1. **Information**
2. **Blog**
3. **[Training](#_Training)**

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| 1. **Where to find more information on Occupational Health (OH)**
* [**WHO (World Health Organisation) Occupational Health**](https://www.who.int/health-topics/occupational-health)
* [**CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel Development Occupational Health**](https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/occupational-health-factsheet#gref)
* [**SOM (Society of Occupational Medicine) Work and Health**](https://www.som.org.uk/work-and-health)
* [**SOM Careers**](https://www.som.org.uk/careers)
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1. **Blogs**

**Independent OH Nurse Advisor – Libby Morley**

**RGN, Dip OH, MSc Workplace health and wellbeing**

**MHFA England trainer / Author**

**Member SOM, Board member iOH**

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I heartily recommend getting into OH as a profession; there’s not enough of us and there will always be work! The variety of work related to OH is vast, and you’re sure to find your passion.

I stumbled across OH, so I hope that pre-registration students have an opportunity to learn about this speciality.

After completing a return to nursing practice course, I saw an advert for an OH nurse Advisor on a building site, which sounded compelling, but I didn’t have an OH qualification or experience. I applied anyway and was successful. My new employer agreed to sponsor me through the OH Diploma at Warwick University (which is no longer running). One module within the diploma reignited my passion for mental health, leading me to undertake the Mental Health First Aid trainer course. I realised that management referrals were my forte as I loved listening to people and therefore, I began contracting with an OH provider. I noticed an increase in referrals for stress and mental ill health and managers seemed ill-equipped to support their employees. I wanted to change that, so I started my own business focussing on mental health.

I feel quite strongly that to declare oneself a specialist in any subject that some level of study, combined with experience is needed to bring another layer of professionalism to my role and therefore I completed the Nottingham University MSc in Workplace Health and Wellbeing. The course modules were highly relevant to my work; each essay has enabled me to explore, in-depth, topics including new and emerging risks to workplace health, work-related stress interventions, models of behaviour change and sickness absence, rehabilitation, and retention.

Now, I write and deliver a variety of courses related to stress and mental health across many workplace sectors and undertake management referrals focusing on mental health within my own company, Mindshift. I’ve even written a book and have started supporting the RGU OH course mental health module.

Regarding further study, I would advise having some experience with OH first… but then go for it! Don’t think you’re too old to start; I was 51 when I graduated.

**OH Nurse Advisor and team leader - Michelle Aroloye**

**RGN, SCPHN – HV, BSc Occupational Health RGU**

**Member SOM, iOH**

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My role as an Occupational Health Nurse Advisor within construction varies daily, which is why I love doing what I do.

Before applying for a trainee role at PAM Group, I was an SCPHN School Nurse. I soon realised that my SCPHN qualification did not apply to my role in OH and therefore, supported by PAM, I applied to do the degree at Robert Gordon University. The content of the course was very specific to the role which I felt would be helpful and it was. After completing the degree, I was promoted to team leader, supporting other trainees commencing their journey in OH and their studies with RGU.

Dependent on my diary or scheduled work, I may undertake telephone appointments with employees to action complex Fit for Work medicals or Health Surveillance appointments that have been escalated due to complexities of health conditions. These may require gathering further information or requesting further evidence for review. It may include conducting management referrals, online mental health awareness training for new starters or face-to-face mental health awareness training for employees who have requested to be mental health advocates within the workplace. Part of my role is also to provide face-to-face health observation training for supervisors and managers and training on a variety of health issues for colleagues, employees, and managers

Due to the nature of the evolving construction environment, I operate in, my role is at times variable, and responsibilities are constantly shifting and being added to which helps me grow.

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**Deputy clinical lead Lincoln NHS Trust OH department - Denise Pywell**

**RGN, RM, SCPHN-OH**

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My nursing background is varied. I trained as a general nurse and worked in ITU initially, followed by a period of working as a practice nurse in Germany. I then retrained as a midwife upon my return to the UK. I loved this work and still miss it to this day, however, my family circumstances meant working shifts was not conducive so I began to consider what I could do and what transferable skills I had and how these aligned themselves with the type of career I not only needed but also felt I would enjoy.

I had a few friends and colleagues who had been through OH for pregnancy-related matters and felt they had not had the best advice or care, which led me to think about Occupational Health Nursing, what it was about and the responsibilities of an OH nurse and Advisor. I felt this was an area where many of my skills were transferable, and in which I was developing an active interest.

