

## Our South West nursing and midwifery people

**Jill Crook**

**Director of Nursing Professional and system development**

I became a mental health nurse partially by accident having applied to do my general nurse training however at that point there was an 18month waiting list to commence training and I was offered the opportunity to consider doing a 3 year mental health nurse training followed by an 18month general nurse course.

Having qualified as an Registered Mental Health Nurse and Registered General Nurse I have had a lot of great work opportunities within mental health and general nursing where I worked predominantly within an acute medical unit. Within mental health I worked for a number of years as a Community Psychiatric Nurse ( CPN) within acute, elderly and children sectors which gave me an opportunity to progress into management however I maintained a clinical caseload. I absolutely loved working as a CPN and felt very privileged to work with individuals in their own settings.



I was also fortunate to have set up new mental health day facilities and work with really great multi-disciplinary teams.

My next career moved was also somewhat accidental in that I came back from leave to find an advert on my desk for a Deputy Regional Chief Nurse Southwest and to this day I do not know who put the advert on my desk. Having a general and mental health background proved very useful in this and subsequent strategic roles.

Following a reorganisation I subsequently became Director of Nursing at Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority and also did a part time secondment into the Chief Nursing Officers team.

In 2006 I moved to become the Director of Nursing at Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust and latterly Gloucestershire and Swindon, moving to the newly formed NHSE Bath, Swindon, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire in 2013.

In 2014 with a further reorganisation on the horizon I decided to have a break and planned to retire, however I was asked to come back to lead the nursing and quality team to the point when the reorganisation happened which I agreed to do on a part time basis. Once this had happened in January 2015 I was asked to lead

the Transforming Care Programme covering Learning Disabilities and Autism on behalf of the Regional Chief Nurse across the South Region.

Having set up the infrastructure for Transforming Care in the South Region I was able to make sure there was appropriate infrastructure South West and South East so that each sub region was discreet operating model and then took a short term contract to lead the nursing and quality team within the north DCO team.

With NHSE/I coming together I am very pleased to be within the South West Nursing team as Director of Nursing Professional and System Development. After being a nurse for 43 years I still consider that I have been very fortunate to have such a varied career which has been so very rewarding and I remain humbled by individual patient stories.

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