WELCOME TO NORTHERN IRELAND
COME WORK WITH US

Information on Living and Working in Northern Ireland

Caring with Compassion
Welcome to Health and Social Care

As the Chief Nursing Officer for Northern Ireland, I would like to encourage you to come to work in Northern Ireland and become a valued member of the nursing team.

In Northern Ireland we are proud of our nursing heritage and have a long tradition of training outstanding nurses who are highly esteemed by our local population and the world over. Northern Ireland nurses have been at the forefront of leading innovation, safety and quality initiatives, and developing professional person centred practice to enhance the experience and improve outcomes for the patients and clients we care for.

You will find working as a nurse in Northern Ireland to be very enjoyable and rewarding. It will be a satisfying experience with great opportunities available for developing your professional practice in a range of areas and specialities. There are lots of opportunities to develop personal interests and become a valued member of our society. Many of our nurses work outside hospital settings and are part of the local community they work in.

I would strongly encourage you to come and join us in an environment where you will find diversity of practice, challenge, growth, teamwork and support for your nursing career. Nursing is a wonderful profession and I look forward to welcoming you to continue your nursing career in Northern Ireland.

Professor Charlotte McArdle
Chief Nursing Officer

CONTENTS

WHO WE ARE 02
A NURSING ROLE IN THE HSC 04
WHAT WE HAVE ON OFFER 06
MEET SOME OF THE TEAM 08
LIVING IN NORTHERN IRELAND 12
SUPPORT ON ARRIVAL 16
FOR MORE INFORMATION 17
WHO WE ARE

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUSTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Throughout Northern Ireland, there are a number of Health and Social Care (HSC) organisations, agencies, networks, partnerships, charities and programmes that deliver a wide range of health services, however there are five core organisations which employ Band 5 Nurses:

• Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
• Northern Health and Social Care Trust
• South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
• Southern Health and Social Care Trust
• Western Health and Social Care Trust

These HSC Trusts deliver a wide range of Health and Social Care Services to the population of Northern Ireland, and each have a variety of Community and Acute Hospital based services - including sub-acute care for older people.

The Trusts deliver services both locally - within the Trust boundaries - and on a Northern Ireland wide basis. Below is a map of Northern Ireland showing the different Trust boundaries.

Whilst some Trusts cover smaller geographical areas than others, the populations served are relatively similar. A few statistics are set out below. All of the Trusts have core values which whilst the wording varies between Trusts generally cover the themes of:

• Treating all with dignity and respect
• Openness and honesty
• Excellence in delivering services
• Valuing and supporting staff
• Listening and learning

The HSC in Northern Ireland has an excellent record of delivering high quality services and we welcome you to our team.

HSC TRUST AREAS

Western HSC Trust
- population of 300,000 people served
- 10,298 staff employed across all job groups
- approximately 2,916 staff make up the Nursing & Midwifery workforce

Southern HSC Trust
- population of 365,712 people served
- 10,641 staff employed across all job groups
- approximately 3,734 staff make up the Nursing & Midwifery workforce

South Eastern HSC Trust
- population of 450,000 people served
- 9,249 staff employed across all job groups
- approximately 3,086 staff make up the Nursing & Midwifery workforce

Northern HSC Trust
- population of 471,000 people served
- 11,591 staff employed across all job groups
- approximately 3,712 staff make up the Nursing & Midwifery workforce

Belfast HSC Trust
- population of 450,000 people served
- 20,250 staff employed across all job groups
- approximately 7,229 staff make up the Nursing & Midwifery workforce

Approximately 20,250 staff make up the Nursing & Midwifery workforce

Caring with Compassion
In order to work as a Registered Nurse in Northern Ireland, you must hold current registration with the UK Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

Once you have met all the prerequisites, you will be allocated to a specific clinical area and assigned an experienced registered nurse to support you clinically.

**INDUCTION**
All newly registered nurses and midwives will receive induction to provide essential information in relation to their professional and clinical responsibilities as well as mandatory training within their area of work.

**PRECEPTORSHIP**
A period of Preceptorship will be undertaken by all newly registered nurses and midwives, usually spanning a period of six months following registration. Preceptorship is based on the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) and is designed to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of new registrants and to support them as they meet the probationary requirements of the Trust. All new registrants will be allocated a Preceptor who will provide supervision and support during this period.

**EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT**
Each Trust is committed to helping you develop within your current job and to equip you in fulfilling your career ambitions. We provide an excellent range of development activities, each carefully selected to help staff at all levels achieve successful and rewarding nursing and midwifery careers.

