

Rewarding Careers in Learning Disabilities





Learning Disabilities Nurse Education at the University of Greenwich

The University of Greenwich offers students the opportunity to undertake a three year full-time Diploma in Higher Education or Bachelor of Science (Learning Disabilities Nursing) which usually commence in September each year.

The following education qualifications are accepted as entry to the Dip HE programme:

- Five GCSE's at Grade C or above (including English language and mathematics or a science) or equivalent
- BTEC National Diploma
- NVQ level 3 and GSCE English Language or equivalent
- Approved Access to Higher Education Course (minimum 54 credits at level 3 including mathematics and English at least to level 2)

The following education qualifications are accepted as entry to the BSc Hons programme:

- 200 UCAS points **from**
 - EITHER** a minimum of two A-level subjects
 - OR** a BTEC National Diploma
 - OR** equivalent qualifications.
- **PLUS** a minimum of three GCSEs at grade C or above (including English language and mathematics or science) or equivalent qualifications
- **OR** an Access to Higher Education course (minimum 60 credits at level 3, including mathematics and English at least to level 2)

Both three-year programmes focus on nursing practice and professional studies. In order to develop multi-professional working and collaborative working there is shared learning throughout the programme between all nursing and midwifery students in: biological, psychological and social sciences; evidence-based practice; professional values; teaching and learning theories and academic skills. The first year of the programme focuses on a 'Common Foundation Programme' for all nurses, the following two years focus on the area of Learning Disabilities Nursing theory and practice.

The programme offers both practice and theoretical learning in a variety of in-patient and community based settings. However, the learning disabilities placements are very community focused. All theoretical learning is currently based at the Avery Hill Campus and constitutes 50% of the programme. Practice placements are provided within the allocated NHS Trust areas in SE London, West and East Kent within a variety of settings to enable students to develop their knowledge and skills required for the role of a Learning Disabilities Nurse. Practice makes up the remaining 50 per cent of the programme.



What is a learning disability?

'Learning Disability' is a term used to describe someone who:

- Has impaired intelligence, so the person:
 - has difficulty in learning new skills
 - has a reduced ability to understand new or complex information
 - has an IQ of less than 70.
- Has impaired social functioning, so the person:
 - may have difficulty communicating
 - may have difficulty with daily living skills
 - may have problems making friends and socialising.
- Has a lifelong condition, which occurred before the age of 18 years. A learning disability is usually determined before birth, either by genetic factors, or by problems arising at birth. A learning disability is NOT a mental illness, and cannot be cured medically.

Additionally, the person may have:

- Support needs to enable them to become independent and to be able to take an active valued role in their own community
- Increased physical health needs
- Increased mental health needs
- Increased behavioural problems.

Further information about learning disabilities can be found on the following websites:

www.bild.org.uk

www.mencap.org.uk

www.learningdisabilities.org.uk

www.doh.gov.uk/learningdisabilities





What support do people with learning disabilities need?

The level of support an individual needs will depend on his or her degree of learning disability and any associated conditions. Support should be centered on the person's needs, wishes and aspirations. The areas of support someone might need may include:

- Developing communication skills
- Developing independent living skills
- Developing social skills
- Developing personal care skills
- Accessing health services e.g. GP surgery, hospital, dentist, chiropody
- Maintaining health and well-being
- Accessing advocacy and empowerment services
- Developing and maintaining a range of relationships
- Overcoming sensory disability and/or mobility problems
- Managing finances/money
- Accessing education
- Accessing training
- Obtaining employment
- Accessing community and leisure facilities
- Making choices and taking risks
- Managing emotions and feelings
- Exercising human rights and becoming a valued citizen.

Why choose a career in learning disabilities nursing?

In 2001 the Government issued a White Paper called 'Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century' (Department of Health, 2001) and subsequently 'Valuing People Now: a new three year strategy for learning disabilities: making it happen for everyone' (Department of Health, 2009).

The aim of these documents is to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities as for many years they have generally been excluded from society, and from the services they need to support them to become healthy and valued members within the community. There are approximately 1.2 million people with a learning disability in England.

