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Nicola Higginson

Registered nurse degree –
mental health

Risedale Estates



Nicola, tell us a little about yourself

I have worked in care on and off for many years. When my dad died I decided I wanted to become a nurse. Its my passion and I couldn't imagine doing anything else now

Why did you choose an apprenticeship?

I'm married with 2 children, I couldn't commit to going away to university and travelling daily wasn't an option either. When I did my research I decided an apprenticeship was for me.

What are your main responsibilities as an apprentice?

I mainly monitor my own time, I work full time but I have breaks for placements/ off the job hours.

Would you recommend an apprenticeship to those looking to start a career in the care sector?

Yes, earning while you learn is great but the biggest plus for me is the experience/knowledge you gain whilst working, resulting in you being more confident and able whilst on placement/ in a new environment.

What is next for you? Is there another milestone you want to achieve?

Once I've qualified I want to continue to absorb knowledge from the nurses around me, then hopefully become a successful senior nurse.

What do you feel are the advantages of doing an apprenticeship over other training or education?

The support from peers, the more supported you feel the more successful you will be. I'm 36 this year so I have life experience and that is respected, I couldn't have achieved what I have straight from school.

What are your future plans?

I plan to work for Risedale for a long time. Hopefully one day becoming part of the management team.

As the theme for National Apprenticeship Week 2023 is #SkillsForLife, what skills for life would you say you have gained whilst undertaking your apprenticeship?

I'm a completely different person than when I first started. I'm a strong, confident person. That filters into my personal life too. I feel like I can achieve anything I set my mind to and I have the support of my employer to help me with that