

Personal Statement – Sample 2

In his essay on the profession of medicine, Sir William Osler writes that the medical field strives for a time, "when there should be no more unnecessary death, when sorrow and crying should be no more, and there should not be any more pain." I think it is important for every physician to keep these basic goals in mind no matter what field he/she enters. Clearly, my grasp of information, the foundation of my medical education, is only part of what will make me an effective physician. Though I have performed well academically in both my clinical and basic science years, I have learned to place a greater importance on solid communication and relationships with my patients, peers, and teachers. No amount of academic training can teach the compassion, hard work, camaraderie, and coolness under pressure which can make me an exceptional physician.

While medicine continues to become increasingly complicated, I feel that the physician's most important role, that of a fierce and loyal patient advocate, remains unchanged. This is a broad responsibility which, for me, has included demanding financial help for a migrant worker, obtaining counseling and referrals for a battered woman, and simply cutting the toenails of an elderly patient. I have learned that for patients in situations such as these, having a concerned advocate is as valuable as having a scientist and clinician. The best physicians among us have achieved a balance of all these roles, and not only assess and diagnose patients, but also understand how best to provide the physical, emotional, and social interventions to achieve optimum overall health.

Another crucial lesson learned through my clinical experience is that there are still great improvements to be made in the availability of health care and the implementation of preventive care. I have personally seen the importance of these issues through my experiences growing up in an area with limited health services and through my work with the Rural Health Coalition. The greatest barriers to prevention in rural areas, in fact in all underserved areas, are education and access to qualified personnel. By devoting weekend time to education, basic care, and prevention, the Rural Health Coalition is able to effectively practice quality preventive medicine and improve the health of rural communities. I feel that this organization provides a great model for future practices, and I am committed to extending my services, and health care in general, to underserved populations.

Though I intend to first and foremost become a clinical physician, I also plan to participate in investigation and education throughout my career. Ask me about my ideas for research projects; I am enthusiastic about them and demand a program which can facilitate and guide my curiosity. I also enjoy teaching, and have continued to teach chemistry and natural science even during my years in medical school. The balance for which I search in my career will unite direct and honest patient care with practical discovery and education. A residency in internal medicine will provide the ideal foundation for this pursuit.

I am looking for a strong academic and teaching program, one which will provide a solid background that allows me to choose between competitive fellowships and a career in general medicine. I see myself not only as a future leader in providing health care to my community, but also as a leader outside of medicine as a respected citizen, neighborhood advocate, author, and role model. I continue my journey into the field of medicine with a sense of excitement and

anticipation, and with the commitment to provide earnest and open patient care. I am certainly idealistic, but as the medical profession itself continues to undergo constant evolution and change, I want to remain dedicated to remembering and practicing medicine as a humane art.