

Reagan Welch

Grade 12

Suburban Hospital

“Hospital-wide Intern”

November 7-11, 2016



“Briefly state where you interned, what your duties were at your internship, why you chose this internship, and what your initial expectations were before you started.”

For the dates of November 7-11, 2016, I had the privilege of interning at the bustling, energy-filled Suburban Hospital located in Bethesda, Maryland. At my internship, my duties included several different tasks because I shadowed a few different types of positions (although I mainly shadowed Registered Nurses) because I interned at almost every extremely diverse department in the hospital. When I was shadowing a group of hospital volunteers for a little while, my duties included doing nearly anything that the volunteers needed help with. I would grab extra items for them when they needed them, I would learn and listen intently on how volunteers are an important and welcomed part of hospital service, and I would help them do extra little things to make patients in discomfort feel at ease. While shadowing floor technicians, the aids to the Registered Nurses, I would help them by handing them supplies when they were cleaning a patient, read off a list of things for them to type into their computers for charting, help them clean up a small mess in the patient’s room, and help discharge patients get dressed, packed, and wheel them in their wheelchairs down to their cars to send them home. While shadowing secretaries, I would answer incoming calls to the hospital from family members, doctors trying to reach nurses, answer call bells from patients’ rooms to the front desk who were in need of help, transfer calls from one unit to another or from one doctor to another, clean and write up the nurse’s boards for the shift, break down discharge charts, and add any additional paperwork/labwork to patients’ charts. While shadowing the nurses, my duty was to be very alert to the

patient's diagnosis, the interactions that the nurse carried out with the patient, the bedside manner of the nurse, the different precautions the nurse took with the patient, the different tasks that the nurse performed on the patients like vital signs, injections, exams and more, and observe the charting work. Afterwards, the nurse would quiz my knowledge on what I retained, so I had to pay close attention. I chose this internship because I have had a love for medicine since as early as I can remember. This passion for medicine has driven me to pursue medicine in my college endeavours for my future career. Before beginning my pursuit of studies of medicine, I wanted to take this opportunity of the internship to equip myself with better knowledge of medicine and a Registered Nurse's duties, as well as equip myself with hospital experience to be more successful possibly in Nursing School and to be sure of the career I plan to pursue. My initial expectations of the internship before I started it were that it was going to be strict, include lots of work, and that I was going to learn a very large amount of information on the importance of hospitals, the role of Registered Nurses, and about if I truly wanted to pursue this field of study.

Journal Entry 1

“What were your first impressions of this work? (The atmosphere, people, tasks, schedule, transportation, etc.) What tasks did you like? What did you dislike?”

My first impressions of this work, included a mixture of utter awe and excitement. I could not contain the rushing feeling that took over me as soon as I stepped onto the first floor of my first department. I wanted to be in scrubs with a badge and stethoscope around my neck doing exactly what I saw occurring around me. After the initial rush was over, my impression of the atmosphere was that it was energetic and surreal. All around me people were hurrying across from one station to another, seldom sitting down at a computer for a break or to make a call. It was surreal because after a few hours inside the hospital, it felt like you were in a world of its own. Everything was about the patients, and your focus could barely get diverted from that. I remember on Tuesday, Election Day, I could barely remember it was Election Day after the shifts had started. There was so much to be done and attended to that you were in your own bubble. I loved that. My impression of the people was just awe. The doctors around me rattled off orders and disease processes like it was common vocabulary or colors. The intelligence that the nurses showed when performing a task on the patient or speaking to the patient, family members, or me about what was going on was amazing. It was clear to see that the hospital is an environment full of easily some of the most intelligent people in our country. Not only were they intelligent, but everyone was driven and on task. Also, I had never been to a more friendly hospital. Suburban made me feel like home because of the employees that I interacted with, because of their poise,

professional attitude, and outgoing behavior. I still look up to several of them as role models today and probably will for awhile. My first impression on the schedule was that it was very rigorous and long. Most nurses work for 12-hour shifts. They do have a few breaks, but are mostly on their feet. That was something that I disliked at first, but later appreciated because I saw that the longer the nurses were with their patients, the more special the bond the nurse achieved with each patient, which really made a difference in them getting better. My impression on the tasks that the nurses carried out was that they were not easy and you had to be very educated to do everything right. I saw that the nurses had tasks that, if done incorrectly, could cost them their entire job and sometimes their license. This made me immediately think that nursing school must have to be as rigorous and competitive as everyone around me has told me, because there would be no other way to create such intelligent, highly-skilled workers as these. Their tasks made me want to jump in and join them right away, and I must admit it was hard not to. I liked almost every task they did, except I didn't like when the technicians were busy and the nurses had to clean the patients in certain areas.

(528 words)

Journal Entry 2

“What skills, education, and other training are required for this position? Are any unique character qualities or personality traits required? What would your strengths and weaknesses be? Interview your internship supervisor or another employee and then describe the path he/she took to reach this career.”