There are a wide range of education and development opportunities available - these will be discussed when you start your job and during your development review. The Trusts will provide:

- Mandatory training necessary for the safe provision of services
- Education and training necessary for service developments within your clinical area
- Professional development opportunities.

The Trusts work in partnership with the Clinical Education Centre, the Leadership Centre, Queen’s University Belfast, Ulster University and the Open University. Nursing and midwifery staff who undertake courses commissioned through the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety’s (DHSSPS) Commissioning Plan receive time for the course and travelling expenses to attend lectures.

**REVALIDATION**
From April 2016, The NMC require all registrants to meet revalidation requirements. Revalidation helps nurses and midwives demonstrate that they practice safely and effectively and builds on existing renewal requirements by introducing new elements which encourage nurses and midwives to reflect on the role of the Code in their practice and demonstrate they are ‘living’ the set standards.

Each Trust will provide support for every registrant to ensure they meet the revalidation requirements as set by the NMC.

**DEVELOPMENT OF PRACTICE**
All Trusts are committed to the development of practice and aim to identify, develop and promote best practice through clinical supervision, work-based learning and reflective practice in order to realise the full potential of individual registrants and clinical teams.

**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (PDP)**
All nurses and midwives will have an annual review to evaluate individual progress, set objectives and identify development opportunities. The review is an opportunity to reflect on achievements and set new objectives for the forthcoming year. Any learning and development needs arising can be discussed and planned with your line manager.

In order to work as a Registered Nurse in Northern Ireland, you must hold current registration with the UK Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).
All staff within the HSC benefit from excellent terms & conditions as well as a wide range of policies and schemes aimed at providing a good working environment. Key features include:

### WORKING HOURS / SALARY ARRANGEMENTS
- Standard working week of 37.5 hours
- Band 5 salary scale is £21,478 - £27,901 per annum
- Monthly salary paid directly into your bank account on the third clear banking day before the end of the calendar month
- The option to join the HSC Superannuation (pension) scheme where both you and your employer contribute

### ANNUAL LEAVE AND STATUTORY / PUBLIC HOLIDAYS
- 27 days paid annual leave on commencement rising to 29 days after 5 years and 33 days after 10 years
- 10 days paid statutory leave in addition to annual leave

### CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
The Trusts all offer ongoing continuous professional development through Annual Personal Development Reviews.

### MODERN FACILITIES
The Trusts are continually updating their facilities to ensure modern ‘State of the Art’ care environments for all its service users and staff.

### HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES
The Trusts all offer a wide range of Human Resources Policies to underpin the value that is placed on staff. Whilst these may vary slightly from one Trust to another, the type of policies offered include:
- A range of Work Life Balance/Flexible Working Policies
- Employee Health & Well-being Support
- A strong commitment to Equality of Opportunity
- Savings on Social and Leisure Facilities
- Child Care Voucher Scheme
- Cycle to Work Scheme
MEET SOME OF THE TEAM

I arrived in Northern Ireland with 96 other nurses from the Philippines, the majority of us coming from the Island of Mindanao. It was my first time this far away from home, and I had no experience of being in a different country or working anywhere else.

The Royal Victoria Hospital recruitment team made my transition an easy one. They made us feel at home and have continued to reassure us from the start.

It is a privilege for me to work with this multi-disciplinary team and in such a professional manner. I still enjoy living here after 14 years.

Geraldine Tinto
Belfast HSC Trust

I arrived at Belfast International Airport on the 6th of December 2002, and after a warm welcome and dinner, I was shown to the nurses’ accommodation where I lived for three years - it was clean, warm, comfortable, very affordable and only a few minutes’ walk from the hospital (no travelling expenses!). The biggest challenge was homesickness, but I now have internet access and can chat to family via the web.

Antrim is a family orientated town with all the amenities, including an outlet shopping centre! I feel very welcome and part of the community. There are also many beautiful walks and it is close to the famous North Antrim coast.

Schools in Northern Ireland offer a high standard of education and extra-curricular activities and my son attends St Comgall’s Primary School. Also, there are many different churches and we easily found one that allowed us to freely practice our faith.

Both hospital and GP care is free - including dental for children and prescriptions. Public hospital care is of a high standard and resourced to meet all your family’s medical needs.

The International and Belfast City airports are both near Antrim. Belfast is 20 minutes drive away and Dublin only 2 hours. Generally, the cost of living is more reasonable than the rest of the UK but the standard is incomparable.