The White Paper is focused on four key principles to improve peoples' lives:

- Rights
- Independence
- Choice
- Inclusion.

By choosing a career in learning disabilities nursing your challenge will be to put these principles into real action to make real differences to peoples' lives. As a learning disabilities nurse you will do this through using your specialist knowledge and clinical skills in partnership with others.

There are a variety of different roles and careers in learning disabilities and other services which encompass a broad range of experiences within a variety of settings e.g. day services, residential services, respite care, individuals own homes, community based services, specialist health services, and other health, social and educational services involving working with children, adults and older people with learning disabilities.

Learning disabilities nursing plays an important role and integral part in achieving the White Paper principles.

The role of the learning disabilities nurse

Learning disabilities nurses support people with learning disabilities to live their lives as fully and independently as possible in the community, whilst respecting their rights, dignity and choices.

This includes a focus on improving or maintaining health and well-being. They work in partnership with service-users, their families and carers to assess peoples' individual needs and draw up plans of care, implementing and monitoring those recommendations. Typical roles involve working with other nurses and health, social or educational professionals either within a community based service, specialist health services or assisting service-users to develop basic living skills and social activities within residential, day, educational or respite services. The specialist contribution of learning disabilities nurses is the use of the specialist knowledge and skills to influence behaviours and lifestyles that promote health and well-being for individuals with learning disabilities and their families or carers, though utilising specific communication methods.

This includes:

- Detecting ill health and the conditions that compromise health or well-being in areas of: physical health; mental health; behavioural problems; communication; functional skills; advocacy; empowerment; relationships; employment; leisure
- Taking action to alleviate or improve ill health or well-being in partnership with: the person, carers, staff, health, social or education professionals
- Training and developing the skills of staff, carers and members of the public to provide effective support
- Managing, leading and co-ordinating care
- Researching, educating and giving professional advice.

NHS Trust allocation and placement areas

Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust and Bromley Primary Care Trust – South-East London

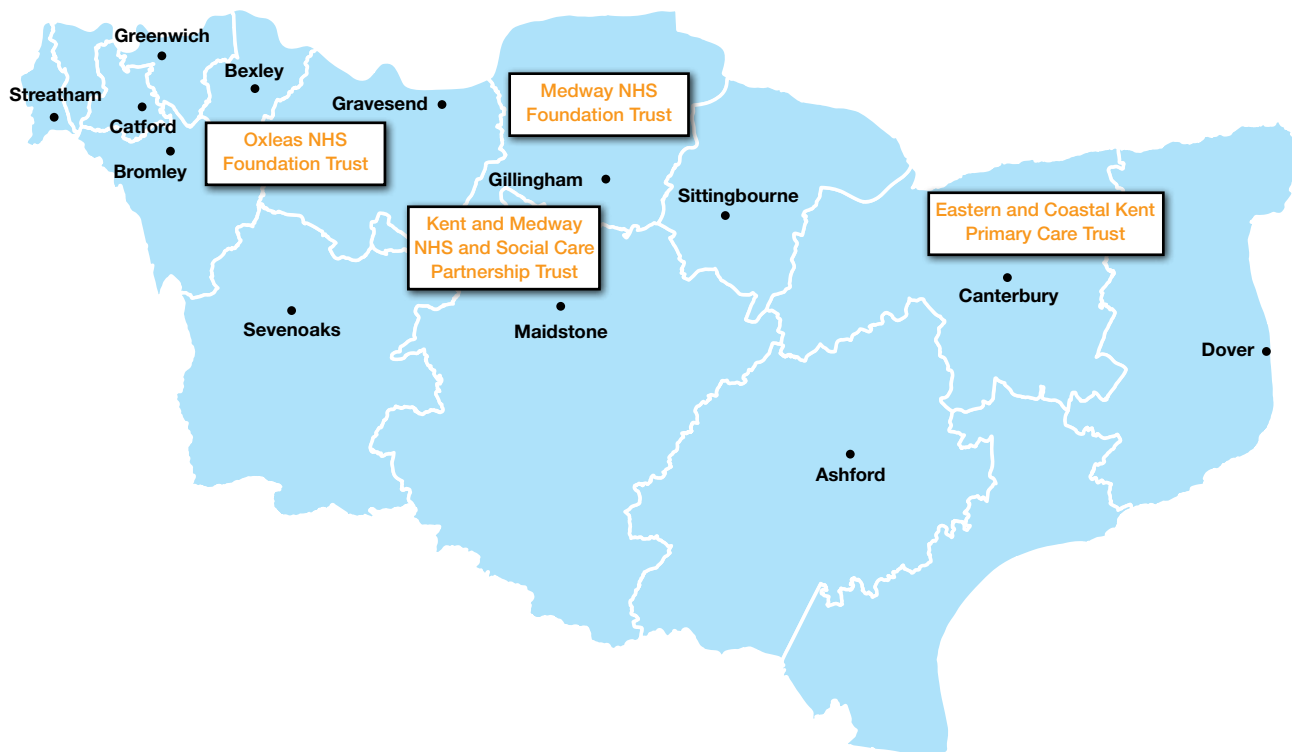
Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust and Medway NHS Foundation Trust – Kent and Medway

