

Medical School Personal Statement

My friend's father always warned him not to run a lot since he had asthma. While playing games he always stopped to use an inhaler, which eventually enabled him to run for a while. As a child I was fascinated by how small particles in that inhaler could treat his big lungs. He recovered from that terrifying infirmity, but imprinted in my mind was the feeling of relief he felt from the inhaled drug, which his life depended on. What began as a childhood fascination became an ambition for the rest of my life.

As I was enrolled at the University of Houston in 2009 pursuing my undergraduate degree in Health Science, I wanted to further my knowledge beyond the classroom setting. For this reason, I decided to work as a pharmacy technician to obtain a sense of what my professional life might be like. I observed the day-to-day performance of the pharmacists, their interaction with the community, and how well they were reciprocated. The experience and knowledge I gained motivated me to continue working as a pharmacy tech even after I graduated.

My times spent working, as a pharmacy technician was as educational as it was emotionally worthwhile. The experience gained during my four years working at CVS, Walgreens and at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Hospital, allowed me to understand that pharmacists are able to make a difference on their community simply by counseling patients who are experiencing drug- drug, drug-disease, and drug-food interactions. It became apparent that pharmacists served as the last line of defense in protecting patients against any drug-related problems. Furthermore, I learned pharmacists are well-positioned to be drug therapy experts in order to handle the challenges in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical revolutions that are creating complicated new drugs. My encounters with patients taught me that pharmacists must look beyond the prescription counter. Every time I had the opportunity to meet new people, I would talk to them, and try to get to know them, and listen to their problems. These interactions allowed me to improve my communication and personal skills while realizing that I could leave a positive impact on people just by listening and focusing on their ailments. I learned that companionship and patience could be an excellent way to approach patients' problems.

My experience as a pharmacy technician also motivated me to pursue my Master's in Public health I became interested in community health while working patients who came to the pharmacy for vaccinations. As I considered methods to improve vaccine delivery in our community, I developed an interest in school-based vaccine initiatives. Improving the vaccine compliance rate in our patient population would be an invaluable benefit to our community. Vaccine programs in the pharmacies I worked at were very well-organized with a central computer system for tracking; however, improvements in compliance, education, and delivery of vaccines to the population could be improved by school-based vaccine programs. This would be of particular benefit to influenza prevention, as many of our patients did not obtain the flu shot annually. I committed myself to improving community health and decided to enter an MPH program in order to pursue this goal.

Being a public health professional has shown me that early preventive education is the most effective means of changing one's behavior patterns, thus enabling me to gain a broad perspective regarding health care. It is clear that public health and pharmacy are two fields, which are one in the same and go hand in hand. In order for pharmacists to have a more substantial public health impact, they will need to extend their perception and practice of public health from providing clinical services that affect their communities, such as lipid screening and immunizations, to increasing their knowledge of the five core competencies of public health. In assessing the classes that were part of my MPH program; Social and behavioral sciences, Health policy and administration, Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Environmental health sciences has prepared me to use this knowledge in order to contribute to the field of pharmaceuticals.

Becoming a pharmacist is a lifelong dream of mine. It is a product of both the good and bad experiences in my life. My eagerness to work hard and persevere through difficult circumstances, coupled with my ability to relate and communicate to others, will enhance my capacity to contribute to the healthcare delivery system as a pharmacist. I believe that serving, as a pharmacist in a community will bring about both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, which will be realized over the breadth of my career.

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