

Personal Statement for Physicians Assistant Program at University X (Important Details Changed)

My desire to become a physician assistant originated while working at the clinic of Dr. C. As a back office assistant, I take preliminary patient histories, educate patients on their medical treatments, assist in surgeries, provide wound care, remove sutures and serve as a technician for medical devices. As the only Spanish speaking employee in the office, I am charged with acting as an interpreter and managing relationships with Spanish speaking patients. Over the past four years while working at Dr. C' office, I have developed a reputation for building strong working relationships with patients, writing thorough medical histories, and providing excellent patient care. Dr. C has noted that many patients request appointments during my working hours.

Every day, patients are referred to our office from the non-profit City Y Family Clinic which serves low income and homeless individuals. Our office provides these patients with pro bono healthcare. I am entrusted with managing the office's relationships with the City Y Clinic patients, as most of them speak Spanish. During my second year working in Dr. C's office, we helped a Spanish-speaking patient with a rare condition. This patient had no insurance and very little income. Treating this patient reinforced my desire to become a physician assistant. Diagnosed with Disease X, she experienced chronic enlarging of the scalp that was both painful and disfiguring. Despite weekly treatments with steroids and antibiotics, the patient's condition only worsened. Every week, she expressed her frustration over her worsening condition and her fear for the future. I was determined to help her so I did what I could to console her through this difficult time. When I took a two-week vacation, the patient complained to Dr. C about my absence. Although I was only an assistant, the patient looked forward to my presence and was disappointed that I was gone. When I returned, she mentioned that she felt disconnected from the office and she missed my refreshing attitude and helpfulness. This experience, among others, has led me to realize that I can make a difference in the lives of patients. I have found that I am able to provide a sense of comfort and reassurance for patients. The rewarding feeling after each patient encounter has inspired me to pursue a career as a physician assistant so that I can also care for these patients therapeutically.

Before applying to a physician's assistant program, I recognized the need to take additional classes to further expand my knowledge of medical science. In addition to building strong patient relationships at Dr. C's office, I also apply my knowledge of medical science from these courses. My studies of microbiology taught me the importance of providing good wound care and keeping medical instruments and surgery sites sterile. My anatomy and physiology coursework gave me insights into the many disease processes, such as diabetes and cancer, facing the patients I encounter at Dr. C's office. Additionally, I learned the importance of taking an accurate medical history from my medical terminology class. In short, my studies gave me practical knowledge of the medical issues facing my future patients.

For the past few months, I have volunteered and shadowed Mr. X, P.A. at Community Medical Urgent Care in City D, not far from where I grew up. The patients we encounter face the same problems I witnessed in my own community growing up. I speak their language and I understand the social and financial problems that can often adversely affect their health. My work with Mr. X has given me insights into the role of a physician assistant as an educator of patients and a facilitator of medical care. We encounter many socioeconomically disadvantaged Hispanic and African-American patients who consume unhealthy foods that cause diabetes and hypertension. Smoking and asthma are also common health problems facing our patients. I use my comforting communication skills to educate these patients about the importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle. We also try to inform patients about less expensive alternatives to conventional treatment for smoking cessation. Similarly, the pharmacy in the clinic stocks generic versions of medications in order to make prescription drugs more affordable. The clinic also offers payment plans for treatments. I learned that each of these charitable components play a role in providing patients with excellent yet affordable health care. My experiences with Mr. X demonstrated to me that understanding the language, cultural background, and socioeconomic status of patients help physician assistants to give better care.

Over the past four years, I have gained health knowledge, clinical experience, insights into the practice of medicine, and maturity. I have a genuine passion for helping people and I want to give back to communities such as the one that I came from. As a University X trained Physician Assistant, I will undoubtedly put my knowledge to good use and fulfill University X's mission statement by servicing the needs of medically underserved populations.