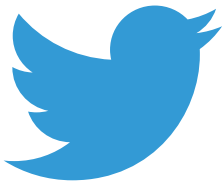


## 7: Choosing a nursing career

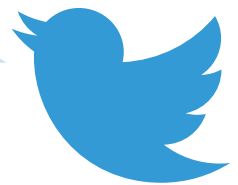


**Els Freshwater**

[@theRCN](#) [#whyInurse](#) because I love the opportunity to learn new things

**Donald Nurse 999**

[@theRCN](#) I nurse because I'm happy to do whatever it takes to improve just one patient's life. In hospital or prehospital it's [#whyInurse](#)



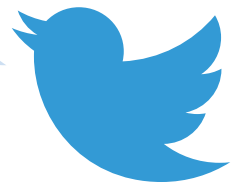
**Cody Trezise**

because it is so gratifying to make a positive impact on an individual's life, whether that is big or small.  
[#whyInurse](#) [@theRCN](#)



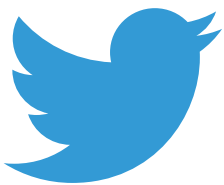
**Dorcas Gwata**

Because nurses are critical in addressing mental health problems with young people. [@theRCN](#) [#whyInurse](#)



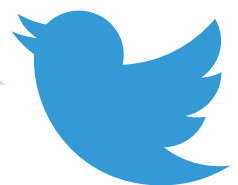
**Zvetlana Farrugia**

[@theRCN](#) [#whyInurse](#) [#iluvnursing](#) because it's challenging, scientific and a caring profession



**Pete**

[@theRCN](#) [#whyInurse](#) I nurse because I get to design and create better ways to help people full time day in day out



Tweets posted on International Nurse's Day 2015

## 7: Choosing a nursing career

These tweets show just how inspiring modern nursing staff find their careers. As well as being inspiring, nursing is also a career full of varied, challenging and rewarding opportunities. When professional training began in the 18th century, there was only one type of nurse, today students choose from one of four types, or fields, or nursing.

### Adult nursing

Adult nurses work with patients over 18. They can work in hospitals or in community settings such as people's homes, health centres or nursing homes.

### Children's nursing

Children's nurses work with children and young people up to 19 years old. Children react to illness in a very different way to adults, and children's nurses are specially trained to understand their needs. Children's nurses also support, advise and educate parents and carers.

### Learning disability nursing

Nurses who qualify in this field of nursing help people with learning disabilities to live independent and fulfilling lives. They may work with people in supported accommodation, or with those who need more intensive support - for instance, in hospitals or in specialist secure units for offenders with learning disabilities.

### Mental health nursing

Mental health nurses plan and deliver care for people living at home, in small residential units or in specialist hospital services. Nurses working in this field need enhanced communication skills to support families and carers. They work with other health care professionals to ensure patients with mental illness get the specialised care they need.

### Midwifery

Midwifery is a separate profession to nursing with its own degree level qualification. Midwives work at the heart of the community, as the primary co-ordinator of care for all pregnant, labouring and postnatal women. They provide support, guidance and care for mother, baby and family.

### Health care assistants

Nursing is also carried out by health care assistants (HCAs) and assistant practitioners (APs). They can be found in all sorts of settings, including hospitals, doctors' surgeries and the community. Working with patients of all ages, they are an essential part of the nursing team providing care and support across every healthcare discipline. Training varies across the UK.

Find out more about careers in nursing in the Professional Development section of the RCN website at [www.rcn.org.uk](http://www.rcn.org.uk)

### Activity

In your groups discuss what attracts people to nursing now and what attracted people to the role in the 19th century – what are the similarities and

differences. Write a 40-word advert promoting the role of the nurse for a 19th century newspaper and a 140 character tweet promoting modern nursing.

**Fact:** In January 2017 the role of Nurse Associate was introduced in England. The role is expected to work alongside HCAs and registered nurses to deliver hands-on care, focusing on ensuring patients continue to receive compassionate care.