



Marie Curie Nurses reached 23,406 patients in their homes over the year.

To find out more about our nurses and nursing service:
www.mariecurie.org.uk/nurses

'You can see the relief in their faces'

Every hour of every day, people are being cared for by Marie Curie Nurses.

Ayodele David joined the Marie Curie Nursing Service four years ago. Her description of how she feels about what she does is studded with warm words: love, respect, reward, laughter.

"I work roughly 16 nights a month, and that works well for my family," says Ayodele. "I'm here when my nine-year-old son comes home from school, and I'm here to wake him up in the morning. He thinks I'm a stay-at-home mum!"

But while her son is asleep, Ayodele is out, delivering care and support which one of her patients sums up with yet more precious words. "Each time I ring he says, 'Here comes my gold dust,'" says Ayodele. "Once you've built up the trust with the family, they can relax – you can see the relief in their faces when you arrive, and the appreciation in the way they say thank you when you leave."

Working in the diverse London borough of Hillingdon, Ayodele meets a wide range of people from many different cultures, and that in itself is a learning experience. "Some things you may think strange, but if you are in someone else's house, you have to respect it," says Ayodele. "For instance, in some Muslim homes they don't want you to wear shoes, but for safety reasons you have to wear them. It's all about showing respect, explaining why you have to do things and coming to an agreement."

The small things build trust – showing an ID badge, introducing yourself properly, and waiting to be invited to sit down. Ayodele's professionalism also helps her through the tough bits – seeing mothers her own age with terminal illness is particularly hard for

her, and coping with weeks such as one when three patients died on consecutive nights.

"You know that when you leave the house you have to try to unwind, but it's instinct to reflect back and go over what happened. All you can do is know you've done your best to give someone the best

holistic care possible, and take comfort in that as you walk away."

The most memorable shift Ayodele recalls is one where the client died laughing. "He'd been reminiscing about the past – it was a perfect way of dying," she reflects.

"I am so glad I joined Marie Curie. The nurses practise what they preach – they listen and respect each other. We feel the love and feel part of a team – and that's what's important."

“It's all about showing respect”



Marie Curie Senior Healthcare Assistant Ayodele David