

## **PRESS RELEASE – 15 January, 2019**

### **New community nursing role is helping to improve patient care and experience in South Tyneside**



A new community nursing role introduced by South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust is helping to improve patient care and experience for people living in South Shields.

As the first of the Trust's new 'assistant nurse practitioners' working in the community, Andrea King is now able to provide advanced support to district nurses and community staff nurses, thereby freeing up their time to concentrate more on assessment and care linked to patients with complex needs.

Miss King was previously a healthcare assistant with the Trust's community team for nine years. To enable her to expand her role and take on the new post, she achieved a Foundation Degree in Science and Health and Social Care Practice, following a two-year course at Teesside University, and was able to demonstrate the development of her knowledge and clinical skills through a competency training programme.

As an 'assistant nurse practitioner', Miss King is now able to provide much more care in her own clinics and on independent home visits, doing tasks such as giving certain injections, removing stitches, inserting catheters and applying leg ulcer compression bandages. Previously, she would have had to rely on the supervision of a more senior nurse also being present.

Miss King said: “It was hard work combining all the study required with my full-time job but I thoroughly enjoyed the academic aspect and it is so rewarding to be able to use the clinical skills I have learned.”

Diane Shotton, the Lead Integration Nurse for South Tyneside community integrated teams, said: “The assistant practitioner role contributes to more effective, efficient use of resources and we have had extremely positive feedback from patients and their families who tell us that they appreciate Andrea’s approachability and the continuity of care she provides, and that they have trust in her clinical abilities.

“The role is also very important to the registered nurses in the team as it helps them to maintain reliability and continuity when visiting their patients in their homes, enabling our district nurses to deliver and deal with complex care, for which they have been highly trained. Andrea had the whole-hearted support of the Trust, and our East community team in South Shields in particular, throughout the process of becoming an assistant practitioner and we are all really proud of what she has achieved.”

As part of continued efforts to evolve and develop more new innovative workforce models to help keep pace with demand on the NHS, healthcare leaders at the Trust are now evaluating the assistant practitioner role with a view to introducing assistant nurse practitioners in its other community teams throughout South Tyneside.

## **Ends**

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*Photo caption: South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust’s community assistant nurse practitioner Andrea King, left, with Diane Shotton, the Trust’s Lead Integration Nurse for South Tyneside community integrated teams*