

Darcey, Foundation Degree Nursing Associate (FDNA)

My name's Darcey Bennett and I'm a Health Care Assistant at Westgate Doctors Surgery, in Kent.

What learning path did you choose?

I completed the Pre-Employment Programme (PEP) in 2018, a 2-week programme that covered 2 days' work experience, which I undertook at Westgate Surgery funded by Health Education England Kent, Surrey, Sussex (HEE KSS) and co-ordinated by the local Primary Care Workforce Lead working for the Training Hub. I subsequently completed my Level 2 Health and Social Care Apprenticeship, funded by HEE KSS and successfully gained employment with Westgate surgery. I am presently enrolled onto the Level 5 Foundation Degree Nursing Associate (FDNA) course with Canterbury Christ Church University. Since completing my original apprenticeship, I have had the opportunity to consolidate my role as an HCA, alongside learning. I have developed in confidence which in turn has given me confidence to pursue the Apprenticeship which I am now undertaking.



What were the challenges?

One of the biggest challenges is getting the balance right between everything. Undertaking an apprenticeship is incredibly busy. You must work, learn, go to university alongside attending your weekly placement. I also believe an active social life out of work is important as well. So just finding a balance between all of them can be very challenging, but the key is to just keep yourself very organised.

What did the on-the-job learning involve?

On-the-job learning is very much blended learning. Sometimes we are at the university on-campus in lectures, learning theories, giving us a chance to unpick our skills. Or we could be completing tasks online, so virtual as well. We also have the skills lab, which is great. It gives us a chance to practice our clinical skills in a safe, face-to-face learning environment too. This has allowed me to consolidate and expand allows my knowledge further.

What role did the practice play?

Both my practice and the team have been very important to me. They've very much been my lifeline throughout this. I've had amazing support from my Practice Supervisors and Practice Assessor. They've helped me progress to ensure I get enough time to complete written assignments and supported with clear guidance through my placements as well.

What would you say to anyone considering an Apprenticeship?

I would say that if you are more of a hands-on learner, and you like situational learning, then an apprenticeship course is for you.

For all apprenticeships information, please contact Kent and Medway Training Hubs:
kmccg.pcthapprenticeships@nhs.net

To access the video, visit 'Other resources & tools':
<https://www.northkenttraininghub.nhs.uk/resources>