Julie's revalidation story

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Julie is a GP practice nurse at a medical centre in Preston with 35,000 patients.

> "It's ethnically very diverse," Julie says. "It's very interesting. I love my job, it suits me down to the ground."

Previously a nursing ancillary, she qualified as a nurse and first worked at Chorley hospital, where she became a hospital sister working on medical assessment. Then she became a practice nurse, joining her current practice in 2012. She enjoyed working in hospital teams but likes the greater independence of working in a GP practice, together with the confidence that comes from acquired knowledge and experience.

> "I love interacting with patients," she says. "It's the best job ever."

Like other nurses, she was initially concerned at what might be required of her.

> "From what I'd read, I thought it would be difficult." Then she printed off the revalidation forms from the link on the NMC website: "It all looked very clear and logical – nothing to worry about at all."

Reflective accounts and CPD

For Julie, these were almost second nature:

> "I think we reflect all the time as nurses. I try to educate myself on areas I feel I could improve on. I feel frustrated if I don't do something right." She included two complaints, which were not upheld. "It was just that patients sometimes have different expectations, and they may also have a lot of stress in their lives."

Julie is the secretary of a practice nurse group which holds monthly meetings to learn about current medical research and techniques.

> "They're very helpful," she says. Her own practice holds "lunch and learn" days where the practice team, from GPs to nurses, meet over sandwiches to update themselves on a range of topics, most recently asthma, which is one of Julie's specialities. "All the time you're developing, you're learning how to do different things."

Julie makes notes at these sessions and adapted these for her reflective accounts. She also undertook online learning, refreshing her knowledge on subjects from diabetes and smears to safeguarding and child protection and trafficking.

She has started organising group consultations at the practice, inviting up to a dozen patients by letter or phone to educational meetings.

> "They're quite a new thing," she says. The first was for asthma patients, covering how to use inhalers, asthma control tests, airway inflammation and related topics. "They were discussing it among themselves, networking with each other, which is what I wanted." That too provided material for her reflective accounts.

Feedback and reflective discussion

Julie included feedback she had received from patients. Her reflective discussion was handled by the senior nurse at her practice:

> "She was up-to-date with what I am doing. It was quite an informal meeting and although it was thorough, it did not take long." After submitting her online application to the NMC, Julie received an email confirming her revalidation. "I was confident I had met all the requirements, so I was just happy I could carry on."

Julie has seen revalidation from both sides, as she acted as the confirmer for a colleague who worked at a single-handed practice in Preston and whom she knew through the practice nurse meetings.

> "She comes to all the meetings and always comes up with new ideas. I felt that I'd be very happy to have her nurse me as a patient." Like her own confirmation session, this one was both thorough and relaxed. "She

showed me all her certificates, we discussed her reflective accounts, she had met her hours – everything was fine."

lulie's advice to colleagues is that revalidation is simpler and easier than they might have expected.

"It's all very straightforward, especially if you plan it ahead," she says. And she is sure that it is a vital process. "If you work in a GP practice, people might not always see your everyday practice. Revalidation makes sure we all work to consistent professional standards."