Pharmacy: My Reasons To Choose This Sphere

My interest in pharmacy derives from my desire to help others and have an active role in the community, where I can work to directly improve the welfare of people around me. Visiting my family's rural village in a developing country like Pakistan throughout my life and seeing a simple, albeit much needed, pharmacy open in the area made me appreciate how antibiotics can have a hugely positive impact on the wellbeing of the community. Talking with those pharmacists and seeing first-hand the passion they had for helping others as well as the gratifying experiences it provided was a major motivation behind my desire to pursue a career in pharmacy.

Reading 'Letters to a young pharmacist' by Susan A. Cantrell et al, a collection of writings by experienced practitioners of pharmacy, has given me a better understanding of what it means to be a pharmacist. While specifically for those already in a pharmacy career, it provides valuable insight for prospective pharmacists on how to become leaders in the field as well as potential challenges and adversity you may face, challenges which I aspire to overcome.

Studying A-level Chemistry has provided me with the fundamental knowledge needed to pursue a degree in pharmacy as well as vital mathematical and practical skills such as analysing data and evaluating results. I particularly enjoyed organic chemistry, including the study of the various organic compounds and how the small differences in functional groups can result in completely different chemical substances. A level Biology has provided me with essential knowledge about the structure of cells, functions of various organs and how drugs affect the body. It also brought to my attention the problem of antibiotic resistance, and reading articles like 'why are there so few antibiotics in the research and development pipeline?' by the pharmaceutical journal has made me realise how complicated and controversial the problem is. Looking at past studies carried out by researchers in A level psychology also made me value the often-overlooked ethical side of pharmacy when dealing with the public, especially when it comes to confidentiality of patient information.

During my work experience at a community pharmacy, I was responsible for sorting between over the counter and prescription drugs, checking the expiry date of medicines, stocking shelves and other duties. It taught me important organisational and time management skills as well as making me appreciate the more mundane yet significant tasks of a pharmacist that take place behind the counter. Shadowing the pharmacist also gave me the opportunity to see them provide blood tests, diabetes screening and helpful advice for a wide range of health concerns to the public, which demonstrated the increasingly diverse role of a pharmacist and emphasised just how important they are to the local community.

I also participated in the National Citizen Service, a programme that has allowed me to obtain skills suitable for pharmacy and university. For example, guiding my team during a hike and motivating them has taught me how to be a responsible leader along with important team management skills. Spending a week at a care home and taking care of patients with dementia was an experience that pushed me out of my comfort zone, but rewarded me with valuable communication skills when talking to those outside of my age range, something that is necessary for pharmacists. Subsequently, fundraising for the awareness of dementia along with

others developed my ability to work as a team member in order to achieve a shared goal, whilst providing a fulfilling experience that reinforced my desire to become a pharmacist, so that I can continue to help others.

I am aware of the competitive nature of pharmacy and higher education, but I firmly believe that my past experiences and skills combined with my strong work ethic will make me a great asset to university life and have sufficiently prepared me for the challenges ahead.