

Learning the Ways of a Physical Therapist

I plan on studying to become a physical therapist in college and to do that I got a little more insight on what it is going to be like by doing my job shadow with a physical therapist here in Lindsay. On October 3rd, I shadowed Dr. Stephen Lege from PRO-PT and a PTA, a physical therapist's assistant, Kimberly Marks as well. During the job shadow I assisted both Steve and Kim on different patients and with different duties that needed to be done.

At the start of the job shadow I was actually pretty apprehensive as to what was going to happen in the four hours I was there. When I first got there, Steve showed me around the facility, where the kitchen was, where the ice and heat packs were, and where he does private consultations and evaluations. Then he showed me how their scheduling system worked and showed me the way that he and Kim split up each appointment for the hour. After he showed me everything, the day definitely started because patients started coming every hour.

The first patient came and it was her first appointment so he had to evaluate her injury, and he had me tag along with him to see how evaluations work. She had had surgery on her foot about five months ago and it healed incorrectly so she was referred to Steve to try and realign her foot to normal so that some of the pain could be relieved. As the evaluation went on he had her do certain strength and stretching exercises so that he could have starting measurements. As he got each measurement he taught me how to input those measurements in the computer to save as her evaluation.

I had talked to him about the classes I'm taking right now and physiology happens to be one that we related to each other on. Throughout the day, as were working with patients, he would quiz me on what bones or muscles he was talking about or having them stretch. It was

really reassuring to see that a lot of the aspects I'm learning in my high school physiology class is actually going to help me in becoming a physical therapist and luckily I knew a lot of what he was talking about.

I really enjoyed this experience and the lessons and ways it taught me for when I become a physical therapist. It was really rewarding and definitely reassuring that this is exactly what I want to do in life. I had gone to physical therapy myself for my knee injury and am currently going right now for my shoulder surgery recovery and I knew then that a physical therapy is what I wanted to be. Nothing else has ever intrigued me and gotten me so excited for what's to come in college, like physical therapy.

Some of the most memorable moments I had at my job shadow was working with the patients and Steve or Kim and also meeting the different patients that came in for their appointments. It was really exciting getting to meet patients of all ages and listening to their stories of how they got injured. After they told me what had happened, it was moving to hear what they've been doing to recover and to see what exactly it is that they're doing to recover. Helping them with different exercises and hearing that as they did certain exercises, they improved on repetitions or on the weight for the exercise. It was really rewarding to hear that as they did better on their exercises, it was because of the physical therapy that they had been doing. I feel that if it was that rewarding for me now and I'm not even close to becoming a physical therapist, that when I become one the feeling is going to be way more exhilarating and gratifying.

From this job shadow, I really learned that people can get hurt in the most random ways, but there's always some sort of exercise or movement that will help them regain mobility and

strength. I also learned that there will be many kinds of people in my line of duty and that I will definitely have to alter my behavior and techniques according to their needs. Part of being a physical therapist means that you have to be patient with each person you see, that you have to basically cater to them and that is fine with me. Although there will be people that are unpleasant to work with, I still feel that when their time of recovery comes, they will be nothing but thankful to me helping them get there.

I really can't until I get into college to start my journey of becoming a physical therapist. Once that voyage starts then that means I am definitely one step closer helping and aiding people to recovering fully and being able to do what they were doing before their injury. On my way to becoming a physical therapist, I feel that it will be an experience that I will remember for the rest of my life. Once I am a physical therapist, every day that I serve patients, I will remember that Dr. Stephen Lege had initially developed the way I feel about physical therapy.