

Natalie Mecklenburg

Ms. Smith

Internship 4B

4 October 2024

### Interview with my Mentor

#### **Background:**

Natalie Mecklenburg: Tell me about yourself and your family? Where are you from?

Emily Boyd: I was born and raised in Greenville. I ended up going to Clemson and majored in Health Science with intent to go into physical therapy. Last semester senior year is when I discovered prosthetics and orthotics. Now I have worked here for almost 14 years.

N: What is your job title? What was your job title before you stopped working with patients?

Why did you stop working with patients?

E: I am clinic manager, but I am still a certified prosthetist. Basically I am the liaison with a PM&R physician for telehealth visits for prosthetic patients. I stopped working with patients by choice. I had really rough batch of patients last fall and felt that I was very good at listening and being compassionate with patients, but not the best at fitting devices and troubleshooting.

N: How did you come to work at Hanger clinic?

E: A friend from highschool's father owned the company before it was Hanger. I reached out to him when I was interested in this career. I also shadowed for many months before I decided to work here.

N: Would you do anything differently if you could go back?

E: No I don't think so.

N: What part of this job do you love the most?

E: Even though I'm not directly involved, I love that we can play such a huge part in a patient rehabilitating from amputation or injury. We positively impact patients and improve their quality of life. This job can be very rewarding.

N: What parts of the job do you love the least?

E: The managing staff part. Things like performance management.

**Work-Life:**

N: What does a regular work day look like for you? In the office

E: Overseeing day to day functions of the office. Today I am reviewing all clinical summaries for upcoming visits and giving corrections back to clinicians. I have lots of phone calls about ways to try and improve documentation.

N: How do you and your team stay up to date with new technology in this field?

E: We are constantly getting emails from sales reps every time new products are launched. We also have an event in Jan or Feb. called Hanger Live. This sends 3-4 thousand Hanger employees to one place and a lot of vendors come in and set up booths with new devices. We also have continuing education requirements to maintain certifications, where we also learn a lot about new products.

**Industry Advancement:**

N: How has the prosthetic industry changed since you first started working in it?

E: When I started working, we were still documenting using paper charts and handwritten notes. Now we use technology like AI to assist in documentation. The technology in prosthetic components themselves have also advanced significantly. The last thing is how much more strict insurance has become on what they will or won't approve and the documentation to get paid for those devices.

N: Do you think the prosthetics field should be talked about more as a career option across various college majors? Why?

E: Absolutely. I went 4 and a half years in health science major and it was never discussed. They talked to us about dental, PT, etc, but never prosthetics. Most people are on bioengineering track for prosthetics, which I think is overkill.

**Advice:**

N: What's the biggest piece of advice you'd give to someone interested in this field?

E: Know that it can be a really rewarding job and experience, but it can be really gross. Shadow a lot, multiple, multiple months to be exposed to all the parts of the job.