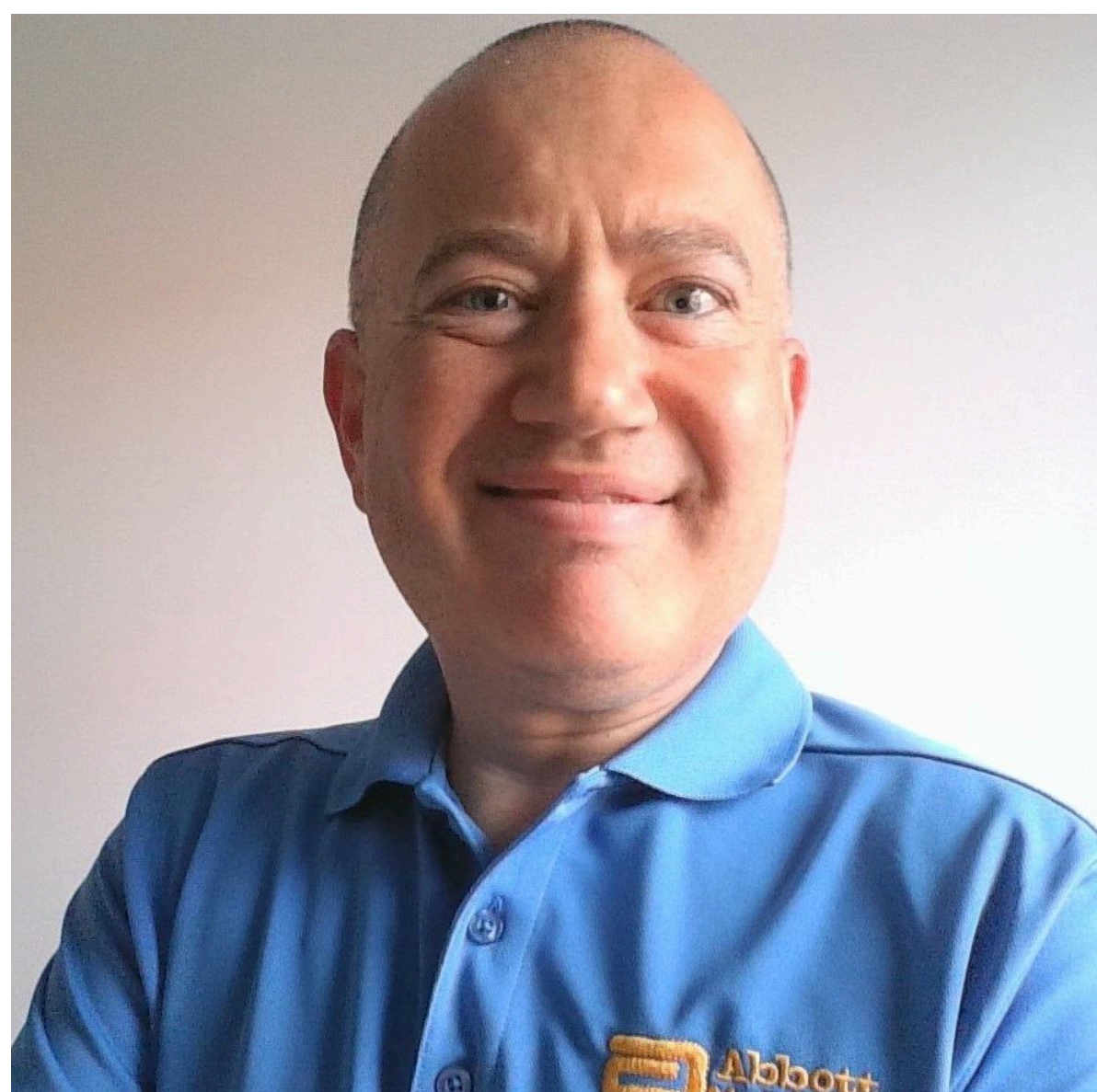


A DAY IN THE LIFE: AARON BOWLEY



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Abstract:
In this article, Aaron Bowley, a Clinical Nurse Specialist within the Abbott Nurse Advisor team, shares insights into his working day, supporting both colleagues and patients in the community.

