

## #MonthlyMotivation: Millie Martin (class of 2012)



**Volunteering in a homeless shelter during her maths degree led Millie to a career in mental health nursing.**

### **What made you realise you wanted to pursue mental health nursing?**

After leaving Putney in 2012, I went to Cardiff University to study Mathematics. Whilst there, I began volunteering at a homeless shelter alongside my studies and quickly came to realise that I was far more interested in this area of work.

This prompted me to completely change my path (something people shouldn't be afraid of) and I applied to become a mental health nurse at Kingston University, qualifying in 2018.

### **What does your role entail?**

As a mental health nurse, I primarily care for and work closely alongside patients, creating treatment plans and supporting them throughout their day, through both their ups and downs.

Ultimately, the role involves so many different tasks including carrying out assessments, administering medication and monitoring physical health. Patience is key! Being in hospital can be an incredibly stressful situation for

patients; you also have to be quite thick skinned; some people may not always take kindly to your help!

### **How do you think your time at Kingston, and experiences from your first job, impacted you?**

The course at Kingston gave me the opportunity to work in a number of different areas as a student including acute wards, rehabs and community services. My first job as a newly qualified nurse was on a male psychiatric intensive care unit (PICU). As stated in the name, this was an intense environment, but it threw me into the deep end, allowing me to continue to develop my skills following university.

The patients were severely unwell and presented as high risk which required support and empathy even in the most challenging of situations; as my first job in nursing, it taught me I could do more than I ever thought I could.

### **Are you still working on the male psychiatric intensive unit?**

Since September 2019, I have started work on an eating disorder unit which aims to focus on long term relapse prevention. Opening only this summer, it has been a great experience to be able to help create a new service which I hope can only go from strength to strength.

### **What would you recommend for those looking to go down a similar route to you?**

For others who are interested in joining the field of mental health, it is important to know that although the job can be stressful, and even difficult at times, it is an incredibly rewarding role. Working closely with people who are suffering with their mental health takes time and knowledge.

I highly recommend gaining work experience to truly understand what it involves as well as having a solid background in mathematics and science. It is also important to remember; you can always make a difference no matter your position and never be afraid to challenge others if you deem it necessary.

### **How do you think Putney prepared you for your career?**

I believe that being at Putney gave me the confidence to have faith in my own ability, to make the right decision and stand by my choices. Being a good nurse requires working well with others as a team, and listening to each other, a skill I became well acquainted with during my 7 years on the rowing team at Putney.

*"Being at Putney made me believe in myself and to not be afraid of a challenge"*