

Amanda Iley, has been a Head Chef for Westmorland General Hospital at University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust for around seven years. Here she tells us more about her role in the Catering Department.



Tell us how you got your role?

My qualifications include an NVQ Level 2 and Advanced Cooking Level 3. I also undertook in-house training in a variety of hotels and at the hospital.

My previous roles include five years in the hotel trade and 30 years in the catering team at Westmorland General Hospital.

What does your role involve?

My daily role includes making sure that all the food is cooked and delivered to patients for our meals on wheels service and for staff who visit our restaurant. Part of my job is to ensure quality of the food and adhering to Environment Health Officer's (EHO) policies.

During the coronavirus pandemic, we have made sure that our restaurants adhere to the government guidance including providing the right amount of distance between seating and carrying out additional cleaning.

What have been the best bits of your role?

We were the first hospital to be presented with an award from EHO for a healthy eating campaign. No other hospital at the time had received the award. The award really was testament to all of the hard work of our catering team.

What have been the challenges of your role?

Adjusting to all of the changes in the NHS over the past 30 years.

Life outside of work:

I love sport, that's the Australian in me. I enjoy cricket, football and rugby and after my husband passed away I took up geocaching.

Top tips for people wanting to get into the profession:

You have to be a certain kind of person to be a chef. You have to have a sense of humour, thick skin and not be afraid to get your hands dirty.

Sometimes you may be asked to carry out other roles to support the team. Even as a Head Chef I have covered the roles of Porter, Catering Assistant and served in the canteen - you need to be adaptable.