



# Case Study: Return to Practice (nursing)

## Mary Spinks

### What was your initial experience of nursing?

I qualified as a registered nurse in 2007. My first role was as an adult nurse and I loved it! Some time later I switched to prison nursing. Although different to my first role in hospital, I thoroughly enjoyed my working life as a registered nurse. I then had a break from nursing to look after my daughter and when I was ready to start back, I was successfully appointed to a nursing role in a different hospital. This time, my experience was not so good. I started to feel as though I was working in a bullying culture where everything that related to CQC seemed to take priority. I didn't know where to find help and I was so unhappy I decided to leave nursing altogether. I was out of nursing for 5 years.

### So, what prompted you to return to nursing?

I saw the Lincolnshire Training Hub Facebook post, encouraging ex-nurses to come back to nursing. The post highlighted opportunities in general practice and how the training hub would support a return to practice (RtP) placement in primary care. I didn't realise you could, as a nurse, go straight into general practice nursing and wondered if this might be right for me. After a couple of telephone conversations with a nurse at the training hub, I was excited about the possibility of returning. I applied to the University of Lincoln and was accepted onto their RtP module to start in September 2022. Lincolnshire Training Hub arranged my general practice placement with mentor support.

### Have you enjoyed your overall experience of your RtP module with placement in general practice?

I have absolutely loved it! My placement was superb - it more than met my expectations. My mentor support was fabulous. I couldn't fault any aspect of my return journey. I've had no real challenges. I've enjoyed learning so many new things and I've loved every minute.

### So, what's next?

I've passed all the academic requirement set by the University of Lincoln and I've secured a permanent role in general practice in Lincolnshire for when I get my PIN! It wasn't difficult finding a role in Lincolnshire - the training hub helped and I'm thrilled that I am now working with my new practice, firstly as an HCA until my PIN comes through. When it does, I'll be employed as a registered nurse again. I honestly wouldn't hesitate to encourage anyone else to follow this pathway and I've already recommended to a few friends who are ex-nurses! I've started a 2-year training hub scheme called 'Career Start' and this will support my future professional development as well as ensure I have regular access to mentor support. My only regret is that I didn't know about this possibility earlier in my career.

