

My commitment and desire to become a doctor

Psychology, Success



First-hand experience as an NHS patient is what initially caught my interest in Medicine. Up until the age of 15, I was constantly in my local A&E department due to a rare condition with my eyes involving corneal ulcers. Without hospital intervention, I would have lost my eyesight permanently. Regular presence in a hospital environment, surrounded by healthcare professionals, provided me with first-hand insight into how they administer patients and deal with the emotional and stressful demands of the job.

When I arranged to undertake a placement at my GP surgery for four weeks, I had the opportunity to shadow a nurse tend to patients, check their blood pressure and extract blood. After I became comfortable with the environment, I was allowed to assist in taking patients' blood pressure and measuring their height and weight. I would also assist the nurse and provide her with the equipment she needed for consultations such as various types of blood collecting bottles. I also observed a doctor during consultations listen to patients' concerns, assessing various possible causes and symptoms to ensure a correct diagnosis and then used her communication skills to explain her observations in an empathetic manner. After the consultation, she then liaised with the nurse and advised her what samples were needed from the patient and which hospital department to liaise with. The efficient organization and leadership skills displayed by the doctor gave me an understanding of the importance of effective communication between multidisciplinary teams.

Additionally, I volunteered in a residential elderly dementia home weekly. This was challenging in itself as I had to balance extracurricular activities with college, to ensure I didn't fall behind in my studies. Each day was

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unique as I learnt and dealt with different situations each week. I had to be alert and vigilant in cases where residents in the later stages of dementia displayed bouts of hostility towards me. This equipped me with the skills to adapt quickly to challenging environments as well as specific skills that helped to reduce their agitation, including monitoring their personal comfort and creating a calm environment. The most important thing to bear in mind during the aggression was that it was not deliberate, and to remember that the patient was still an individual. As a result, I am now aware of the physical and emotional needs of patients and I am now prepared to deal with the harsh realities of infirmity and ageing. One particular resident intrigued me when I made a key observation that even though he had dementia, albeit an early progression version, he had an innate ability to play pool which hadn't been affected. I regularly played pool with him, and after I finished my volunteering, I decided to continue my newfound passion for pool and now play weekly with my father.

Taking part in both the Reach for Excellence and Next Step York schemes, which included summer schools, alongside multiple taster days that I attended allowed me to partake in hands-on practice. I prepared a dummy for anaesthesia and was taught by qualified EMT's and paramedics about how to use "DR ABC" upon arriving at a casualty. This gave me the comprehension of what it is like to study Medicine as an undergraduate. Getting to experience life at university was an amazing opportunity which gave me the chance to see the wider benefits of student life.

My experiences of shadowing a GP and the healthcare staff exemplified how modern primary care in alliance with secondary care is key to an effective NHS. From undertaking work placements, what particularly interests me about medicine is the aspect of each patient being unique and the ability to witness different situations and scenarios with each one. My commitment and desire to become a doctor has been strengthened through these experiences and has inspired me to research into a career in medicine and affirmed my view that this is the career for me.