

**Caroline Gill**  
**Head of Learning Disability**  
**NHS Forth Valley**

My name is Caroline Gill and I am Head of Learning Disability Nursing in NHS Forth Valley. I am first and foremost a learning disability nurse and have the following qualifications RNLN, RGN, Post grad diploma in Palliative Care, BSc in Health Studies (distinction)

I started as a Health Care Support Worker in the Royal Scottish National Hospital in 1982 before starting LD nurse training in 1984. I held various roles in RSNH in until its closure. I then became senior nurse in the new assessment and treatment unit in 2003. From there, my role was building a staff team and working on my own skills and experiences in hospital and community. In 2018, I was promoted to head of nursing for Learning Disability within NHS Forth Valley.

As professional lead for LD nurses within Forth Valley, I have a vital contribution to make in shaping services and ensuring that they are future-proof. I work with LD nurses within NHS Forth Valley and ensure that the workforce and skill mix is appropriately reviewed, training and development opportunities are available, and an emphasis placed on career progression and succession planning. This helps ensure that the assessment, care and treatment to people with LD referred into our teams is of a good quality and person centred.

I have quite a strategic element to my post and am involved in reviewing services and models of care as well as developing new services which have a strong LD nurse component within them. I work within the NHS and over two Health and Social Care Partnerships, ensuring that the role of the LD nurse is understood and valued and that we have representation within groups and working parties to ensure that the needs of people with LD are included, thereby improving outcomes and wellbeing.

My first post as HCSW cemented my wish to become a learning disability nurse. Communication has always been at the heart of the role and having a genuine interest in the health and wellbeing of individuals with LD has been key for me. Each role that I have moved to has been varied and interesting. It may sound a bit clichéd, but I feel that every day we can make a difference: it may be in a small way such as working with an individual on improving a health issue, improving self-esteem, involving an individual in decisions about their care (we all know we do person centred care the best!), working positively on behavioural issues to being involved at a strategic level to redesign services for people with LD and improve workforce issues and models of care