Can you tell us a little about the role in the Abbott Nurse Advisor service?

In my role as an Abbott Nurse Advisor, I currently have around 450 patients on my caseload across the West Kent area. I support both new and existing community patients, providing training on the use of equipment and making sure they're able to manage their nutritional needs at home. Training is a big part of my role, and I visit acute and community settings like hospitals, care homes and schools to train both patients and responsible staff, as well as delivering virtual training sessions when necessary.

I also work with other Abbott colleagues, like the warehouse team in Sittingbourne, to share insights into the work that Abbott Nurse Advisors do. I think this is really beneficial as it helps everyone see how our roles link together, and gives them a better understanding of the important parts they play in supporting patients.

You also hold a Clinical Nurse Specialist position within the team. What does that involve?

I've been with Abbott for nearly seven years now, and over that time, I've gained the knowledge and experience to take on the role of Clinical Nurse Specialist, which I've been doing for the past sixteen months. There are nine of us across the country.

The role involves shadowing Nurse Advisors throughout their day to observe, assess and provide feedback. It's all part of ensuring we're maintaining best practice and delivering a consistent service nationwide. As Nurse Advisors are usually lone workers, it's also a great opportunity to get together in person. We also provide full training for new nurses who join the service, supporting them throughout their journey to becoming confident and capable Nurse Advisors.

What does a typical day look like for you?

I'll check my diary first thing every day before checking in with the wider team. This helps us all get a sense of everyone's workload for the day and identify areas where we can support each other. After that, I'll check my emails and voicemails for new referrals or actions that need tending to, like following up on out-of-hours communications from patients.

It's a very mobile role, so on a 'typical' day, I will be travelling to visit patients, providing whatever support they need, and completing the necessary paperwork before going to see the next patient. I will usually have a full day, but there is always room to adapt.

We have to be ready to be flexible, as things can happen unexpectedly that require quick attention. Many Nurse Advisors give their patients their direct phone numbers. So we can essentially be on-call for them when they need us during working hours, while they can contact Hospital2Home at any time for 24-hour care.

Can you tell us about your background?

I have quite a varied background. I spent fourteen years as a civil engineer before my wife and I moved to live and work in Canada and New Zealand. It was there that I got my first taste of working in healthcare, managing a sterile services department.

Returning to the UK, I eventually took on a role as a healthcare assistant. The hospital obviously saw some potential in me as they encouraged me to become a nurse. They put me through university, where I qualified with a degree in 2017. After that, I was a community nurse for two years before joining Abbott.

What tends to be the most challenging part of your role?

It can sometimes feel like a challenge to fit everything in, especially at the start of the week, but we always manage to. That's thanks to being part of such a supportive and resourceful team.

Having good communication and team support is a big advantage. For example, sometimes you might come across a specific question that you don't have the answer to, but you can almost guarantee another member of the team will, so we can pool our shared knowledge and experience to resolve queries together.

What are you most passionate about when it comes to your role?

I love training. Once upon a time, I might have been nervous about public speaking, but now I don't even think twice about standing in front of a room of a hundred people and talking in detail about something like pumps that I know so well. It's become second nature.

In a similar way, some patients might initially be nervous about using their feeding equipment, but after training, I can see the relief in their faces when they realise it's manageable and not as daunting as they expected. It's a great feeling to know you've taught them something and helped them gain that confidence.

Tell us a little about yourself, what do you like to do outside of work?

My family and I are big football fans, so you'll find us on the terraces at Charlton Athletic most weekends. Recently, I've gotten into running and regularly attend the local park run on a Saturday morning. In fact, I've just completed the Brighton and London marathons, which my wife and I did together.