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Ms. Smith

Internship 4B

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September Conference Reflection

This month marks the beginning of my internship. My overarching goal this year is to achieve over 60 hours and gain a deeper understanding of what exactly prosthetics is and if I want to pursue a career in it. As I finish September, I definitely feel as though I've already begun working towards my goal and gained a deeper understanding of this field. Not only has my goal been worked on, my employability skills have grown as well.

This month, I had 3 main accomplishments that helped me towards my goal. The first was through my annotated bibliography. For this, I read an article about voluntary amputation. This stemmed from my interest in a patient I saw who opted for one of these due to paralysis in his arm. Researching this topic thoroughly helped me understand a procedure relating to prosthetics. Next, I consistently went to my internship 2x a week, except for once or twice, and got at least 2 hours every time I went. This has helped me to get 20 hours in just September. Keeping up my schedule will help me work towards my goal of over 60 hours in a manageable way. Lastly, I learned a lot about the role insurance plays. There are many aspects of this field that I am unaware of, and insurance is one of them. It is a topic covered in almost every appointment, and I never knew it was that important. Learning about this part of the field is already broadening my knowledge of prosthetics, and I hope to continue learning.

This month I have also grown my employability skills. The five skills I wanted to work on at the beginning of my internship were citation skills, verbal communication skills, creativity

skills, initiative skills, and goal-making skills. Mainly, my creativity skills have improved. During a patient's appointment, there is a lot of troubleshooting that the clinician does. They have to make multiple trips downstairs to the lab to fix any squeaking, discomfort, or other problems the patient has reported. As I've watched more, I have started to get an idea of what could be causing discomfort. Therefore, I think this skill has improved a lot in the short time I've started my internship and will only continue to improve as I keep shadowing. Additionally, I think my initiative skills have grown as I gain more confidence and become less nervous going to my internship. While all of these skills have improved, I think the hardest to improve was verbal communication. This is because when I am shadowing a clinician, I often can't add much to the conversation because I am not knowledgeable enough about prosthetics. I have, however, bonded well with the clinicians in the office. Since I am following them all day, there are many chances to talk and get to know them, which I have capitalized on.

Since starting my internship, I have been exposed to a new career field and learned so much. Part of this learning is shadowing, but doing my bibliographies has also caused me to explore more about prosthetics. I have already learned that I definitely don't love some aspects of it. For example, I don't enjoy the orthotics appointments I shadow. I do, however, really enjoy shadowing any upper extremity amputation appointments. I also was surprised by how gory this field can be. In the first month, I was shown pictures of a man's bloody, detached arm, and the clinicians were very desensitized to it. I also really enjoy the patient interaction part of this job, so even if I don't go into prosthetics, I definitely want a job that includes that aspect.

Next month my goal is to explore and learn more about some more uncommon prosthetic types or amputations. This is my goal because I want to gain insight into a more hidden part of the career field, and it also seems valuable to be knowledgeable about many different types of

amputations. I aim to do this by asking clinicians and doing research with my annotated bibliographies.

Unfortunately, my conference was canceled due to Hurricane Helene. Even though I didn't meet with Ms. Smith, I feel that laying out my progress on a document has helped me see my growth and also what I need to work on in October. For example, reflecting on my employability skills lets me focus on what skills I need to focus on growing next. Setting my new smart goal is also a good reminder of what I want to get better at, or become more knowledgeable about, this month. Overall, despite being unable to discuss my progress in-person, completing the conference sheet has helped better visualize my goals for the next month.