they don't ask for my portfolio because mine is a mess!' But if you're in the habit of keeping these things you won't find it too complicated at all."

Feedback

For some people it's the new feedback requirement that seems the most daunting, but Carol actually found this to be one of the easiest aspects.

"It's something we as care home staff have had to do for quite a long time," she explains. "What I like is that you can get feedback from residents and relatives. I like that it might make people feel a wee bit more confident about themselves."

As Carol explains, you don't necessarily have to ask for feedback face to face – there are lots of types of feedback you can use.

"As a manager, I could use thank you letters, I could use the questionnaires that we put out, and I was able to use the Care Inspectorate grades as well. There's lots of information that you can use to prove that you're doing a good job, and to learn about yourself as a practitioner."

Reflective accounts

Carol chose to write one of her reflective accounts about the Care Inspectorate grades; for another reflection she focused on some training she had done. She found the NMC form helpful in understanding what she was being asked to do.

"They aren't looking for reams and reams of paper," she says. "As long as you're capturing the important

parts, reflecting on it, and linking it back to the Code, that's enough."

Reflective discussion

When it came to discussing her reflective accounts, Carol found it really just formalised what she was already doing with her line manager, who is another registered nurse.

"We meet monthly and do a one-to-one so I am having those conversations regularly," she explains. "We just sat down together and discussed my five reflections one by one."

Confirmation

Carol also had her confirmation with her line manager, and in that meeting they went through her whole portfolio together.

"She went through my learning hours, my reflective accounts, the NMC forms. It was quite self-explanatory really," Carol says. "I'll be a confirmer for my deputy, and possibly for some of the staff nurses too. We're doing their appraisals and supervisions already and I think confirmation will fit in with that quite nicely."

Carol has some wise words for all those getting ready for revalidation now: be prepared:

"As I've said to all my nurses – get your NMC Online account opened, find out when you need to revalidate, and get yourself organised. If you get a system up and running that suits you now, it means that when the time comes there's going to be very little work for you to do."

And how does she feel about revalidation now that she's been through the process?

"I know we're already professionals," she says. "But I think revalidation is going to make nurses that wee bit more accountable. At the end of the day it's going to benefit our residents."