Sarah's revalidation story

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Sarah is a health visitor in the South Wales valleys, and a practice teacher working with student health visitors.

Working in people's homes

Sarah has been a health visitor for 23 years and there's good reason for that.

> "Working with people in their own home is a privilege. You empower people to make their own decisions and can build up a trusting relationship over a number of years."
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> "Often we're working with people whose health is not their first priority and it takes a lot of initiative to get messages across."
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> "I love what I do, and enjoy being able to convey that to the students I work with."

Revalidating when there are changes at work

Sarah's part of a large team, which has seen a lot of change. Recently the team moved accommodation and are no long GP-based. For some, the new way of working took a lot of getting used to.

But this hasn't impacted on Sarah's experience of revalidation:

> "I've revalidated twice. I did it with a different manager the second time but it wasn't that different at all. It was still relaxed and positive, like it was the first time."

Reflect on the highs and the lows

Reflection allows you to identify areas for learning and improvement and Sarah definitely made the most of the opportunity to do that.

> "Not all reflective discussions will follow the same format. For my second revalidation, I met with my manager to have an in-depth chat about my reflections, which then led on to other things about the career direction I want to take."
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> "I did reflect on something that hadn't gone well and led me to question my thinking and practice. It's important to go over the difficult moments as well as the successes, and to reflect on how we dealt with it and learn from it, individually and as a team."

A wide range of feedback

> "It can be a challenge to make your practice related feedback different. You have to think outside the box and approach people a long time before your revalidation is due."
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> "As a team, we've all now got good at giving feedback. If we do something good, our manager will email us with a formal thank you. I also have feedback from the teaching I do with students. "
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> "I work with social workers who I might approach next time. It would be good to get feedback from other professionals we work with too. It'll make the feedback more enriching."

Advice for others

Sarah's main recommendation for others is to prepare in advance.

> "Revalidation is a three year process and if you leave it until the last minute it will be more challenging. So preparation is the key. And do be aware of the variety of things you can use for each part of your revalidation."