Nursing
Make a difference in mental health

Amy

"Mental health nursing is really a job like no other – it's rewarding to know you've helped someone, even when that's sometimes just through small conversations or actions."

This is Amy's reflection on the fulfillment she has experienced from her mental health nursing career after seven years in the profession.

Today, Amy is just as passionate about making a difference to people in her care living with a mental illness as she was when she began nursing in 2015, and she's equally committed to encouraging more professionals to consider working in the field.

"It's not always easy to describe the role of a mental health nurse, but if you would like a role that is less task orientated, less focussed on a single physical health concern and really takes into consideration the whole person, a career in mental health is definitely for you."

WA Health is currently recruiting qualified and experienced professionals to join the team with opportunities across WA. There are positions in acute care and community-based services.

Mental health services treat people in hospital settings, community clinics, at home, courts and prisons, and with specialty teams to treat older adults, patients with drug and alcohol and mental health concerns (dual diagnosis).

> **"Within the profession there are many different roles to explore and opportunities to move around."**

"We work with a range of psychiatric conditions – from depression to schizophrenia. We build strong therapeutic relationships with these people and their families to help them feel more empowered in situations they may feel that they have little control over," she said.

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Having completed her graduate nurse training program in mental health in 2015 at Fremantle Hospital, Amy has gone on to become a clinical nurse, and earlier this year worked as part of a home treatment team.

"The service works like a virtual inpatient ward where staff go out and visit our clients at home every day. It aims to keep clients at home for treatment where it's safe to do so."

Amy now works in the community where she has a caseload of 23 patients.

"I go out and visit at their homes or for a coffee, and during these visits I assess my patients' mental health, and also how I can improve their quality of life and make things better for them," said Amy.

Amy says throughout her career she has worked with some amazing staff.

> **"I am supported to advance my career with training, study days and in-services."**

She is now studying a Graduate Certificate in Mental Health nursing at Edith Cowan University, sponsored by the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office.

"I think that not only is there stigma attached to mental health, but also to mental health nursing. There isn't a great understanding of what our role is and the best way to know is just to give it a go and come and see for yourself," Amy enthused.

If you're keen to **join WA's mental health team**, visit health.wa.gov.au/mhworkforce