



to share or not to share

Georgie Coster looks at how we can positively talk about faith at work

If you're a student nurse or midwife, I can hazard a guess that one of your most pressing questions is something like this: Can I share the gospel with my patients? You might have a longer list of questions about boundaries. Can I pray with my patients? Am I even allowed to tell my patients that I'm a Christian, or is that totally inappropriate?

By the time your very first lecture draws to a close, you will have heard all about the NMC Code. Rightly so. It is our guide for professional practice and behaviour, designed to protect our patients from substandard care and malpractice.

The Code tells you that as a nurse or midwife, you must '*make sure you do not express your personal beliefs (including political, religious or moral beliefs) to people in an inappropriate way.*'

¹Those words can send a shiver down the spine of even an experienced nurse or midwife, let alone a first-year student. The thought of having your PIN taken from you before you've even earned it can make you want to vow never to mention the name of Jesus when you're on duty.

Did you know, that's how many Christian nurses and midwives feel? Silenced. Gagged, even. Knowing they have words of life but feeling totally unable to share them. Must it be that way?

I think the mistake many of us make is forgetting those final four words in the Code: '*in an inappropriate way*'. Take those words out of the sentence and the message changes entirely. That tells me that the NMC believe it is possible for nurses and midwives to express their personal beliefs in an appropriate way.

The NMC are not asking us to be undercover Christians.

I love these words of Jesus: '*You are the light of the world – like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.*' (Matthew 5:14-16 NLT)

Are you asking those questions I mentioned at the start of this article? They were pressing questions for me as a student too. I found very practical answers by doing a Saline Solution course,² aimed at equipping Christian healthcare workers to be witnesses for Jesus in the workplace. The course was so helpful to me that I later trained to teach it myself. I think every Christian healthcare professional should do it at least once! ☺

For more information about Saline Solution courses, check out cmf.org.uk/nurses/events

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1. Nursing and Midwifery Council. *The Code*. January 2015. Updated October 2018.
2. See cmf.li/Saline for more information about the Saline Solution course.