

Ruth Oakes

Founding Partner, COOCI Associates
Specialist Spinal Injury Case Manager &
Registered General Nurse

Location: Buckinghamshire

Summary of patient expertise and specialist training:

Ruth has specialised in spinal injuries since she qualified as a Registered General Nurse in 1991. Her 17 years working in the National Spinal Injuries Centre in Stoke Mandeville Hospital has given her extensive experience of the complications which often arise with these cases.

Ruth's first-hand knowledge and training encompasses **children, young adults and older adults with a range of spinal injuries**, including many with significant additional medical complexities.

As well as her medical training, Ruth is also a highly-trained, experienced Case Manager. She is particularly skilled at helping her clients psychologically, helping them mentally adjust to their injury challenges and supporting their emotional, as well as medical needs. She is experienced in the following areas:

- Complete and incomplete spinal injuries
- Brain injuries
- Cerebral palsy
- Complex mental health disorders, such as PTSD, anxiety and depression
- Sensory impairments including visual and vestibular
- Epilepsy
- Continence issues
- Ventilation requirements

Ruth always works calmly in stressful situations, **ensuring that her patients and their families feel secure in her hands**. Her outgoing nature, dedication, outstanding organisation and proactive approach guarantees first class care for all her patients.

Case Management skills:

The smooth running of any case is crucial for the comfort and well-being of our patients. Ruth's experience in correctly managing a case from the outset is second to none. Her skills include:

- Immediate Needs Assessments
- Case Management Action Plans and Progress Reports
- Understanding of the requirements of the litigation process
- Liaison and working with clinical commissioning groups
- Set-up and maximisation of continuing health care needs plans
- Safeguarding and Risk Assessment
- Mental Capacity Act

Professional memberships and associations

- Royall College of Nursing
- Spinal Injuries Association
- Back-Up Trust
- MASCI

Qualification and Training:

Qualifications

- Registered General Nurse (RGN) training (1991)
- Teaching and Assessing in Clinical Practice ENB 998 (1993)
- Nursing Patients with Spinal Cord Lesions ENB 371 (1997)
- Teaching and Assessing in Clinical Practice ENB 998 (1998)
- Acute and Critical Care Course ENB 100 (1999)
- BA in Professional Practice (2000)

Mandatory and Basic Life Support Training.

Other training:

- Spinal Injuries Association Case Manager
- Case Managers Training, Stewarts Law LLP
- SIA 'Managing Spinal Cord Injury: The Needs of the Child and Young Person'
- RCN Revalidation Study Day
- Continence Management/Catheter Care Workshop

Employment:

COOCI Associates (from 2009)

Founding Partner and Specialist Spinal Injury Case Manager

- Formed a Partnership with COOCI Associates LLP and continues to work as a Rehabilitation Case Manager
- Manages a diverse case load of complex clients, including spinal cord injury complications, syringomyelia, bladder, bowel, skin, pain management and ventilatory support
- Focusing on client goal enablement, works collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team setting with therapists, co-professionals, client and their families.
- Good working knowledge of benefit entitlements
- Works with Educational Health Care Plans

Example of client goal achievement: *I was delighted to facilitate my high thoracic client to walk down the aisle on his wedding day in an Eskoskeleton suit. We helped him to return to driving independently following his paralysis. I assisted with his vehicle procurement, transport assessment and adaptation recommendations. Additionally, I facilitated the spinal injured young adult trial of supported independent living; short term and long term accommodation securement; properties requiring small adaptation to the full trajectory of the tender process. I helped him to experience with holidays abroad ensuring the hire of necessary specialist equipment and care.*

Bush and Company – Specialist Spinal Case Manager

- Worked with children and adults with catastrophic injuries, including spinal cord and/or brain injuries, clients requiring respiratory and/or non-invasive or permanent ventilatory support.
- Worked with Continuing Healthcare Services (CHC), including set up of 24/7 care packages
- Set-up community services, co-ordinating therapists and rehabilitation programmes

NHS National Spinal Injuries Centre, Stoke Mandeville Hospital (1991-2009)

Deputy Sister (Band 6) St Andrew, Acute Spinal Ward – 2005 -2009

- Instructed ward team and provided hands-on care for patients
- Trained existing and new staff plus student nurses
- Advised on promotion of health and prevention of illness
- Developed nursing care plans to facilitate more physical or verbal independence

- Manage the unit, plus responsible for 6 other wards for clinical nurse specialist absence
- Maintenance of the Trust's nursing and administrative policies and procedures

Ward Manager (G grade), St Andrew, Acute Spinal Ward – 2002 to 2005

- Line management of ward based nursing, medical, clinical and clerical staff
- Management of resources within budget
- Provided training for new staff, student nurses and CPD for all existing staff
- Responsible for communication channels – clinical and managerial
- Promoted continuous development in clinical practice and in delivery of patient care, encouraging innovation and appropriate changes in service delivery

Senior Staff Nurse (F grade), St Francis, High Dependency Area - 1997 to 2002

- Management of team to ensure the highest standard of patient care
- Continued to work within multidisciplinary team

Staff nurse (E grade), both Acute and Rehabilitation Nursing Wards - 1992 – 1996

- Assessed, planned, implemented and evaluated nursing care
- Leadership and management of the team
- Managed and organised appropriate patient support services
- Taught other health professionals, trainees and visitors on SCI
- Promoted a safe, efficient environment for the physical, social and psychological well-being of patients

Staff nurse (D grade), both Acute and Rehabilitation Nursing Wards - 1991- 1992

- Anticipated and responded to the acute needs of patients, their relatives and friends
- Worked within a team with other nurses, medical, para-medical staff and social workers for the well-being of our patients
- In-service training on spinal cord injury, tracheostomies, ventilator support