



interview

coming to **work** in the UK

Spotlight interviews
Dulce Dalangin-Rona about her
experience of moving to the UK
to work as a nurse

Spotlight: *Tell us, why did you become a nurse?*

Dulce: I had no background in medical things; I worked for years in a large mission organisation and when doing missionary trips, I began to see the huge need for medical help. In one country I went to, if a person was injured on the street, they were just left there, as the person who took them to hospital would be responsible for paying all the bills.

I knew there had to be a practical element to me sharing the gospel. So I trained as a nurse in my country, the Philippines, with the goal of becoming a missionary nurse.

S: *Did you always want to work in the UK?*

D: No. I had been to the UK with the missionary organisation I worked for, but I really felt that I wanted to be in rural Cambodia. However, God had other plans! While in the UK, he spoke clearly to me that he wanted me to nurse in Britain, but I was in denial. I was 40 and didn't want to be a nurse in a developed country. But I was really convicted by the Holy Spirit, and so, at the age of 43, after a lot of paperwork and hard work to get my NMC registration, I became a UK registered nurse. I didn't really plan to, but God did.

S: *You came to the UK as a newly qualified nurse – how did you feel starting a new job in a new country?*

D: I hadn't practiced for that long in the Philippines but had tried to get as much experience as possible so I could come to the UK. It felt scary, intimidating, like everything was new. No amount of searching online can prepare you mentally for what you face. I had to set aside everything I knew.

S: *What were some of the challenges you faced and how did God help you in these challenges?*

D: Language, culture, and people's expectations. Conversational English is very different, so I had to adapt and learn it quickly. Learning British history has been useful for adapting to the culture. I want to be faithful to the Lord in what he has put in front of me. If I had gone to the mountains with no electricity or running water it would be the same, I would need to be faithful to God. So I have bought a TV licence and radio, even though I naturally wouldn't do those things, so I can learn more about the culture. Although the pay is OK here, it is hard with the cost of living to deal with people's expectations.

When doubting my capabilities in the middle of a shift, I always commune with the Lord, because I know he called me here to nurse. It is a privilege to be a Christian and a nurse!

S: *What do you love about working as a nurse in the UK?*

D: I love how safe nursing is in the UK compared with other countries. There are protocols and laws, and although these do not always get followed properly, the laws are still there! There are also good training opportunities.

S: *What would you say to a newly qualified nurse or midwife starting out in the UK?*

D: Hang in there! God did not make a mistake making you a nurse, and you should not give up just because there are obstacles or difficulties in the way. Always be teachable and have the humility to accept corrections. You need to believe in faith that as a Christian nurse you have the mind of Christ. You may make mistakes and have to complete all the paperwork that goes with that, but God called you into nursing and you will thrive if you walk with him and remember that your identity is in Christ. It is a privilege to be a Christian nurse or midwife!

S: *How can we best pray for internationally trained Christian nurses and midwives in the UK?*

D: Pray that we remain true to ourselves. International nurses have three worlds – their own culture, the UK culture, and the Christian culture. Pray that we identify with where God has called us, but not lose ourselves in the process. Pray for confidence that we have something to offer. People put you on a pedestal for having passed all the exams and got registered with the NMC, but what is it? Just a number and a piece of paper! Pray we would be faithful and humble.

After all these years, God has brought me in a full circle. I always thought I would be serving in the community, and although I thought it would be in a very different community to the UK, God had other plans, and I am now a community nurse and phlebotomist. Trust God – you never know where he will lead you!

S: *Thank you, Dulce, for taking the time to talk with us and share your experiences and wisdom.* 🍷