I now work as an Assistant Clinical Sister and I had wonderful mentors when I first started. Both managers and colleagues have supported me throughout my nursing career and I have had the opportunity to continually develop.

Northern Ireland is now our second home and I would truly recommend it both from a personal and professional perspective.

Almira Barro
Northern HSC Trust

I arrived in Northern Ireland with 96 other nurses from the Philippines, the majority of us coming from the Island of Mindanao. It was my first time this far away from home, and I had no experience of being in a different country or working anywhere else.

The Royal Victoria Hospital recruitment team made my transition an easy one. They made us feel at home and have continued to reassure us from the start.

It is a privilege for me to work with this multi-disciplinary team and in such a professional manner. I still enjoy living here after 14 years.

Geraldine Tinto
Belfast HSC Trust

I arrived at Belfast International Airport on the 6th of December 2002, and after a warm welcome and dinner, I was shown to the nurses’ accommodation where I lived for three years - it was clean, warm, comfortable, very affordable and only a few minutes’ walk from the hospital (no travelling expenses!). The biggest challenge was homesickness, but I now have internet access and can chat to family via the web.

Antrim is a family orientated town with all the amenities, including an outlet shopping centre! I feel very welcome and part of the community. There are also many beautiful walks and it is close to the famous North Antrim coast.

Schools in Northern Ireland offer a high standard of education and extra-curricular activities and my son attends St Comgall’s Primary School. Also, there are many different churches and we easily found one that allowed us to freely practice our faith.

Both hospital and GP care is free - including dental for children and prescriptions. Public hospital care is of a high standard and resourced to meet all your family’s medical needs.

The International and Belfast City airports are both near Antrim. Belfast is 20 minutes drive away and Dublin only 2 hours. Generally, the cost of living is more reasonable than the rest of the UK but the standard is incomparable.

I now work as an Assistant Clinical Sister and I had wonderful mentors when I first started. Both managers and colleagues have supported me throughout my nursing career and I have had the opportunity to continually develop.

Northern Ireland is now our second home and I would truly recommend it both from a personal and professional perspective.

Almira Barro
Northern HSC Trust
MEET SOME OF THE TEAM

Jenah Yap Atos
Western HSC Trust

I am currently working as a Staff Nurse Band 6 in the main operating theatres of Altnagelvin Hospital, located in the picturesque Waterside area of the City of Derry, Co. Londonderry for the last 14 years. I am originally from the Philippines having registered in 1994 as a qualified nurse. After 7 years working in both public and private hospitals at home, I decided to come and work in the UK, having two very young children at that time. I arrived in Northern Ireland in January 2001 and worked in a private hospital for 15 months. With my husband (who is a nurse too!), I then decided to transfer to the Altnagelvin Hospital, which provides extensive acute and specialist services not only in the North West but also to the nearby four counties.

On my very first day in Altnagelvin, I was introduced to all the staff, given an induction pack and allocated a preceptor, a qualified staff nurse to support me for the whole 6 month induction programme. I was never left in a situation by my preceptor, mentor or my colleagues that I was unsure of. There is a culture to ask when you are not sure.

At Altnagelvin, I work in a welcoming and supportive environment and have the chance to work with people from diverse backgrounds. There are plenty of colleagues from countries like India, China, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, Sudan, Poland, Spain, Lithuania, Greece, Great Britain and more. Protocols, standards and policies to guide me in my practice are readily available in the office and intranet and much more just a phone call away to a relevant office if unsure. Mandatory training is funded by the hospital to keep the staff updated. There is a practice educator who keeps track of our training needs. Altnagelvin is a teaching hospital that has direct links with three Universities.

The working week is 37 ½ hours, which is shorter compared to back home and the times are flexible and family friendly. I work 4 days a week and I have 3 days off for myself and my family. Annual leave is very generous and I am able to go home every year to see my family to combat the feeling of homesickness. I also earn a lot more working here because of the exchange rate, so I’m able to provide better for the needs of both my immediate and extended family.

The main thing I noticed between Filipinos and the people of Northern Ireland is that we both have strong family ties. My colleagues know the names of my husband (and how good his cooking is!), my three children, and the names of my mother, sister and two brothers back home. People ask how you are and smile at you in the streets even if you don’t know them.

