

BTEC ALUMNI CASE STUDY

ABBY MYERSCOUGH

Former BTEC Level 3 Sport student at Chichester College

Current position: Nurse at St Richards Hospital in London



At present, I am a nurse on the Cardiac Ward at St Richards Hospital in London.

How has the pandemic impacted your work?

At the start of the pandemic, protocol called for the Cardiac Unit to be converted into the 'COVID ward'. This was a daunting transition, there were so many unknowns with this illness. Our roles adapted as we swabbed, triaged and looked after those who came through the doors. As a nurse on the COVID ward it was very stressful and demanding, I had good days and bad days. It was challenging to keep up to date with new information and protocols, as they were changing daily. It was also incredibly tiring as I picked up extra shifts, the worry of bringing COVID back to my loved ones and the general uncertainty of lockdown. My colleagues and family were such a good support system to me, allowing me to offload and de-stress.

How did your BTEC qualification help prepare you for this current situation?

Although my BTEC was in Sport, it was the health related part of the course that first got me interested in going into nursing. My BTEC taught me how to be resilient and a good team player. I was involved in the netball team during my time at college, being part of a team and sharing one common goal really helps in my current job role. I can adapt and work with others across the multi-disciplinary team to achieve one aim - making my patients better!

I have been able to learn and further develop my nursing skills throughout the pandemic. I have strengthened my medical knowledge, by learning more about the symptoms, side effects and treatments associated with the virus.

I've also improved my communication skills with staff, patients and relatives through new channels of communication that weren't commonly used previously. The use of iPads, FaceTime and phone-calls was really important to keep relatives up to date, as loved ones weren't allowed to visit. Additionally, I've developed professionally, working throughout a pandemic is something I hope I may never have to do again, however, by doing so I feel it's strengthened my professional character.

It has been lovely to have positive recognition for all the key workers during this situation. Hospital staff have been incredibly lucky to receive amazing donations and the weekly clap for carers. The clap for carers was a great way of bringing the community together. My BTEC Tutor and netball coach, at Chichester College, wrote an appreciation post on social media giving support to myself and all key workers this was really touching and truly meant so much to me.

What was your own BTEC Results Day like?

After results day I felt happy, relieved and excited, I knew all my hard work had paid off and that I would be able to secure my university place. I didn't think it would be possible to apply to do nursing with a BTEC in Sport, but I could, and I did. I am proud to have been able to help others by being on the front line during the pandemic.

With thanks to Chichester College and Abby