

I'm proud to be a nurse.

I have been a nurse for 20 years and I am proud to be a nurse. I started nursing at BC Children's Hospital. When people used to ask where I worked, I would proudly tell them. I love working with kids and families and it was a perfect fit for me. I had the privilege of serving, advocating for and caring for some of the most vulnerable in our society and their families. People would say "it must be so hard to work there". But I knew I had the heart, the compassion and the capacity for it. I loved it.

I then moved to the Fraser Valley and started working at Surrey Memorial in the NICU. I am so proud of my work as a nurse in the NICU. What a privilege to be present for a family in crisis and care for their tiny little one. When talking about my work, I would tell people, no one plans to go to the NICU, I'm honoured to be there and walk beside these families in this traumatic time of their lives.

In 2016 my life changed. As we planned to welcome our 4th child into the world, the unexpected happened. I had preterm labour and we ended up with a critically ill daughter in the NICU. My world turned upside down. During her two months in hospital, nurses cared for my little girl hour by hour. I would be with her in the day and at night I would phone in to talk to her nurse to see how she was.

Now as I consider why I am proud to be a nurse, I think of the nurses that I have encountered on our journey with our little girl and in my career. I think about the nurses who cared for and loved our daughter in the NICU at Surrey Memorial when I couldn't be there. I'm proud to be considered a colleague. I think about the nurses that I didn't know when our daughter got transferred to BC Women's NICU and how they quickly won our trust through kindness and excellence in their practice. I think about the nurse who kept our little girl comfortable and kept quietly checking in with us at Canuck Place Hospice as we said goodbye to our baby.

I also think about one of my current colleagues who has spent time as a forensic nurse in Emergency caring for and giving voice to women who have been sexually and physically assaulted. I think about a nurse colleague in the PACU at BC Children's Hospital who was so empathetic and loving as she tended to a 12 year old who had recently witnessed her own mother's death.

These are only a fraction of the nurses that come to mind when I think of why I am proud to be a nurse. I am proud of a profession that cares for others and endeavours to help those in need.