

## Theresa White, BSN, RN

### *Why did you choose public health nursing?*

I chose public health nursing because I wanted to be a part of impacting the community to improve health outcomes by educating and promoting healthy lifestyles.

### *Please provide a brief description of what you do.*

I am a nurse home visitor for Oakland County's Nurse Family Partnership program. I provide home visits to the most vulnerable low income women living in the City of Pontiac. I follow these young women early in pregnancy up until the child reaches its second birthday. My work is to teach and encourage early prenatal care, appropriate nutrition, smoking cessation, stress management, recognizing signs and symptoms of infections, stages of pregnancy, child growth and development, parenting skills, assisting with community resources and to assist developing goals to become self-sufficient.

### *Please describe your role in the health care community where you practice nursing.*

My role is to focus on the health of the entire population. To provide outreach and collaborative services to local human service agencies and to promote health by participating in various health fairs.

### *What do you consider to be the most challenging part of public health nursing?*

The most challenging part of public health nursing is accepting that behavior change takes time.

### *What do you consider to be the most rewarding?*

The most rewarding part is to be able to experience and be a witness to my client's success, no matter how big or small!

### *What advice do you have for nursing graduates who are considering public health nursing as a career?*

Think outside of the box and to visualize the big picture, especially as we see others in different neighborhoods, cultures, religions and races. It's the Relationship that makes the difference. Be a good listener and be sensitive to the needs of others.

### *Any other comments?*

I am committed to helping transform young mother's lives and the lives of their children, by creating incredible relationships which fosters trust. It is this powerful mentoring relationship that builds confidence and influences change in the lives of the young mothers I serve. If I could do it all over again, I would choose public health nursing!

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