

# Meet Juliet



## Healthcare Assistant and Care Certificate Achiever

Hi, my name is Juliet. I am a Healthcare Assistant (HCA) and I work on the Cardiac Ward at the Royal United Hospitals Bath (RUH.) Find out more about my career journey and what I do.

### What inspired you to become an HCA?

Prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, I worked as a receptionist in the Paediatrics Outpatient department at the RUH. During the first wave of the pandemic, the hospital put out a request for admin staff to volunteer and upskill into an HCA role to support the wards. I wanted to help so I put my name forward. I had never thought about care work before or even heard of the Care Certificate. It was daunting leaving behind everything I was familiar with and not knowing for how long I would be redeployed. I decided to immerse myself in the role, applying myself to learn and doing the best I could. It was an amazing experience. I found that I really enjoyed caring for the patients and being part of the HCA team. By the end of my redeployment, I knew I wanted to become an HCA so I applied for a position on the Cardiac ward and was successful.

### What do you do?

I help look after patients with a wide variety of cardiac conditions. My main responsibility is to work with the Registered Nurse to provide patient care. This includes assisting with/enabling personal hygiene, assisting with fluid and nutrition intake, supporting patient mobility as well as repositioning patients to maximise their physical comfort and prevent pressure sores. I also record vital signs (E-obs), measure and record capillary blood sugars, perform ECGs and bladder scans,

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maintain and remove peripheral cannulas and accurately complete patient care plans.

### **How did you hear about the Care Certificate?**


The Care Certificate is a requirement of the Trust and it is recorded on my mandatory training record for the HCA role. It provided me with the training, skills, knowledge and understanding to enable me to deliver high quality, safe, person-centred care. As part of this, I attended an “Introduction to the Care Certificate” training session. This provided me with an overview of the two workbooks. One workbook covers what you need to know (knowledge) and the other covers what you need to do (skills.) During the session, I was provided with a link to the Skills for Care website and this is where I found information that helped me to complete the workbooks.

### **What was your experience of completing the Care Certificate?**

As someone who was completely new-to-care, I found completing the workbooks to be challenging at times. Being focused and organised helps but overall, I found the experience to be extremely helpful and informative. The workbooks helped me to think about and understand my role as an HCA. In addition, gaining a certificate that is recognised nationally across health and social care has given me the confidence I need to do my job.

### **Describe a typical day**

I work a mix of day and night shifts which are 12 hours long. I generally work three shifts a week, occasionally four. There is a ward routine which provides a structure to the day. Handover is the very first thing we do. This involves finding out how our patients are progressing. As a team, we follow an individual plan of care for each patient. I make beds, provide personal care and give fluids and nutrition such as tea, coffee and sometimes toast. I help to serve lunch around midday and support patients who have specific dietary requirements or needs. I have a specific set of post-lunch checks to perform. I will also reposition



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patients, complete documentation and comfort rounds before helping to serve dinner. I also restock essential equipment.

### **When thinking about providing care, what have you learnt from completing the Care Certificate?**

For me, the main thing I learnt from completing the workbooks was how to work in a person-centred way. Person-centred care is an approach that respects and values the uniqueness of the individual, and seeks to maintain, even restore, their individuality. It is not just about a list of tasks, it is about patients, each of whom are individual and unique. I also learnt from the workbooks how to do my job and the attitude required. It also highlighted the importance of privacy and dignity.

### **What is the next step in your career journey?**

I am still relatively new to the HCA role so my main focus currently is to become the best HCA I can be. I would like to develop my clinical skills so that I can be more useful to the nurses on the ward. Most importantly, my heart is with the patients and their care. I will always want to keep this as the main focus of any job I do.