

BDA Support Workforce Case Study

Jen Menton

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Tell us about your NHS role and the difference it makes to patient care:

I actually have two roles within dietetics. I work within the community diabetes team, facilitating weight loss courses for groups of patients with type 2 diabetes, and it is this role that I was nominated for the award. I take patients for a series of group education sessions to help them and raise their awareness of the techniques and behaviours that will allow them to make changes to their own lifestyle to promote wellbeing, and ultimately weight loss, which will result in a better prognosis for them and their diabetes. I am constantly striving to gain knowledge of new research and new ideas within diabetes, weight loss and wellbeing that I can bring to the groups, and will adapt the course content, under the supervision of a diabetes specialist dietitian to bring new ideas to the groups. I am always very aware that it is the patients who can make the changes to their behaviours and lifestyle, and that I am merely raising their awareness of barriers that may be holding them back, and seeing the tools that may help them. The feedback from the participants is always hugely positive, with clinical success in weight loss and reductions in HbA1c levels, as well as a feeling of wellbeing for the patients.

My other role is within oncology, where I support two oncology dietitians with the administration of the patients referred to the service and ensuring that the patients have the correct equipment where necessary.

Tell us about the award you were nominated and shortlisted for

I was nominated for the 'Reaching your potential' award and was shortlisted for the final. The nomination came as a complete surprise and I was delighted to have received it

Tell us about the reason you were nominated for the award, and who were you nominated by

I was nominated by my line manager, Felicia Louisy, Diabetes Specialist Dietitian. I believe it was for the effort I put in to keep the course programme relevant and as up-to-date as possible, looking to improve it at every opportunity, including re-designing the participant pack to make it more user friendly and a long-term support for participants.



Presented by Health Education England at the Celebrating Inspirational AHP Support Workforce Webinar in December 2022.



What would you say to others to encourage more people to join the NHS Dietetic Support Workforce

I believe that if you have a passion for an area of healthcare and you feel that you are able to make a difference that there is always a place for you in the NHS. I came to my role after working for almost 30 years, and I have finally found the job that does not feel like work at all. My background has been varied, and although I do not have a dietetic degree, and so I am not a dietitian, I can still make difference to patients and their quality of life. There are always opportunities to learn, develop and use your skills to make a difference and if it is this that makes you get up in the morning, then the opportunities are there.

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Anything else you would like to say about your role, or being a member of the dietetic support workforce?

I am delighted to see that the AHP workforce is receiving an increased and more widespread profile. Whilst I have always felt supported and valued, having the increased awareness of the work of AHPs recognised and more structured competencies will help to produce a more level playing field across the profession.