I know not everything goes well in real life, there are ups and downs. But I get my strength from my family and my work colleagues. There are forms of social media that I can access to communicate with my relatives back home. And much more there is a charity organisation called KabaliKat (pronounced as ka-ba-lee-at), which, in Filipino, means solidarity, arms in arms, “you’ll never be alone”). The organisation is comprised of Filipino community, representing the Filipino migrants and their families to promote Filipino culture and in turn work with the statutory agencies to help resolve issues of its members and promote integration within its members and with the wider communities. There are around 130 members so far. I have founded this organisation with seven other individuals and it is entirely a voluntary organisation to give support to the growing Filipino migrant community in the North West.

Loredana Minvana
South Eastern HSC Trust

I recently relocated to Northern Ireland from Italy. From my very first experience with the Recovery Ward in the Ulster Hospital, 4 months ago, I realised how committed it was to providing patients with the highest level of care, as well as providing staff with the highest level of support.

The main reason why I joined the team at Ulster Hospital was the opportunity for professional development. Professionally, I feel I’m developing thanks to the support of the helpful staff, constant training and mentoring as well as the stimulating work environment.

Every member of the team is valued which is evident in the constant training opportunities to learn new skills. Working in the Ulster Hospital is a truly unique career experience.

Genevieve Braga
Southern HSC Trust

Originally from Makilala, Cotabato, Philippines. I commenced my nurse training in 1992 in San Pedro College Davao City and gained my Bachelor of Science and nursing degree in 1996. I successfully passed the nursing licensure examination provided by the Philippine regulation commission in 1997 and applied for a post as a Registered Nurse in a local hospital (Madonna General Hospital). In September 1998, I moved back to Davao City with my husband and daughter and took a post in a general medical ward in San Pedro Hospital.

An opportunity arose in 2002 to apply outside of the Philippines to work as a registered nurse in Northern Ireland and I was offered an interview in September 2002. I was absolutely delighted to hear that I was successful and left the Philippines in November 2002 to embrace my new life in Northern Ireland. It was with a heavy heart that I left the Philippines as I had to leave behind my husband of five years and my five year old daughter.

Coming to work in the opposite side of the world is a big challenge. One of the challenges we face is the communication. Even though English is our second language, it can be difficult to understand the way local people pronounce the words! But as the years go on, we learn it and we become part of the community.

I started my adaptation in the Stroke Unit at Lurgan Hospital for 3 months. In March 2003, I got my NMC pin and transferred to Medical Admission Unit. I was one of the first staff to open the new unit. I have been working in the unit as a staff nurse for 12 years and was promoted to the Clinical Sister post in February 2015.

I have developed excellent skills, knowledge and confidence through my experience in the Acute care setting and have enhanced my management skills. From November 2015, I became part of the Patient Flow/Clinical Coordinator team. Now, I have three children and my two boys were born here in Northern Ireland. It has been a great privilege to work here in Craigavon Hospital; it has given me the opportunity to grow and I’m very happy to be here.
LIVING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

LEISURE – THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Living in Northern Ireland means there’s always an adventure to be had.

You can cross the country by car in about two hours – north to south, or east to west- and in between you’ll find a rich variety of eye-popping scenery, captivating leisure and outdoor activities, and a host of distinctive cultural attractions.

In no time at all, you’ll be exploring our dramatic coastlines, castles, mountains and lakes. For the more intrepid, there’s action-packed watersports, superb ocean and freshwater fishing, and a huge range of walking trails - from casual strolls to challenging peak climbs. And for those who like to take things at a slower pace, there’s no shortage of breathtaking drives, historical landmarks and some of the best golfing in the world.

If you love great social life, Northern Ireland offers many fine restaurants, cinemas, leisure centres, and renowned theatres, galleries, arts and entertainment centres - there’s something for every lifestyle!

Northern Ireland is not only a region of outstanding natural beauty, filled with dramatic mountain landscapes, verdant forest parks and sparkling lakes, but it’s also a place populated with bustling cities and historic towns and villages. In short, you’ll find the perfect mix of outdoor, indoor and social pursuits where there’s always plenty to see and do.

There’s an excellent education system, a world-class healthcare service and all types of affordable property, all helping to ensure a high standard, yet low cost of living. Northern Ireland may be renowned for its work ethic, but it places equal emphasis on the friendliness of the people and the quality of life.

With a population of 1.8 million people spread across six distinct and unique counties - Antrim, Armagh, Londonderry, Down, Fermanagh and Tyrone - Northern Ireland is one of the most beautiful and welcoming areas of the United Kingdom. It is here that you will find our five HSC Trusts hospitals and services.

DERRY–LONDONDERRY

Walk along the City Walls of Derry–Londonderry and be part of its living history. County Londonderry is also where you’ll find the stunning Roe Valley Country Park and the enticing Castlerock Beach.

