

Bridging Mind and Movement: Lessons from my placement

Before beginning placement with a movement disorders clinic, I reflected on the goals and my expectations for this experience. A key goal was to gain a deeper understanding of collaboration within a multidisciplinary team. I believed this would help me strengthen my understanding of the diagnosis and management of complex neurological conditions such as Parkinson's Disease. Initially, I was unsure how my psychology background would fit in a specialised neuroscience space with nurses and other medical staff. However, from my first day, it was clear every team member, including me, played a unique role in supporting patients and their families to navigate the nuanced nature of movement disorders.

One of the most striking lessons I gained from placement was witnessing the interplay between the mind and body in patients' lives. Movement disorders such as Parkinson's Disease and Functional Movement Disorder affect physical, psychological, and emotional functioning. I saw this firsthand during the clinic visits, observing how nurses like my supervisor, utilise their expertise to consider the broader case. This went beyond managing medication or monitoring symptoms. These were vulnerable moments for patients and family members. It is through healthcare staff, like nurses, that we are able to provide a steady presence for patients who experience anxiety, frustration, or even uncertainty about their condition. Ultimately, this taught me that, as health professionals, our duty is to transcend professional capacities. We must also be there for patients in a humanistic manner.

As a psychology student, I felt that my academic knowledge and professional experience

allowed me to notice changes in mental state. Sometimes, these included words, but often it was a patient's body language, mood changes, or even withdrawal. I observed how nurses applied these concepts with empathy and creativity, adapting their communication to meet patient needs. These clinics were never straightforward and required a greater understanding of effective clinical practice. For example, when interacting with a non-English speaking patient, I recall how using humour and patience restored stability to the session. This moment helped me consolidate emotional care as is just as important as the physical aspects of our roles.

Additionally, I did meet my goal during this experience by learning how interdisciplinary collaboration is vital for comprehensive care. This meant having neuroscience nurses and neurologists share their individual perspectives, each providing a crucial piece of the puzzle. I was grateful to be part of this, sharing my insights and psychological knowledge to discuss areas such as motivation, self-efficacy, and mental health effects associated with neurological conditions. These became opportunities to listen, ask questions, and integrate insights into the professional practice I aspire towards. This experience was transformative, opening my eyes to the value of teamwork in healthcare.

Yet, if I had to choose one lasting experience from this experience, it would be realising that holistic care is more than a philosophy. It is our daily practice, the interactions we have with patients, the way we function in the world. Nurses and healthcare professionals do not just treat conditions; they provide the backbone of our health system. They offer guidance and support during hard times in an individual's life. They celebrate the small vic-

tories —like seeing a patient at their local health club, moving and enjoying activities, or even giving someone hope for the first time in years.

Stepping into the clinic instilled a newfound respect for the health profession. I saw directly how psychological principles—such as active listening, resilience-building, and empathy—can enhance holistic practice in the neuroscience context. This experience has ultimately shaped the future trajectory of my career and practice, especially the dedication and adaptability I witnessed among clinic staff.

To conclude, I would like to thank my amazing supervisor for this experience. To all the nurses who are reading this, thank you. Your work has inspired me not just to think, but to feel. To not only observe but connect. It is moments like this in our professional journeys that remind us that the human connection we offer leaves a lasting impact.

Priya Patel

Psychology student

DOI: [10.2478/ajon-2025-0017](https://doi.org/10.2478/ajon-2025-0017)

