

It's not what people know you know, it's everything else

A poem created for and with staff at Mid Cheshire Hospital Trust

Everyone knows that porters know everything
but you tell me every porter is resuscitation-trained
and I didn't know that.

Everyone knows that healthcare workers know the facts
but you tell me you're also fluent in body language,
forming your knowledge into words we understand.

And you tell me you know the feeling too –
people coming for mastectomies know
you know what they're going through.

Everyone knows that people who work in hospitals
help fellow humans, but you talk about the tortoise
you looked after for a patient in your own home.

Everyone knows healthcare is a lifelong vocation,
but you tell me you used to be a florist
so you see your patients as the hardiest carnations.

And you left school without your GCSEs.
And you re-trained in a supermarket pharmacy.
And you became Band 3 at 60 - a feat you never thought you'd achieve.

Everyone knows hospital staff aren't just medics,
that the talents of admin, facilities, estates,
nurses, therapists, and HCAs, power this trust.

But how many people know that some of these sunflowers
often feel invisible?
Everyone knows you do this job because you care,

but you tell me that when someone is on their own,
you know you're the only one they trust
to help them climb their stairs alone.

And you tell me that without the NHS
your family might not have coped.
And you know how to pick people up at their worst,

how to get them back to their best.
And you tell me qualifications can only get you so far.
Experience brings the rest.