

Personal statement on narrative: a brief essay about my desire and motivation to ...

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



Healthcare is in a constant state of evolution. The education and training of Physician Assistants began in earnest with the shortage of trained medical staff during the Second World War. Traditionally, a Physician oversaw this work, and teamwork was an essential quality of a Physician's Assistant. The job of the Physician Assistant entails conducting physical exams, making diagnoses, treating the ill, conducting tests and interpreting the results, prescribing medications, and otherwise counseling the patient or even assisting in surgeries. The modern era has seen a shortage of physicians; a problem that is particularly acute in primary care, and the Physician Assistant will be at the frontline of overcoming this shortage.

My father had always wanted to go to Medical School, but he had grown up in Colombia with seven younger sisters. Being the eldest child, and particularly a male, he was given a great responsibility and had to work to help support his large family. My father was my first and greatest teacher. He taught me to love natural phenomena. For my eighth birthday, he bought me a microscope. I spent hours making slides of everything I could find such as plant petals and insects. One day my father explained to me that humans were very similar to animals, and that we could learn about ourselves by understanding them. He took me to the butcher, and we bought organs. We bought a liver, a heart, kidneys, and a brain. We spent the evening learning about the functions of these organs from the encyclopedia, and then, using the hematoxylin and eosin stains that came with my microscope, I made slides. I observed the smooth endoplasmic reticulum of the liver cells and was awed by the tortuous veins. In the kidneys I saw the glomerulus and the renal medulla. The red muscle fibers of the heart were deeply contrasted

against the dark blue multi nuclei of the cells. In retrospect, at the time I didn't really appreciate the awesomeness of what I was observing. But now, I consider this part of the things that formed a desire to work in healthcare. While I was a teenager my mother was diagnosed with cancer. My world seemed to collapse as her health and mortality seemed to be on tenterhooks. I suddenly was propelled into the role of caregiver. I went with my mother to countless doctors appointment, bouncing around from her primary care physician to specialist from specialist, as each was evaluating the functions of various symptoms. I saw my mother go through many rounds of chemotherapy and several radiation treatments. My mother who I had always thought of as formidable was reduced to a scared, cachexic, and bald shadow of herself. My primary focus was her well being. Early on we were told that treatment was tough, but if we followed the regimens prescribed that her chances of survival were good. I resolved to be a part of her healthcare team at that point, intent on helping my mother overcome her illness and win another small battle for the medical sciences. Given my age, and lack of any training, I had to restrict my help to comparatively simpler avenues. I drove my mother to her appointments, I helped around the house, I made sure she took her medications. My mother would always embarrass me by telling the doctors and nurses that we were seeing about my interests and how good of a caregiver I was. Consequently, they often took the time to explain to me various tests such as a CBC and the meaning of the seemingly endless numbers on the piece of paper. They also explained concepts like para-neoplastic syndromes to me and one in particular would always explain the cellular basis of the therapies she received. The team

worked together, my mother pulled through and has been cancer free for a number of years now. This would not have happened if not for the coordination and teamwork displayed by everyone involved. The cancer experience taught me many things about myself, including that I really enjoyed the teamwork involved in caring for the ill.

Since these formative experiences in my quest towards working in healthcare I have had the opportunity to further explore my interests in science and caring. My histological experience as a youth proved invaluable as I shadowed Dr. Jeffrey Moore in a cytopathology laboratory. Under his tutelage I have learned vast amounts of pathology and have a new understanding of the process of disease in the body. During my internship, I shadowed third year medical students in a free primary care clinic. I learned the importance of early intervention and was able to work in the team to provide the best healthcare delivery possible to the patients.

The Physician Assistant provides a complementary service to the Physician; separate and unique. My interests align with the academic work, and my history of being a caregiver will make me an ideal candidate. Ultimately, my goal is humanistic, and I would like to offer care and support for vulnerable individuals and make the world healthier.