



Lucy's story

Lucy left the NHS in 2017 to work as a nurse in the aesthetic sector but recently decided to return to work through the NHSP Rapid Response service at The Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust to help in the fight against COVID-19.

Thank you for supporting the NHS during this challenging time - you're truly an NHS Hero!

1. What was your job before this crisis?

Having left the NHS in 2017 I was working as a nurse in the aesthetic sector.

2. How has your work changed since the coronavirus outbreak?

At the start of the outbreak my work continued as normal but we were using higher levels of protective equipment, however, since the lockdown began my work has completely stopped.

3. Talk us through what you were doing when you decided to help with the crisis.

When things started to get more serious I knew that, when needed, I would return to the NHS. I felt that my previous knowledge and experience would have been needed in critical care. I discussed this with my employer who agreed that it was a good idea.

4. How did you sign up?

I have previously worked through NHSP, however, my DBS with them had expired so when I contacted them to get it updated I was told about the new COVID-19 Rapid Response route which I ended up going through.

5. What have your shifts been like so far?

My shifts have been going well, I've had a lot of support, but at the same time they have been very eye opening. I've never seen ICU have so many patients come in so quickly and all with the same problems. Some shifts have been hard when having to wear all the PPE, one of which I went 5 and a half hours without removing the equipment or having a drink/food/toilet break. It can also be quite heart-breaking seeing the patients unable to have family there.

6. Have there been any high points and low points that you would like to share with people?

My high points have to be the great support I have received from other staff within the hospital along with the nice gestures from the outside community who are sending in food and support.

My low point is seeing patients not improving and unable to have their families there to hold their hand.

7. What was it like turning up on your first day at the new ward?

Very scary, although I know the ward very well, I was really scared to go back on the frontline but at the same time I was excited to get back and help out.

8. What have your family and friends said about you returning to the NHS?

My husband didn't want me to as he was concerned for me, but at the same time he was very proud, as were my dad, sister and friends.

9. What would you say to current health workers who are unsure whether to transfer and return back to the NHS?

I completely understand their fears, it is scary, and I worry every time I cough. However, if you have the skills and you feel you want to help and can give something back then it'll be worth it. I'll be so proud when this is over, and so will the rest of the country. When it comes down to it, it's the key workers that will have fought this battle, so why not be part of that? It's also made me realise how much I loved nursing and I know I'll go back to it more afterwards.

10. Could you describe the effort you've seen from NHS staff in one word?

Grateful