

Nikunj Thakrar

MPharm, 2009

Manager, Tesco Pharmacy



Working as a pharmacist

After completing his MPharm degree at Hertfordshire, Nikunj Thakrar was offered a place with Tesco to complete his pre-registration year. Upon finishing in 2010, he was offered a managerial position within the company, where he has been ever since.

In his position as a manager for Tesco Pharmacy, Nikunj's role varies between clinical and business activities. *'My role includes checking prescriptions, providing sound, knowledge-based advice on minor ailments and the management of long term conditions such as diabetes. I also provide a range of different services such as flu jabs, travel health clinic, erectile dysfunction service and signposting services. In addition to the clinical aspects of my role, I am heavily involved in the business side, which involves setting and meeting targets, staff management and ensuring the pharmacy is running legally.'*

Getting ahead

As a 16 year old trying to decide on a potential career route, Nikunj undertook work experience in a local pharmacy. It was this that made him decide to study pharmacy, and provided a valuable lesson to him on the value of getting real sector experience. Nikunj continued

to gain work experience in a number of different pharmacies during his degree, and is an advocate for the benefits of getting experience – not least for giving him an edge over other graduates.

'During University I participated in a number of summer placement programmes. These placements were essential for my development and also gave me a head start in my degree and ultimately the pharmacy world. My advice to any prospective pharmacists is to gain experience in the field as it makes the world of difference once you have qualified. Be driven, ambitious and, most importantly, understand that you have a duty of care to all patients.'

Practice and teaching

As well as his role with Tesco, Nikunj is also involved in teaching through overseeing NVQ3 training for staff and working at the University of Hertfordshire as a visiting lecturer.

This is something he would like to develop this further in the future, combining working in academia whilst continuing to practice as a community pharmacist. *'I feel appreciated and respected in my role as a community pharmacist and want to continue delivering care of the highest standard for the foreseeable future.'*



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