

## Personal Statement (Medical School)

Blood! This ooey, gooey, crimson fluid has made its way into multiple aspects of my life for as long as I can remember. Take my life as a hockey player, for instance. This wonderful sport found me when I was five and has since refused to leave. However, it is always in the biggest moments of the biggest games when my viscous, red friend finds a way to escape from any hole on my face, preexisting or not. I have become best friends with various trainers; I run to them once or twice a game, sweat pouring out of every pore and carbon dioxide racing from my lungs, to let them work their magic on my suffering face. Perhaps I work too hard in this “recreational” sport. Perhaps my face would have fewer scars and my nose would be straighter if I vowed *not* to hustle harder than anyone and lead the team by example. But what is the fun in that? This is one of my passions! I am the assistant captain, president, and the soul of this team! My face can suffer a few scars while my soul runs wild in the sub-zero (Celsius) battlefield I call a hockey rink.

Blood! The red fluid follows me in my academic life as well, fulfilling my inherent curiosity to understand how the body works and can be treated. While physically less intense, my animal-based research has become just as thrilling and motivating as my battles on the ice. In fact, since I began in my sophomore year of college, it has become the motivating part of my undergraduate education. In this case, it is not actually *my* blood that reddens rubber gloves, but rather that of my rats. These rats, whose myocardial infarctions represent a great part of my time spent in college, valiantly spill their crimson fluid in order for my experiments to succeed. I ultimately aim to show that immature cardiomyocyte therapy prevents heart failure following these infarctions. Research has allowed me to learn in-depth physiology while working to solve the leading cause of death in the United States; my gloved hands are providing new insights into treating a debilitating disease and helping to progress the medical field! My experience with cardiac research has been priceless; my aspiration is to become a cardiologist so that I may apply my knowledge of cardiac physiology towards treating patients.

The ambitious pursuit toward becoming a physician was not originally in my plans while growing up. The only time I spoke of being a medical doctor prior to my senior year of high school was in second grade, when I claimed I would be a doctor during the week and play in the NHL on the weekends (which still sounds like a great idea). The epiphany to pursue a medical career occurred late in high school when my grandfather, whose parents were immigrants with little education, spoke sage words to me. We were sitting at the breakfast table when he looked at me and said, “Bryce, the most important thing in life is to help as many people as you can. Whatever you do, make sure you help people.” This was exactly the push I needed to give my life direction. At that moment, the daunting workload and dedication needed to become a doctor no longer seemed insurmountable. I was ready to do whatever it takes to become a physician and help as many people as I can. I have tried to follow his advice by volunteering in the community and teaching children, but an insatiable desire to give health and improve life still remains; becoming a physician is the best possible fulfillment of this desire.

The question still remains: *Why do I want to practice medicine?* It is not to continue my association with blood, it is not for the money, nor is it just that “I want to help people.” I want to be a medical doctor because it is the most hands-on, direct way to help people restore their life. Loss of health, the loss of bodily and mental well-being, is the most debilitating loss a person can suffer. One can live without a home or money, but no person can live a fulfilling life without

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their health. I want to be the giver of health; I want to put hope in a patient's eyes and make him *know* that there will be a time when pain will subside and he will be whole again. One of the most touching experiences I have had with medicine was in shadowing a pediatric neurologist. A mother brought her five-year-old son in because he had been having seizures and night terrors; after a long examination and a mild prescription, the neurologist said, "Your son should be fine in three to four weeks." The tears that came from this mother's eyes were not of sadness, but of hope, and were enough to convince me that I have made the right choice. I want to give that hope. I want to make a mother know that her child will be alright.

Medicine, as I have come to realize, provides an opportunity to make an immense difference in a person's life. The trust and smiles coming from patients are the reason to be excited to go to work each day. Teaching and shadowing have shown me that there can always be hope to give; research and hockey have shown me that with dedication and sacrifice, amazing things can be achieved. I am ready to give sweat, tears, and yes, even gooey blood, to become a physician. I ultimately dream of practicing cardiology, but regardless of where my medical studies take me, I will "help as many people as [I] can."