

JESSICA – RDNS REGISTERED NURSE

It was only after Jessica Booth had left RDNS for another nursing job that she realised that working at RDNS was what she really wanted to do. The bubbly nurse recalls how she thought trying something different might be a good idea. She remembers with a mild tinge of embarrassment telling her new employer that she felt she had made a mistake and wanted to return to her role at RDNS. It had only been two weeks.





These days she is a settled and accomplished member at one of RDNS' largest sites and embraces her daily work with dynamic enthusiasm. An average day may involve managing multiple medications for clients with dementia, treating wounds of varying severity, providing catheter care and giving many other forms of clinical care. It's a diverse and constantly changing world and that's exactly what appeals to Jessica. She is bright, keen and clearly passionate about what she does, explaining what a pivotal moment of realisation that fortnight away from RDNS was. "I knew then that this is where I wanted to be and I now appreciate what I do even more," she says.

It wasn't always like that. Jessica's early days at RDNS were challenging and she admits that at times she felt the pressure. Not only was there the clinical care to administer, she was required to exercise her judgement and discretion at a much higher rate than she was used to. Having spent time in a hospital setting, she explains that she had become accustomed to being told what to do, rather than having to employ her own decision-making skills with incessant frequency. The first six months were the most demanding of her career but she emphasises that she was determined to overcome these early challenges, stressing that despite the new level of pressure, she prized the experience.

It has made her into a better nurse, she says: more confident in her own ability and more prepared to back the expertise that has come from the combination of her studies and first-hand experience at this front line of nursing. Quite apart from the smorgasbord of clinical care that she administers, each day brings any number of other trials. There is the careful negotiation needed for clients who are non-compliant regarding their care and family dynamics throw up a constant challenge. She says that one of the real beauties of district nursing is respecting people's right to choose. "We can never force people to do what we ask," she says respectfully. "We can only educate and advise and we have to avoid being judgemental." She has seen many things in her time at RDNS which underscore this ethic: from her early days working in high-rise flats to the challenges of caring for people coping with intellectual disabilities.

All of it, she explains with a hint of steel in her voice, has strengthened her resolve to be the best nurse she can be. She says that the lifestyle at RDNS is second to none and is still amazed that some of her old nursing friends think that district nursing isn't as challenging as a hospital environment. Nothing could be further from the truth she emphatically declares:

"Every day is different. Every day is new. Nothing is ever the same."

And after three years at RDNS, neither is Jessica. And that's just the way she likes it.