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Michelle Alderson

I am employed as a trainee nursing associate (TNA) for Sirona Care and Health in extra-care/ step-down; this a social care facility in a small town called Keynsham, Bristol. Before I commenced the TNA programme, my role was a step-down support worker helping individuals to rehabilitate in an assisted living environment. Now that I am a TNA, I can discuss clinical matters with those I support in more depth and can recognise more potential causes for risk or harm. I have become a key worker for two residents which I am working with to improve my communication, person-centred care and I am able to confidently act as an advocate on their behalf.

Daily I deal with medication administration. My training has led me to consider the benefits of taking the medications prescribed, also the disadvantages (e.g. side effects). I have also evolved to understand the condition behind the medications and why it is important that certain conditions are controlled and monitored.

When I came into the TNA role I had completed my Cavendish Care Certificate with Sirona Care and Health and recently completed a 6-month End of Life course. Prior to this I had achieved an NVQ (level 2) in Care and Support Services whilst working as a doctors' surgery receptionist. When I commenced the course, I had up to 10 years' worth of care work experience. This originated from being a personal assistant for 2 individuals, providing one to one personal care (one was highly dependent, and one was a social worker). This experience was invaluable. Being surrounded by the everyday lives of those that needed my assistance for 12 – 48 hours at a time is some of my most valued experience into person-centred care. Whilst working as a personal assistant I was also studying for a bachelor's degree in history, when I realised this is not a subject I wanted to invest in. On finishing my studies, I began to focus on my care work experience. I completed a three-month placement in a hospital. This was an intense course focussing on getting individuals the experience

they needed. During this time, I worked with Occupational Therapists and hospital administrators (including those in management and discharge teams). During the three months I achieved an award



hunting around for it, however everyone that offers advice has been able to point me in the right direction and from there I can pursue whatever learning or experience I require.

