

Description

Meet the team! – Nicolette

Nicolette Porter [she/her]

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Did you know the Editorial Board for The Student Midwife is made up of student and newly-qualified midwives? We commission, write and edit all the articles that fill our wonderful journal, so we know we're bringing content that is of the most interest and use to you. Let's dive in and meet one of the team!

This time we're talking to Nicolette, she is a third-year student midwife at Middlesex University, London

What's your role at TSM and how long have you been involved?

I have been the co-editor of the Student Midwife Journal since October 2021. My work involves liaising with authors to create ideas for articles alongside them and then editing their work when they submit it. I enjoy helping people along their writing journey, especially supporting the first-time publications of student midwives. I also lead the blogs section of the Student Midwife Journal website which releases blogs at least twice a month!

What's your background?

Prior to midwifery, I began an undergraduate degree in psychology, I thought that I wanted to be a clinical psychologist. Although I loved this degree, I felt a calling to midwifery that was truly inexplicable and never looked back! I find that having a background in psychology can be really helpful, in both an academic and clinical way. In terms of academics, studying psychology encourages you to engage in reading complex research papers, which is useful when considering how we can achieve evidenced-based midwifery practice. Clinically, it prompts you to consider the biopsychosocial influence of pregnancy on the birthing people in our care, encouraging us to provide holistic support for their sometimes complex needs.

What are your main values that drive you?

Compassion – it can go such a long way towards the aim of achieving a better world. I also believe that you don't need to experience something first hand to be a great ally to someone.

What's your proudest moment so far?

My proudest moment so far was winning the Nursing Times Student Midwife of the Year Award 2021. So much of a midwifery degree is keeping your head down in the books, going to placement and taking on the next challenging assignment. Winning this award made me pause and think of just how far I've come, and just how much I've learned over such a short period of time. I feel so proud of myself for persevering through the difficult times. It's truly the best feeling when your hard work gets recognised.

What's your area of passion?

My area of passion surrounds adapting ourselves to be inclusive of the diverse populations that we care for. Much more needs to be done to improve the inclusivity of perinatal care services to LGBTQ+ families. My passion also lies in improving the experiences of autistic birthing people using our services. Unfortunately, such little research has been done within this area, but all people should have their holistic needs met when seeing a midwife.

Is there anything you dislike about midwifery?

At times it can feel like we have sort of just accepted the culture of 'this is the way it is' when that shouldn't be the case! I feel that quite a bit of bullying an incivility still happens on our wards, particularly due to outdated hierarchies. When staff are tired and feel undervalued, the problem worsens, and it can create a cycle of harm. This is a complex issue the has persisted for a long time, but I think that it is unacceptable that almost everyone I know has at least one of 'those stories' of times when they were made to feel less than someone more senior.

What's the most pressing issue facing the sector?

I think that a big issue is sustainable recruitment. Poor staffing is a well-known issue and responses are often vague, not well thought-through solutions of "We'll just get more midwives". But is the problem solved? Not really. We have a massive issue with retaining new recruits for a number of reasons. We know that we need to be training more midwives but if we make midwifery degrees really difficult to complete due to the lack of pay, long hours and lack of emotional support for the challenging situations that we come across, you'll be left with not many more than you started with. We need a sustainable recruitment campaign which encourages more people to become midwives as it makes it a desirable and well-supported profession to be in.

Labour Ward, Postnatal Ward or Community?

Postnatal ward.

What's your one tip for student midwives?

Stay true to your values.

What's for dinner tonight?

Spaghetti Bolognese. **TSM**

Category

1. Student Midwife Blog

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