For further information and application forms contact:

The University of Greenwich Course Enquiry Unit

Freephone: 0800 005 006

E-mail: courseinfo@gre.ac.uk



University of Greenwich

The University of Greenwich is a major modern university, with three campuses extending from Greenwich to Medway, serving south-east London and Kent. The university has achieved considerable growth in the last decade. Student numbers, including those at partner colleges, increased to a total of approximately 25,000.

Student services

The Office of Student Affairs provides advice, support and information. These services are intended to help you enjoy being a University of Greenwich student, both on campus and within the community.

Services include:

- Careers advice
- Counselling
- Disability and dyslexia support
- Finance
- International student support
- Skills for study
- JobShop
- Mentoring
- Nurseries

For further information please log on to www.greenwich.ac.uk/study

Equal opportunities

The University of Greenwich is committed to equality of opportunity for all applicants, students and staff. All students and staff are required to comply with the university's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Disabled students

The university welcomes applications from people with disabilities and is committed to enabling enrolled disabled students to succeed.

Central to our philosophy is the understanding that people with disabilities have individual needs and issues. Disability advisers are available to help at any stage in your application process and at any point in your studies.

We provide support through one-to-one advice sessions, offer specialist workshops (e.g. revision strategies for dyslexic students and issues for disabled students when making job applications). We will liaise with staff in your academic department to ensure that they are aware of individual needs.

The university has a Disability Policy Statement which sets out our commitment to disabled students and provides information about access on campus.

For information, telephone the Disability & Dyslexia Centre on 020 8331 7875 or e-mail d-centre@gre.ac.uk.

We are affiliated to SKILL: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities. You can find information about the university on the SKILL database. For further information, please log on to www.skill.org.uk.

Accommodation

Avery Hill

A total of over 1,200 students live on this campus. Accommodation comprises shared flats and maisonettes for between four and nine people. Each flat has its own well-equipped lounge/dining room/kitchen with cookers, fridge-freezers and microwaves. Entry phones are fitted for each flat and some have balconies with views over the park. Each study-bedroom has its own fridge, a telephone capable of making and receiving internal, national and international calls, and network connections for Internet access. Some rooms have en-suite shower/toilet facilities.

The Avery Hill Village includes a bar, gym and food outlets. During term, regular social events are organised by the Students' Union. There is also a general shop, bookshop, coin-operated launderette, parking and sports facilities.

E-mail: accommodation-ah@gre.ac.uk

Tel: 020 8331 9664

Fax: 020 8331 9608



How to find us

Avery Hill Campus

Southwood Site, Avery Hill Road, Eltham, London SE9 2UG

Road: at Junction 2 of the M25 take the A2 towards London or, if coming from London, take the A2 towards Dover. Exit the A2 at the Danson Interchange for Sidcup, Welling and Bexleyheath (A221). Drive through Blackfen on the A210 to the junction with Avery Hill Road, and at the traffic lights with the petrol station opposite, take the left filter lane into Avery Hill Road (B2214).

