
Personal Statement #5

My initial exposure to dentistry was when I met a family member for the very first time. I was so shocked at the amount of interest he had in dentistry. From discussing the running of his practise, finances, materials at first, did sound quite stressful. However, working with him allowed me to witness the relationship between dentists their patients. The constant hustle and bustle of a practise seemed really intriguing to me as well as the expanding sector with a plethora of opportunities and specialisations. I can confidently carry out practicals in Chemistry and Biology by devising my own method, which makes these A-Level subjects of particular interest to me.

Another case which shaped my engrossment in dentistry was when I was told to leave the room work experience, but could not understand why. Upon returning, the private dentist said, "Good that you left, this one was nervous." I could not understand why the dentist could be such an anxious scenario for some. If you brush your teeth twice a day and floss, what is there to be afraid of? Upon discussion with the dentist he told me about dental phobias and highlighted some of the support available. I wanted to know why people have dental phobias and what can be done to treat them, which lead me to create my EPQ project about it, following the conversation I had. This project has allowed me to develop personally as well as have insight into the professionalism nature I will be faced with in the future. I believe that I possess the characteristics a dentist should have to reduce the number of phobic patients that I have developed through my charity work and with the subject knowledge I have gained from studying positive psychology; techniques such as mindfulness can really help patients.

In order to grasp a better understanding of the clinical skills needed for dentistry and subsequently fuelling my interest for the subject, I actively sought work experience, participated in workshops and attended voluntary lectures. Amongst the highlights of my time, I was taught how to suture at the Bristol Royal Infirmary and then got the opportunity to witness the skill being applied at work experience when the dentist was placing implants. The private dentist explained to me that titanium in implants fuse to bone, and how its mechanism is a mystery in the dental world. He then furthered my understanding and interest in orthodontics by explaining the differences between invisalign and conventional orthodontic appliances. He also introduces me to an orthodontic technician who taught me how to bend an Adams crib for removable appliance. Working with a conservative specialist, I was amazed by the different methods of preserving a tooth, from inlays and onlays to bridges and fillings. Being part of the Bristol Sutton Trust Summer School, provided me with an array of lab skills when participating in pharmacology and biochemistry lectures. I was also guided through a patient's journey in a hospital and learnt about the importance of each component in NHS team upon patient arrival as well as post care.

I hold special value for my local radio show I have been hosting for the past three years on a weekly basis that has given me confidence to be the well spoken individual that I am. To operate efficiently, a dentist has to work well within a versatile team: including technicians, receptionists and nurses. The show has not only taught me how to present, but challenged me to organise and liase with a variety of people from different backgrounds, therefore my interpersonal skills would assist me in such tasks prevalent in dentistry. I enjoy sharing new

medical and dental advances in the 'What I learnt this week' segment of the show, which I source from articles from the BDA and dentalhealth.org. I possess a hands on approach to any opportunity I am given whether that be helping to organise STEM opportunities at my school, leading assemblies as part of my role in the Junior Leadership Team, or privately tutoring younger students,

Through the motivation and eagerness that I am possessive of, I would be able to accept challenges in every aspect of dentistry to strengthen my ability. My enthusiastic nature encapsulated with my compassion and confidence would allow me to be an excellent role model enabling to make an applauding contribution to the academic and social life as a dental student.

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