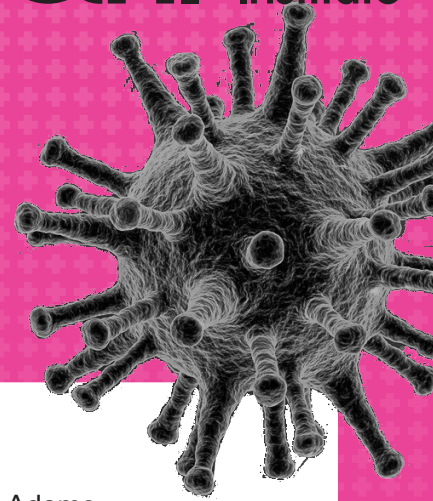


## Community Nursing Covid-19 Innovation/Best Practice

# CASE STUDY

Supporting New District Nurse  
Team Members in Retford during  
Covid-19



### 1/

#### Personal details

**Name:** Nikki Tatt and Amy Adams

**Job title:** District Nurse and Senior Community Staff Nurse

**Employer:** Retford and Villages District Nursing Team,  
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

### 2/

#### Please describe your practice innovation.

During the COVID-19 pandemic we have successfully inducted six new members of healthcare staff into the team. One Healthcare Support Worker and five Community Staff Nurses.

Inducting six new members of staff into a team was always going to come with its challenges, however, these members of staff all commenced employment during the peak of the pandemic. As a team, along with continual face to face support, we were able to make use of online Trust Induction, Mandatory Training, eLearning as well as liaising with relevant Specialist Nurses and Learning and Development team to provide small group face to face socially distanced and COVID secure site learning for specific skills packages relevant to the role. In doing so, we were able to ensure our new colleagues were quickly up and running with the required competencies and skills to work within the District Nursing environment. In turn these members of staff were able to be quickly, but safely, integrated into the team through a carefully structured induction timetable whilst maintaining 4 weeks protected, supernumerary status, which has been of upmost importance in delivering and maintaining our high standard of nursing care in what has been an unprecedented and challenging time for our team and other District Nursing Teams alike.

### 3/

#### How has this enabled you to treat/support patients / residents/families/carers more effectively and safely?

During COVID-19 our patient caseload understandably grew in size as some services were stood down and the acuity and complexity of patients on the District Nursing caseload increased in number. This had a direct impact on the number of patient visits and the community nursing team's capacity and demand. Being able to quickly, efficiently and most importantly safely induct new members of staff into the team meant we had more nurses and healthcare support workers on the ground to visit our patients and deliver care to our community.

Throughout the pandemic the team did not have to enter into business continuity and our service remained functioning as normal. Our regular patients saw no change to their planned visits and new referrals into the service were seen promptly, as requested by outside services such as hospitals, hospice, rapid response and GP surgery referrals. This also means as we enter the recovery and restorative phase, the impact will be very low on community nursing services and we remain on track to complete Local and National CQUINS for quality healthcare provision.

### 4/

#### How has this enabled you to work more effectively with colleagues/partner organisations?

The team has remained in communication with our wider MDT and the utilisation of Specialist teams to provide clinical skills training, either in person or via virtual platforms. The team has supported the new staff members in their competency packages whilst also under their own work pressures. This has also led to changes in how training can be delivered for safe and effective care as we commence restoration of normal services. The process has brought the team together and developed working relationships through mutual support.

## 5/

**Do you see this new way of working as a temporary adaptation to current conditions, or a permanent/evolving change?**

We feel that the pandemic has brought about fast paced changes in training delivery. The use of virtual platforms and basepoint delivered training has reduced the mileage incurred by the team and also releases time to care for our patients. We are in the process of discussions with our operations management team to ensure all positive new ways of working are maintained as we continue through the pandemic and beyond.

## 6/

**Please describe any particular challenges you had to overcome.**

Certain skills and competencies, such as Catheter training and Lower Leg Compression Bandaging have required face to face training, which due to COVID-19 has been delayed. We have liaised with relevant Specialist Nurses to deliver small group, socially distanced training for these specific skills. We then utilised the time remaining in the new team members' supernumerary status, enabling them to shadow members of qualified staff to observe these skills in practice in order to prepare for future training and also completion of their competencies under direct supervision.

Maintaining a safe learning environment has posed its own challenges, as the new staff members were unable to travel with their allocated staff member, which is one of the learning points usually included in the induction process about the locality in which we serve. (This prevents the staff member feeling stressed or isolated in an unfamiliar territory.) We have had to implement a system of new staff following in their own vehicle and having their own list and access to satellite navigation equipment to give the new members some assurances.

## 7/

**Please describe any continuing challenges you would like to address.**

The current capacity and demand continues to impact on the service and the ability to allow the staff to be given adequate time to supervise new staff with clinical skill competencies. With this ongoing, there is a direct impact on the skill mix of the team, which means some of the established and skilled staff are having to work across a very large rural locality to ensure the right skills are available at the right place at the right time. This poses a risk of burnout and increased stress to these staff, an issue which we are mindful of. We carry out daily supervision in nursing handover to minimize this where possible and try our best to minimize this through appropriate patient allocation and planning of workload.

## 8/

**Please list any websites, online platforms or apps that have helped you.**

We have used our trust intranet and Microsoft Teams to aide and deliver training to our new team members and provide support.

## 9/

**What are the main pieces of IT or other equipment you need (e.g. digital camera, phone, laptop, iPad).**

Smart phone with camera access and apps such as google maps and Microsoft teams. Laptop for mobile working and completion of eLearning.

# 10/

**Please give any individual examples, quotes or other information.**

'I feel that the team has been amazing with support and training throughout the pandemic, all members of staff have gone above and beyond to help and assist with any training or support that has been needed, even though they are busy with their own work. I feel so lucky to be given the opportunity to progress in this team.'

'Starting an entirely new job as a Nurse during a pandemic, alongside being quite newly qualified sounds daunting. However, I feel so well supported that every day feels like a new adventure where there is something to learn. The days are often busy and I am still learning, so I sometimes feel quite slow in my work but I know that there is always someone to turn to for advice and support. I am lucky enough to work alongside and learn from the best. The team I have joined has really taken Covid-19 in their stride and have implemented everything necessary to keep everyone safe into their daily work without complaint. It is lovely to join a team that prioritises and values patients as well as each other. Joining this team has given me not only my dream job but I am surrounded by Nurses who provide constant examples of the knowledge and skills I aspire to gain.'

'Joining a new team during a pandemic has not been without its challenges, however all the staff at Retford and Villages have risen to the challenges and given me all the support I could have asked for and made me feel welcome and valued. They're a strong, dedicated, hardworking team and lucky to have joined at such a time.'

'Joining the Retford and Community Team during a pandemic has come with its challenges however all the staff have supported me in my learning process to develop my knowledge and skills. I feel very welcomed into the team. All in all they have made this difficult time much easier.'

'What an amazing team! From starting my career in nursing last September and moving jobs during a pandemic, I have felt overwhelmed at times, but this was soon settled when I moved to this team. Everyone has been so welcoming and even though staff are busy, they are happy to help with any queries or assist on joint visits to sign off competencies. My skills are developing and my confidence is growing. I couldn't have asked for a better start to my career in community nursing! Thank you!'

Joining a new team during a pandemic has not been without its challenges, however all the staff have risen to the challenges and given me all the support I could have asked for and made me feel welcome and valued. They're a strong, dedicated, hardworking team and lucky to have joined at such a time.  
Staff feedback

