



Amira Guirguis

MPharm, 2012
PhD, Pharmacy

A move into pharmacy

Amira Guirguis' career path into pharmacy did not begin in the most traditional way. Initially, Amira trained as an accountant, but always had an interest in people and languages, speaking three fluently. After subsequently working in interpretation and translation, she then decided to retrain as a pharmacist.

One of the benefits that Amira saw with pharmacy was the broad opportunities it offered, including being able to work in the community, hospitals, industry or research. Given this, she advises making the most of all opportunities available. *'Be proactive and learn from the different expertise of lecturers and researchers. Pharmacy is not just about passing an exam but about developing the skills and competences which would enable you to be a successful pharmacist or researcher.'*

Focusing on research

After completing her pre-registration year at Ealing Hospital, Amira decided to undertake a PhD having spent the summers of her MPharm working in research. *'I am very interested in research and keen in pursuing a career in pharmaceutical research, aiming at finding out new methods to improve patient safety and raise our profile as pharmacists.'*

Her PhD focuses on using different spectroscopic methods and computational modelling which could be used to identify novel psychoactive substances (NPS) or 'legal highs'. Currently, Amira is reviewing the existing research and literature, and plans to start in the lab shortly.

Future plans

Even though her focus is very much on pharmaceutical research and her PhD, Amira is keen to retain her skills as a pharmacist and is currently working to gain the necessary accreditations to be able to undertake locum opportunities at community pharmacies. *'As I'm hospital trained, I would need to undertake some mandatory and other optional courses related to enhanced and advanced services in community pharmacy, although still hope to also locum in hospitals.'*

Longer term, her focus remains on research alongside helping future pharmacists. *'In the future, I want to work in research and contribute into pharmaceutical discoveries. My ambitions are also to develop a course for pre-registration pharmacists that would assist them towards their pre-registration training and pre-reg. exam.'*



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