I made an appointment to see the Business Manager pointing out that for a predominantly female organisation, with an age group where a large proportion of staff may get pregnant at some time, he had no specialist midwives on the team and felt having one would add value, improving the support to other OH Nurses, to the care of trust employees and advice to managers on pregnancy-related matters. The Business Manager agreed! And so, I began to do ad-hoc clinics within OH beginning with vaccinations clinics and offering specific advice on pregnancy-related matters. The hours I did over time began to increase, and the clients I was seeing began to get more complex, and therefore I was successful, in my application for a full-time OH Nurse role.

I soon found myself completing the Public Health Degree for Occupational Health at Leeds and have never looked back. I have now been working in OH for 18 years, have been promoted to a management role and still enjoy each day.

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**OH Nurse Advisor and Business owner - Pippa Crouch**

**RGN SCPHN-OH, Masters Medical ethics and Law**

**Vice president COHPA (Commercial OH providers Association)**

**Member SOM**

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I initially studied at City University at the very beginning of my career and completed my Diploma in Nursing.  I then undertook a BSc in Occupational Health at the University of the West of Scotland, a distance learning course which suited my family and work commitments at the time, as I was self-funding. After this, I then studied at the University of Manchester and completed a Master’s in Medical Ethics and Law; which has certainly been helpful in my career so far. It is a cliché, isn't it? ‘Find something you love, and you'll never work a day in your life@ ...however, this is how I feel about my job and profession. No two days are ever the same, there is so much variation in the work we do. I can be on a building site one-day delivering health surveillance, followed by flu jabs in a school the next. There are then board meetings with COHPA and Special Interest Groups with the SOM.

I decided to start my company in 2015, up to that point I had been self-employed but also working part-time for a provider and spinning too many plates, so I decided to go it alone. It was incredibly daunting (and sometimes still is) setting up by yourself without the safety net of a large corporation behind you. I never intended to grow significantly, only to support myself. Now, I have the most amazing team of people, and we are all growing together, from our administrators who hold us all together and are the heart of our organisations, to our nurses and doctors, we employ two young people and are supporting our second student through his OH degree.

## **Training**

To find out more about a career and career progression in OH as a nurse, please have a look at the FOHN website. <https://www.fohn.org.uk/>

A foundation course in OH practice for Nurses, accredited by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine, is now available – more details can be found here <https://www.fom.ac.uk/education/examinations/diplomas/dipohprac>

This is useful for those considering a career in OH, for those working in OH undertaking practical skills and for those considering Higher Education but wishing to understand more before committing. A separate exam must be undertaken to obtain the diploma – this consists of a multiple-choice questionnaire, a portfolio with a workplace needs assessment and a viva.

Current postgraduate HEI courses are found:

* [Derby University SCPHN-OH](https://www.derby.ac.uk/postgraduate/nursing-health-care-practice-courses/specialist-community-public-health-nursing-msc/?gclid=Cj0KCQiAnNacBhDvARIsABnDa68kfzqdFsiqcHcKLuBC8HVMAfnFhHGaI43d96XJt42mNWnR3UChxugaAtVtEALw_wcB)
* [Brunel University SCPHN-OH](https://www.brunel.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/specialist-community-public-health-nursing-pgdip-and-msc)
* [Chester University SCPHN OH](https://www1.chester.ac.uk/specialist-community-public-health-nursing-scphn)
* [UWE Bristol SCPHN-OH](https://courses.uwe.ac.uk/B71212/public-health-specialist-community-public-health-nursing)
* [Robert Gordon University](https://www.rgu.ac.uk/study/courses/1120-bsc-occupational-health) (RGU) – BSc in Occupational Health
* [Cumbria University](https://www.cumbria.ac.uk/study/courses/postgraduate/occupational-health-practice-development/) – Graduate Diploma in OH Policy and Practice

SCPHN – OH is the NMC Specialist Community Public Health Nurse in Occupational Health, the course is therefore accredited by the NMC and requires 50% practice application.

RGU and Cumbria follow the PHE framework of Occupational Health Education 2016

Nurses are advised to consider the content of the course, the delivery and the requirement of their employers when deciding on the best course for them.

Funding for NHS Nurses within Occupational Health can be obtained via [HEE](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/education-funding-reform/nhs-education-funding-guide) in some cases. Your employer needs to apply on your behalf.

Some private OH providers fund Higher Education in OH for their trainees.