

# Medicine Personal Statement

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What initially drew me to medicine arose from a childhood intrigue into the intricacies of biological science and disease. This interest flourished greatly during third-level education and postdoctoral research, growing a deeper appreciation for the many challenges of such an interdisciplinary career. I have endeavoured to explore numerous activities to truly test this desire, all of which have further reinforced my aspiration to study medicine. These experiences encouraged my personal development and facilitated a profoundly informed insight into the level of empathy, compassion, enthusiasm and stamina required to be a good doctor.

Since March 2003 for 8 hours every Saturday I have volunteered at \_name\_ district hospital \_town\_, caring for elderly and post-operative patients. My duties include helping with patient sanitation, washing, wound-dressing, feeding and exercising, along with talking to and empathising with palliative and chronic care patients. Additionally, each week the G.P. allows me to shadow her rounds, providing a valuable perspective on her interactions with nurses, physiotherapists and pharmacists, as well as the gratification of working as part of a team in a caring and responsible role. In June I earned a first-aid certificate, giving me confidence in managing minor injuries and allowing me to join the Order of Malta. This organisation has proven to be a rich learning environment, as twice weekly I either participate as part of an ambulance corps at sporting events, or visit and talk to elderly and chronic term patients in local hospitals. Psychiatry has always fascinated me, and in July I shadowed a psychiatrist during an outpatient clinic, observing the consultation and treatment of persons with depression and schizophrenia. Although a limited experience, it revealed the finely honed oral and aural communication skills required in this profession. In August I spent a day shadowing in the neurology and urology departments of \_Name\_ University College Hospital, acquiring a small appreciation for the pace and pressures of work in a busy hospital. Moreover, in a conscious effort to maximise what I learned from all the aforementioned work experience I actively used the BNF as an educational resource, to expand upon my academic knowledge and clinical understanding of the pharmacotherapies involved.

My primary and post-graduate degrees have provided a thorough grounding in the sciences underlying medicine. In addition, post-graduate studies have broadened my knowledge of the pathology and treatment of many psychiatric, neurological and chronic inflammatory disorders. The self-directed learning during post-graduate research has refined my decision making, problem solving and analytical skills by teaching me to laterally integrate different bodies of knowledge. My post-doctoral workload has meant a continual refinement of my personal organisation and ability to work synergistically in an environment requiring adept leadership and team skills.

Students and doctors have stressed the importance to me of maintaining recreational interests which aid in coping with the inevitable personal demands and professional stresses of a medical career. I have affinities for music, languages, art and sport which are fully integrated into my life, requiring a continual refinement of my time-management. I have played the guitar and piano for 15 years, performing in several bands, and recently mastered the baglama and bongo. Working as a translator in the summer of 1998 rose my French to a fluent conversational level, and I am learning sign-language in a sincere effort to expand my communicative potential. Art is a passion of mine, and I have won prizes at local and national levels, as well as having illustrations published in scientific journals. Fitness is important to me, I run 30 km weekly and enjoy team sports including basketball and football.

I am aware of the social sacrifices of a busy medical career, the continual academic commitment required, and the importance of being a well-rounded motivated individual with excellent interpersonal abilities. Furthermore, the challenge of using logical and clinical reasoning in an environment that demands a genuine personal dedication attracts me immensely. The qualities I have developed from an academic and voluntary aspect have deeply strengthened my commitment, and affirmed my conviction to

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enter this profession. By studying medicine I will not only help others, but pursue a vocation to which I truly aspire.