

ADAM'S STORY

While most Nurse-Family Partnership nurses identify as female, local network partner organizations do employ a handful of male nurses to deliver preventative health services, trusted information and helpful resources to first-time moms – and dads – to build the lives they want for themselves and their children.

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) nurse, Adam, in Allentown, Pennsylvania has been a registered nurse (RN) for 16 years and an NFP nurse for almost four years. “Through my experience, I have found that being a man in this field is not as much of a barrier as one might think,” Adam said.

Adam chose a nursing career so he could have the flexibility and dependability of finding work in any city in which he wanted to live. He shared that he always wanted to be in the helping profession, “I was attracted to the nursing field because I could do dozens of different types of jobs with one license.”



Nurse Adam, seen here visiting NFP dad, Korei, often includes the father in the NFP relationship.

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A father to three children himself, Adam remembers what it was like as a first-time parent. “My former wife gave birth to our children at home. I was very involved in the labor and delivery process and supported her in a team effort,” he said. Adam participated in three home births, his son in 2008, his daughter in 2010 and his third child, another son, in 2012.

At this point in his life, Adam had a diploma in nursing and was working as an RN in the medical/surgical unit at a local hospital. He remembered, “I had always been interested in nursing in a labor and delivery unit, but as a man, I wasn’t sure I would be welcomed. Once I participated in my own children’s home births, I knew I had something to offer in the maternal health field.” He continued, “It was then that I felt like I had something in my personal life I could connect it with.”

Adam transitioned his nursing career to labor and delivery in 2012. By then he also had experience in obstetrics and a background of providing traditional health care to women during their pregnancy. “I loved working as a nurse in labor and delivery – it was a wonderful experience,” he remembered.



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In 2018, a coworker at St. Luke's University Health Network told him about NFP through their hospital system where he was working in the labor and delivery unit. He remembered thinking, "Is that a real job, right here? I could make a living visiting first-time families at their home?" It was a career opportunity he couldn't pass up. Adam earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and began working as an NFP nurse at St. Luke's Nurse-Family Partnership in 2019.

Adam said transitioning from the labor and delivery unit to NFP was smooth, "It feels good to sit down with a new client in her own home and offer comfort and provide knowledge about being a new parent." Adam functions in the same capacity as his female counterparts, "I ask the mom to tell me about the top five things she is concerned about as a first-time parent. Then I'm able to offer answers to her concerns and resources to help support her goals."

However, Adam is aware that he is a novelty as a male NFP nurse. He says, "Before my first visit, I ensure my new client realizes I am a man. I am very open and transparent in talking about it with the family and have found that, overall, clients tend to be very open to my presence." He adds, "Especially once I mention that I am a parent to three kids myself!"

Not only are the mothers in Adam's caseload accepting, but so are the fathers. "I feel like I



NFP nurse Adam has been an RN for 16 years and is a father to three children (shown here).

bring a father's perspective to the role and that contributes to a unique nurse-client relationship. So many men want to be engaged and involved as a new father but simply don't know how," Adam explained. "While a mom in the NFP partnership is my primary relationship, I include the dad as much as possible if they are willing." Adam shared how including the father in the NFP relationship helps the dad feel more empowered to support his partner during birth and after their child is born.

Adam says he loves his job for the same reason many other NFP nurses do, "It's a privilege to partner with a family during an impressionable time in their life – to cheer them on when they are succeeding and tell them I believe in them when they may think they don't have what it takes to be a first-time parent."

He expressed that he hopes to leave the world a better place than how he found it. Adam says, "I hope to keep shining that light here with NFP for a good long while."