Susie's revalidation story so far...

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Introduction

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Susie Quirk was one of the first nursing associates to join the register back in 2019. She currently works in education with students developing clinical skills at the University of Chester.

We got in touch with Susie as she prepared to revalidate for the first time.

June 2021 - getting ready

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With six months to go before her first revalidation, we spoke with Susie to find out how she's feeling about it and how she's been getting on with her continuing professional development (CPD).

> "For me, revalidation is about identifying the areas where I might have a knowledge gap and need some training. So it's helped me understand what I should focus on over the next three years."
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> "Having watched nurses and midwives revalidating while I was qualifying, I knew it wasn't any different to what other professionals were doing. Ultimately we're all part of the same team, working towards the same outcomes and following the same Code."
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> "When I initially started my CPD, I thought it was very complicated. But if you break it down, it's not too daunting. You can do little bits at a time. The key is to keep on top of it, rather than leave it to the last minute."
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> "I recently moved from clinical practice into education, working with students at the University of Chester to develop their clinical skills. I really enjoy teaching them about patient care. We discuss policies, procedures and look at why they want to help patients. It's improved my ability to communicate with people, and I've been able to fulfil my CPD requirements by designing and delivering courses."
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> "I'm in a good place with all of my requirements. I've done 25 of the 35 required hours and I've got some courses coming up. I've already taken part in a mental health first aid course, which has helped my participatory learning. It involved group discussions that were particularly interesting because of the challenges of the pandemic."
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> "If you're worried about revalidation, I recommend looking at the tools and templates on the NMC website. They break down the whole process into manageable parts, making things less daunting. It's not long before I revalidate – January 2022 with applications opening this November. I'm looking forward to reflecting on everything I've accomplished over the last three years."

August 2021 - five months until revalidation

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We caught up with Susie in August 2021 to see how her revalidation preparation is going and talk to her about what she's been doing to reflect on her practice.

> "I've now managed to do all of my practice related feedback. The advantage of having this prepared early is you can really pick and choose the pieces of feedback that really meant something to me, this gave me a sense of satisfaction and helped me find the feedback that I could learn from the most."

“It’s always easy to take the feedback that is more around praise, but what I found more challenging but rewarding was thinking about the feedback that was more constructive. It’s important not to take things too personally, every bit of feedback can be constructive and help you improve.”

“I remember one of the positive pieces of feedback I got was from a patient I wasn’t treating but who had observed the way I was treating my patient. I remember thinking, people are listening to everything you say and do. It made me become so much more aware of my surroundings. It made me think about how in every situation we need to make sure we’re always conducting ourselves professionally.”

“It’s important to always make sure the feedback and reflections you pick are linked back to The Code. For my examples I always found it quite easy to link it back to at least two or three parts of The Code, but if you’re struggling it’s always good to go and ask for someone’s advice. It might seem obvious but also go back and read The Code because it will jog your memory and you’ll find something that relates.”

“I’ve really enjoyed doing the written reflections and doing them early has helped to really think carefully about which ones I was going to use and why I was going to use them. It’s really not about just selecting the examples that reflect best on you, but selecting those examples that you can use for learning going forward. Remember to think back through all of the years of your revalidation period, you don’t just have to use recent examples. Doing this really made me appreciate how far I’ve come along and how much I’ve developed.”

“Taking that time to reflect really helps you process what you’ve been through and what you’ve learnt. It’s actually been quite emotional, but revalidation really helps you to embrace that emotion and take learning points from it and think about what you could do differently in the future.”

“One of the major challenges I had was the flip from reflections in clinical practice to reflections in my current teaching role which was a bit difficult to navigate. One my reflections was on my probationary review with my new manager, so I had to look at the more ‘clerical’ or ‘paperwork’ aspects of the role and think how I could reflect on that.”

“I found a good way to get started in your reflections was to simply write down your feelings and everything just flows from there. It’s important to get started in some way and once you get started things get easier.”

“Remember this is not a test that you’re going to fail. This is about your growth and your development and hopefully to help other people. So take 10 minutes here and there between everything going on in your life and work and give some time to develop yourself. The only way to fail is not to learn or apply your learning.”