

## Our nurses and midwives

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### Why I wanted to become a nurse or midwife

I was late to nursing. I trained after having my children and having an appreciation of the support that the medical profession gave me during my pregnancy and felt this would be a rewarding career.

### How my career has developed

I qualified 2006, worked as a staff nurse on an ENT/Head and Neck Cancer surgical Ward, moved into a Band 6 Head and Neck Cancer Support Nurse from 2009-2016 and then moved to set up a Head and Neck Service as a Band 7, Head and Neck ANP.

### On a typical day

I work 8am to 4pm Mon-Friday, cover head and neck cancer clinics, visit patients pre-operatively with the consultants and post-operatively on the ward rounds, support patients face to face and via telephone. Provide support and signpost to other external services. Provide teaching and support to nursing staff with tracheostomy and laryngectomy care.

### How I've made a difference as a nurse or midwife?

Over the last 3 ½ years I have built up the head and neck service, offering support to a complex set of patients that require input from a wide multi-disciplinary team. This requires good communication between own team, as well as liaising across different trusts to ensure patients have a smooth transition of care. Milton Keynes now has its own branch of The Swallows Head and Neck Cancer support Group and this has been running successfully for the last 2 years, this is a patient led group. As part of my role, I am also involved in the education of tracheostomy/laryngectomy care and provide, as part of a team, regular training days to ensure the nursing staff feel confident and competent to look after this group of patients. Challenges include staff availability for ongoing training and the having a larger team to be able to provide more training days.

### What would you say to a young person interested in a career in nursing & midwifery?

This career is not just for the young, I would encourage anyone to consider nursing. I did not start my nurse training until my 30's and had my family. Bringing up a family and the work I did prior to nursing has stood me in good stead for some of the skills you need in nursing i.e. multi-tasking, communication. It is hard work, but extremely rewarding.

