

Exploring the intricate structure of a nephron under an electron microscope was enough to make me fall in love with the science behind Medicine. However, it was a moment during my hospital work experience that truly made me consider it as a career. I talked to a patient with renal failure and learnt about his journey after diagnosis. He explained that he was planning to go back to his beloved job thanks to his doctors' efforts, showing me how much change they could bring to individual lives. This was reaffirmed to me when I shadowed doctors at a sexual health clinic. Watching how they handled sensitive information and empathised with worried patients showed that, despite being a very demanding profession, its rewards were unparalleled.

During work experience at a GP surgery, I started to appreciate the impact doctors have on a larger, community-wide scale. The focus on preventative medicine with smoking cessation and dietary clinics showed me how important it is to teach people how to take control of their own health. Inspired by this to help my local community, I volunteered at homeless feeds and helped to host a sports day for Cerebral Palsy Midlands. I realised that simply listening and understanding can go a long way to help the vulnerable.

My communication skills have improved by mentoring GCSE students and supervising a science club, in which I have learnt to break down complex topics into simple chunks. Leading a weekly debating workshop in a primary school developed my teamwork skills, which I saw were critical for the multidisciplinary nature of the wards. A particularly memorable experience was when I encouraged a shy child, who had recently joined the class, to speak in front of his new classmates. As he spoke about why pizza was better than ice cream with newfound confidence. I realised that sometimes a guiding hand is all individuals need to achieve their goals.

To broaden the scope of my scientific knowledge I read various books. In particular, Matt Ridley's "Genome" fascinated me by telling a story of how our DNA holds a record of our evolutionary history. I also undertook scientific investigations such as experimenting with reciprocal inhibition for my Biology coursework. Furthermore, after learning about global health trends in Geography, I wrote an International Baccalaureate extended essay into how the nutrition transition affects the health of indigenous communities. I recognise Medicine is not purely scientific, though. I gained a greater understanding of unique ethical challenges such as the Charlie Gard case through listening to BMJ podcasts and reading articles.

Playing the guitar and doing gymnastics help me cope with stress. Apart from improving my dexterity and coordination they have also improved my ability to assimilate and share new practical skills quickly. For example, I made gymnastics video tutorials to help keep my school community active during lockdown. Although a challenge, my time management skills were refined as I balanced this with mounting coursework.

Having spoken to both junior doctors and consultants, I have realised that the profession increasingly involves caring for patients with incurable conditions. Atul Gawande's "Being Mortal" offered a powerful message - one of the most rewarding aspects of being a doctor is helping people with what medicine can't do. Amidst the revolutions in modern healthcare, Guiding and empathising with patients who have challenging issues is at the heart of the physician's role. Although at times the sheer responsibility doctors have seems daunting, I am determined to join the profession as I feel it would fulfil me deeply.