

you've made it!

# what now?

**Gemma Griffiths** shares her top tips for newly qualified midwives

**W**oo Hoo! You have survived your midwifery training and are now a newly qualified midwife (NQM)!

Praise God for bringing you through the ups and downs of placements, essays, and dissertations these past three years. And for the births you've witnessed, the forty plus babies you've delivered, and the hundreds of women and their families you've cared for in the antenatal and postnatal periods. How many times did you refresh that page on the NMC website as you waited for your PIN number to come through? Tens, if not hundreds of times? And now that green tick sits

next to your name telling the world that you are a registered midwife! What a joy it is to receive that first job offer, attend the trust induction, and then get kitted out in a brand-new uniform, complete with a shiny name badge that says 'preceptor midwife' on it (cue selfies and Insta posts galore). But now what?

There is a good chance that you may be feeling a mixture of excitement, fear, and sheer dread at the prospect of looking after women and their babies without the comfort blanket of a qualified midwife mentoring you. Rest assured. That is very normal. Here are a few 'top tips' for an NQM:



Firstly, and most importantly, **know that you are meant to be a midwife.** You may be feeling completely out of your depth, like a fraud or an imposter, but Ephesians 2:10 says, *'For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do'*. God has planned for you to be a good midwife. He has given you the skills to get through the training and now he goes before you in that clinic, on that ward, or at that delivery suite. You are now working on God's PIN number, and he is the ultimate mentor.



Secondly, **you are not expected to know everything!** Being a midwife involves continuous learning; new pumps, new guidelines, in fact every day is a learning day. The NMC principles of preceptorship state *'the preceptor should receive ongoing support and actively engage in professional development'*. Do not be afraid to ask questions (more than once if needed!) and keep your preceptorship portfolio up to date to consolidate your learning and evidence your development. Remember to work on your spiritual development too; try and link up with other Christian healthcare professionals in your trust, and attend church regularly for support and encouragement.



Thirdly, **if it doesn't seem right, get help.** If you are on a ward, pull that call bell early. If you are in the community, escalate to a senior colleague or team leader. It is always better to have too much help than no help at all. And on the topic of escalation, try and underpin every part of your working day with prayer; before, during, and after a shift. God is our ultimate helper and will always be available when you call him.

Finally, although being a midwife is a wonderful calling, **try and maintain a healthy work-life balance.** Invest time in a hobby, spend time with loved ones, and eat well to avoid work-related stress and burnout. And don't forget to protect time for Sabbath rest; rest is part of the order that God has placed in creation, and is a time when we can reconnect with God, re-energise ourselves by the Holy Spirit, and relax in God's presence.

May God bless you in your midwifery adventures! 🌸

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