

Sample Personal Statement

As I reflect back on my path to health administration, one word defines my journey: perseverance. Whether in my personal or professional life, I have been faced with situations that required a high level of focus, hard work, and maturity to see them through. These experiences first led me to healthcare administration and then more specifically to health system operations. This personal value along with my other skills and experiences will allow me to be a successful fellow at (organization).

I began my college career with interests in science and business. I wanted to be involved in healthcare, but I had yet to decide in what avenue. Unexpectedly, my dad passed away during freshman year. He passed as the result of a heart attack bringing to light the importance of healthcare and the very permanent result of not monitoring your health. Despite the emotional and physical difficulties, I resumed my studies with a new drive to pursue a career in healthcare management where I could use my experience and compassion to keep the patient's voice strong and increase access to quality care. To date this serves as my painful reminder of the human element involved in healthcare, one that I take with me each day.

Following graduation, I worked in a multi-clinic dental practice, where I gained exposure to operations. I began working in the call center and immediately saw the coordination required between departments and clinics as I began my work. I had minimal knowledge of healthcare operations, but I was determined to succeed and pushed myself to constantly learn. My development as a healthcare leader continued as I was promoted to float manager soon after. This position encompassed all I had mastered as a financial coordinator but now required me to also look at the clinic from an overall outpatient facility perspective. These positions were challenging but they gave me an opportunity to experience the daily struggles and successes associated with managing a healthcare clinic, while further developing my leadership skills.

This summer I completed an administrative residency at (organization) in (town). Through (organization)'s affiliation with the (state) Health System, I was exposed to the operations of an integrated health system, as well as the daily operations of a 200 bed community hospital. My main project involved improving financial performance of the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), with a focus on Medicaid patients (60% of the unit's payer mix). I utilized internal interviews with staff and clinicians, external interviews with other health professionals, statistical analysis of internal and external data, academic research, and in-person site visits to other NICU's in the (state) Health System to develop my recommendations. Through my investigation I identified three primary areas of improvement: coding/billing, length of stay, and reimbursement and discovered many issues that were contributing to the units' poor financial performance. I also looked at the future operations and introduced a NICU collaboration plan between (town), (town), and (name) Children's Hospital in (town) to improve coordination, standardize best practice and share resources.

Additionally, two side projects rounded out my residency experience. I had the opportunity to work with the hospital's infusion center to redesign their check-in process as they transitioned services from the hospital to a new outpatient medical plaza and I worked on a certificate of need application for a cardiac catheterization lab. This experience was largely self-directed; I needed to be proactive and persistent to ensure my projects were completed meticulously and met given deadlines. Along with diligence and responsibility, I left this experience with a much deeper understanding of health system operations and the (town) market. My main project took a comprehensive look at the NICU which required an understanding of not only the clinical operations of the department but also the other clinical and administrative support departments and constant collaboration required to operate efficiently while providing quality care.

Along with an extraordinary passion for stewardship and a patient-centered belief, perseverance will allow me to succeed as a fellow. I will persevere through the challenges by sensitively listening, collaborating with others and applying my knowledge of (organization's) market area to discover new opportunities to improve the bottom line. The wide variety of diverse and innovative activities will allow me to reach my goal of gaining quality operations experience and the frequent communication with the president will foster my development as a leader. My journey up until this point has been filled with challenges and uncertainty but I have met each one with determination and a willingness to work until the solutions became evident. I plan on taking this same approach during my fellowship and beyond as I continue to grow and develop as a leader and reach my goals of obtaining a senior position in operations and promoting the mission of (organization).