

International Recruitment to the Community CASE STUDY

2022/#5



Interview with Esther Kalafa, Band 5 working with District Nursing team

I qualified as a Registered Nurse in Kenya in 1994. Since qualifying I have worked in a National Hospital in Kenya. I had been interested in coming to the UK for a while, but I did not want to disturb my children's schooling, so I waited until they had grown up.

In 2020 I started making enquiries about coming to England and contacted the NMC to find out what the requirements would be for me to work in the UK; I also took it upon myself to enrol onto an IELTS course in preparation. During this time, I saw an advert looking for nurses to come to the UK, so I contacted the agency and applied. I was subsequently interviewed by the Agency and Senior Nurses from Central London Community Health Trust (CLCHT) and I was offered a post with CLCHT. My flight and visa were paid for by CLCHT, the process took approximately 12 months and I arrived in the UK in October 2021. I began my probation period and worked hard to pass my OSCE which I passed in December 2021.

When I first arrived, I was taken to a house where I was offered a single room and shared facilities with people from different workplaces. This was the first time I had ever shared with anyone, and I was not prepared for this, but I soon settled in, and I have a wonderful landlady. The first month's accommodation was paid for by CLCHT and after the first month it was my responsibility to pay my rent. CLCHT have said that they will reimburse me for my IELTS exam and my NMC registration.

So that my salary could be paid into a bank I had to register with a bank. This was difficult as I had to have proof of address for the tenancy arrangement and the bank wanted to see a utility bill. At this stage, I had only been in the UK a few weeks so this took a lot of communication before I could open a bank account, but I sought advice from the IR lead at CLCHT. This has now been sorted and my salary is paid into the bank account, and I am able to pay my rent. I am hoping to save enough money to move out and rent a 2-bedroom house so that my two sons can join me in England.

I spend a lot of time researching medicines management and wound care products so that I can increase my knowledge in these areas. I would like to eventually enrol on to a course where I can gain credits towards a BSc in Nursing.

I did find the process of moving to an unfamiliar area, sharing a house with people I didn't know and not having anyone I knew to talk to outside of work very unsettling at first, but fortunately another IR nurse who also travelled to the UK from Kenya lives in the same street so that has helped me to settle in. I am not yet aware of any Kenya Nurses Association, but I am going to enquire as I think this would be helpful and I would be able to share stories from home.

I am working with a District Nursing Team who have responsibility for visiting patients in care homes. Initially I was shadowing the District Nurse and her team but now that I am registered with the NMC I am visiting the homes on my own. The District Nurse team have been very thoughtful and helpful and have allocated residential homes that I can either walk or get a bus to. Some of the



residential homes are about a 20-minute walk from my home and other residential homes I can travel to by bus, these tend to be the homes nearer the town. I work 10 hour shifts over four days and visit approximately 8-10 patients a day, but this may mean 12-16 visits per day as some patients require more than one visit per day.

I am really enjoying the work and am learning a lot. Patients that I visit have been referred to the District Nursing service and they are mainly patients with diabetes, patients requiring wound care and patients requiring palliative care. I have learnt so much about diabetes and wound care. The products and medicines available in the UK are far more than medicines on offer in Kenya. Patients are really cared for well. I spend a lot

of time researching medicines management and wound care products so that I can increase my knowledge in these areas. I would like to eventually enrol on to a course where I can gain credits towards a BSc in Nursing.

One of my key objectives for coming to the UK was to gain experience and be exposed to working in a first world country. My prior experience of working as a nurse for over 25 years was not acknowledged when I came to the UK, so I am currently on the lowest Band 5 scale, and I want to better my chances of promotion and gain further qualifications. I am spending a lot of time understanding the processes and the governance procedures, I am aware this is a journey that I began later in life, but I know I will be happy working in the NHS.

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