ANTRIM

Not only the home of the eclectic city of Belfast, but also the starting point of the gorgeous Causeway Coastal Route that takes you to other amazing places such as the Giant’s Causeway, Dunluce Castle, and the Carrick-A-Rede Rope Bridge.

ARMAGH

Gaze at the heavens at the Armagh Astronomy Centre and Planetarium, spend some time reflecting at St. Patrick’s Cathedral, and enjoy the best of life here on earth at Gosford Forest Park.

FERMANAGH

Although known as the land of lakes, you can also step into a marvellous subterranean world at the Marble Arch Caves, shop in Enniskillen, or cook up something special at the Belle Isle Cookery School - the choice is yours.

DOWN

Home to the mighty Mountains of Mourne, Tollymore Forest Park, family friendly beaches, forest walks of Crawfordsburn Country Park and much, much more.

TYRONE

Take a journey back in time at the Ulster American Folk Park, shake out the cobwebs at Todds Leap Activity Centre, or create your own adventure in one of the many forest parks.
INFRASTRUCTURE/TRANSPORT

Northern Ireland has excellent public transport with extensive rail and road networks (meaning less time commuting to and from work!), five commercial ports and three airports. Most places can be reached by road and rail and global connections to Great Britain, Europe and beyond are excellent. Public transportation to Trust locations is widely available.

Distances from airports to the HSC Trust areas:

**BELFAST HSC TRUST:**
- George Best Belfast City Airport approximately 8 miles
- Belfast International Airport approximately 20 miles
- City of Derry Airport approximately 70 miles

**NORTHERN HSC TRUST**
- George Best Belfast City Airport approximately 30 miles
- Belfast International Airport approximately 15 miles
- City of Derry Airport approximately 43 miles

**SOUTHERN HSC TRUST**
- Belfast International Airport approximately 28 miles
- George Best Belfast City Airport approximately 33 miles
- City of Derry Airport approximately 67 miles

**WESTERN HSC TRUST**
- City of Derry Airport approximately 8 miles
- Belfast International Airport approximately 55 miles
- George Best Belfast City Airport approximately 92 miles

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Northern Ireland has a very high standard of education with over 60% of young people leaving secondary education and going on to university or college. School education for children up to the age of 18 years in pre-schools, primary schools and post-primary schools in Northern Ireland is non-fee paying. Two world-class universities, Ulster University and Queen’s University Belfast (both having close links with the Trusts), together with an extensive network of Further Education Colleges, provide outstanding vocational and academic training for young people. In addition, the Open University offers excellent part-time routes into Higher Education with a variety of courses with no entry limits. This gives you the option to study at your own pace, no matter what your academic background may be.

COST OF LIVING

Moving to Northern Ireland will make your money go further. Northern Ireland is one of the most affordable places to live in comparison to most other areas in the United Kingdom. In fact, according to the British Council, Northern Ireland has the lowest cost of living in the UK. Property prices in Northern Ireland are the lowest in the UK. Renting a room in the country’s capital, Belfast will cost just £250 per month on average and renting a two-bedroom apartment in the city will cost £450-£550 depending on location and size. As well as the affordable rent and property prices, the cost of transport, food shopping, entertainment and leisure are all lower too!
SUPPORT ON ARRIVAL

Prior to coming to Northern Ireland, you will be allocated to one of our five Trusts. Some are based in Northern Ireland’s main Cities and others in smaller sub-urban areas. Whilst we need a fair distribution of nurses in all of our Trusts, we will do our very best to allocate you to your preferred Trust that best matches your previous environment along with some people you may already know.

We will meet you on arrival at the Airport and transport you safely to the accommodation made available for you. To help you settle in, you will be provided with a full induction and orientation to the Trust and local area.

During your first few days we will also:
- Highlight the local shopping areas
- Explain how to use public transport
- Provide you with support in opening a bank account
- Help you obtain a national insurance number - essential to work in Northern Ireland
- Assist you in registering with local Doctors and Dentist
- Put you in contact with other overseas Trust staff who have joined our teams

We realise that coming to live and work in Northern Ireland is a huge step and we promise a very warm welcome to everyone who joins our teams.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, USEFUL WEB LINKS:

HSC Trusts
www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/
www.northerntrust.hscni.net/
www.setrust.hscni.net/
www.southerntrust.hscni.net/
www.westerntrust.hscni.net/

Northern Ireland
www.discovernorthernireland.com/ (tourism)
www.translink.co.uk/ (public transport)