

# CAREER SPOTLIGHT

**Julie Connolly** | Occupational Health Nurse Advisor



## Tell us about your career at Saint-Gobain so far

I joined British Gypsum in September 2017, after working for the police force as an Occupational Health Nurse Advisor (OHNA) for 12 years. I love this profession as it is varied and challenging. I was looking for a new opportunity, when a post for a part-time OHNA came up covering the Kirkby Thore and Sherburn in Elmet sites, I had heard many positive things about working for British Gypsum so I didn't hesitate to apply and was fortunate to be chosen for the post. I haven't looked back since. British Gypsum is incredibly supportive in allowing access to role related training, which ensures that we keep up-to-date with our continuing professional development in line the the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

## Tell us about your role

My work involves undertaking health surveillance at the Kirkby Thore (Cumbria) and Sherburn in Elmet (Yorkshire) sites. We work closely as a team and with each site to support management in meeting the legal requirement of health surveillance. We are constantly working to promote good health within the organisation. We support employees and managers, alongside Human Resource colleagues, through the absence process. We advise on fitness for work and recommend workplace adaptations, where appropriate, to ensure individuals can remain safely and sustainably at work or return after a period of sickness absence.



I feel **valued and supported** as a member of Saint-Gobain, it has been **my best career move** so far!



## What made you want to work in Occupational Health and how did you start your career?

The thing I love about nursing is that you can have a very varied and interesting career. I started my career by undertaking three years of training to become a registered General Nurse, working in a variety of hospital settings. I then decided to train to be a midwife and after qualifying I was based in the community, undertaking home deliveries and all aspects of midwifery. My career then took me to train as a District Nurse, remaining community based, working in a dual role as a District Nurse/Midwife. After several years the roles were split and I continued as a District Nurse, spending many happy years caring for people in their homes, supporting them and their family during very difficult life times. My career then took me to train as a Specialist Coronary Heart Disease Nurse in the community, supporting people and their families after diagnosis. I have always been interested in Occupational Health and I decided to apply for a role as an Occupational Health Nurse Advisor with the police force, where I worked for 12 years and gained a huge amount of valuable experience. During this time, I completed a Diploma in Occupational Health with Lancaster University.

## What advice would you give to someone hoping to start a career in your profession?

Occupational Health is an exciting area of nursing to work in, particularly when working for a supportive and forward thinking organisation like British Gypsum/Saint-Gobain. My advice would be to gain as much experience in a variety of specialities prior to entering the world of Occupational Health, this will equip you with the skills to support you in a nursing specialism that it very rewarding.

## Tell us about the SEQOHS accreditation

This accreditation means employees can be assured of a Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Service (SEQOHS). I'm very proud to work for British Gypsum/Saint-Gobain and particularly to be part of a team that has achieved SEQOHS accreditation. This has involved a huge amount of work and dedication; my part has been one of the team helping to support the process.



## What's your favourite thing about working for Saint-Gobain?

I feel valued and supported as a member of Saint-Gobain, it has been my best career move so far!



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