For Southwood Site, continue forward along Avery Hill Road. For Mansion Site, turn on to Reinickendorf Avenue and continue to the end. Parking is off to the right.

Students and visitors must pay to park on campus from Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm. You can purchase tickets from one of the coin-operated pay-and-display machines on site. Students living in a hall of residence at Avery Hill Campus may apply for a student resident parking permit. An application form and cost of purchase can be found at www.gre.ac.uk/averyhillgreentravel.

Train: services to Eltham, Falconwood and New Eltham from Charing Cross, Waterloo East and London Bridge. Mansion Site's nearest station is Falconwood, which is a 15-minute walk. New Eltham, the nearest station to Southwood Site, is 20 minutes' walk away.

Buses: Log on to www.tfl.gov.uk/buses for the latest information.



Applying

Application is via the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS):

**PO Box 28
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire GL52 3SA**

Tel: 0870 112221

Website: www.ucas.ac.uk

Application forms should be submitted by mid-December prior to the year of study.

Please note that the Nursing and Midwifery Admissions Service was incorporated into UCAS in 2007. All applications are now made via UCAS.

At certain points during the year, outside normal application periods, the university will accept direct applications. For details, telephone 0800 005 006.

Financial arrangements

Financial support for students is an important consideration. Learning disabilities nursing students do not pay tuition fees and normally receive a bursary. To be eligible for an NHS-funded bursary, you must:

- Meet the residence requirement, meaning that you must have been living in the UK for the three years immediately before the start date of the programme and have indefinite leave to remain in the UK
- Have settled status, which means that you must be settled in the UK within the meaning of the Immigration Act 1971.

All students receive support towards costs incurred in travelling to placements. Details are provided on commencement.

Full details of eligibility regulations are in the current edition of the NHS publication Financial Help for Health Care Students. For more information, visit www.nhsstudentgrants.co.uk.



Leisha Conmy

DipHE Learning Disability Nursing.
Commenced September 2007

“This is an exciting time for learning disability nursing, and I feel privileged that once qualified I will be in a position to really improve the lives of people with a learning disability. Policies on a local and national level are beginning to reflect the changing climate and ensure that the ‘silent voices’ of individuals with disabilities are heard. I feel that being on this programme has provided me with the skills necessary to be instrumental in this change. I have worked with children and young people with a learning disability for many years and was keen to continue my training. I was lucky enough to secure a place on the programme and have never looked back.

The programme allows me to underpin theoretical knowledge with practical experience on placements. Working alongside other health and social care professionals has given me insight into how working as part of a team can be both challenging and rewarding, and, as a mature student, I have always been made to feel valued by my colleagues. It has been both exciting and challenging. So far, I have been delighted that with commitment and focus I have developed so much, both personally and professionally.

When I started the programme, I was apprehensive about my academic abilities, but the support given by my branch leader and other members of the department, plus the encouragement of fellow students, has helped me to gain confidence. It has sometimes been hard to juggle assignments, placements and home life, but I’ve managed it with support from family and friends and have a massive sense of achievement.

I am looking forward to my third year and cannot believe how quickly it has gone. The course has provided me with the knowledge and skills needed to become an effective practitioner. This unique branch of nursing gives me the opportunity to make a difference to the lives of individuals and their families. I recommend it.”





School of Health and Social Care

Avery Hill Campus
Southwood Site
Avery Hill Campus
Avery Hill Road
Eltham
SE9 2UQ

Enquiry Unit

Freephone: 0800 005 006
Telephone from outside the UK:
+44 20 8331 8590
Fax: 020 8331 8145
Fax from outside the UK:
+44 20 8331 8145

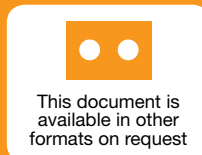
E-mail: courseinfo@gre.ac.uk
Website: www.greenwich.ac.uk



REGISTER FOR
PUBLICATIONS/
GREENWICH VIP



www.gre.ac.uk/study



This document is
available in other
formats on request