I interviewed the Charge Nurse (head Registered Nurse) of one of the units at Suburban to gather the following information. To become a Registered Nurse, one must complete a set of prerequisite courses in college to prepare them for nursing school. These usually follow the same basic guideline of courses, however each college has their own set of prerequisites. The usual basic guideline would include Statistics, Anatomy & Physiology I and II, two English credits, Biology I and II, Microbiology, Human Growth & Development, Psychology, Sociology, Nutrition, and many other courses. After one completes their prerequisites, if they received very high grades on their courses, they must take a test called the TEAS test and pass. This test assesses the student's ability to think like a nurse along with their mathematics, english, and science skills. If one passes, they can apply to their college's nursing program, and wait for admission. If one does not get admitted, they must wait for the next admission period to retry. After admission, a nursing school student can either receive an Associate degree or a Bachelor's degree. My interviewee got her Bachelor's by attending nursing school for four years. The first two years include classroom work and exams as well as projects. These years provide you with most of the knowledge that you need to know to be a Registered Nurse. The last two years include the hardest portion of nursing school, the

Med-Surg studies in the classroom and exams, as well as clinical portions in rotations in hospitals. They also include practice in SIM labs as well as rotations in outpatient facilities. A nursing student is graded on their bedside manner, overall ability to perform the correct tasks, and their quick-thinking and assessment skills during these two years of clinical portions. Because the patients during these clinical portions are real people, it is difficult because the student cannot mess up without risking the patient's well-being. These last two years are known by many as the "weed-out" years, because many nursing school students fail and are removed from the program or drop out because of the intensity alone. After graduating nursing school with your Bachelor's degree, a nurse must take and pass the NCLEX test to become a certified Registered Nurse. Only after passing may the nurse begin working. My interviewee passed the NCLEX on her first try, a praiseworthy feat, and then furthered her education by earning a Master's degree in Nursing. There are definitely a handful of unique character qualities and personality traits required for this field of work. Important character qualities would be: honesty especially if a nurse made a mistake to own up to the mistake with a doctor or colleague, leadership especially because nurses are leaders amongst many other healthcare workers to give directions in the right manner, servanthood especially because nurses do some jobs that most people would squeal at and must be willing to do them, and professional ability especially because nurses must be professional at all times with their patients, colleagues, and family members. Key personality traits include: patience because patients are usually at their lowest most vulnerable state and can act out in many ways, so it is important for a nurse to be patient with them, even-tempered

because it can be easy for a nurse to get frustrated with a patient, family member, or doctor's orders, but they must remain calm and professional, loving because a nurse must love at all times with their actions and manner of caring for their patient because being genuine is something the patient can notice, diligent because nursing is one of the most rigorous jobs that takes a lot of energy and focus so a nurse must be ready to work hard always and never slack, and optimistic because when I asked many nurses what got them through their long shifts and difficult patients they told me that having a good attitude was what pushed them to keep on serving and keep on working hard. My strengths personally would be that I love to lead others and make executive decisions. Also, I love to serve others who are in need because I like to be a hero and be remembered. I love to be honest because it emulates Christ and because not many people are honest today, as well. Furthermore, I love to work hard because I believe hard work is what keeps the soul alive. I love to be optimistic because without optimism the world would know nothing but despair. Lastly I love to see others come back from the brink of a situation like an illness, because I myself did when I was in an accident last year. After I experienced recovering my strength I have a passion to see others recover like that too. My weaknesses personally would be that sometimes I have a short temper, it is hard for me to wait sometimes and be patient, and that I would probably have a hard time staying alert for all 12 hours of a shift.

(837 words)

Journal Entry 3

“As a Christian, how could you glorify God in this type of occupation? Are there specific opportunities to advance His kingdom? Would there be specific challenges to your faith?”

As a Christian and a Registered Nurse, there are many different ways that I could glorify God in my occupation. I could glorify God with my attitude with patients, family members, and coworkers. When others are speaking ill of someone, I could stand out and be mature and refrain from that type of degrading talk and even speak out about it. When family members are experiencing loss or suffering, I could aid them by using God's attitude and words of healing with them, and perhaps mention God Himself. The way to glorify God most in this occupation, however, seems to me to be to simply just do the job with all my heart and ability. To do a job such as nursing where you sacrifice long hours of your time to nurse some of the most crankiest and uncomfortable (with very good reason, of course) people back to their full health, is to do God's work by being His literal hands and heart because those sick people are God's children and every one that is nursed back to health is a child that Jesus would've nursed to health if He were right here right now. A specific opportunity to advance God's kingdom in this occupation would be to ask the most likely extremely nervous pre-op patients if I could pray with them for their safety during the surgery and successful recovery. This could strike a conversation where I could explain that God watches over all of us and takes care of us all and that God would certainly be there guiding their surgery. The same

could be done post-op when a patient is in the hospital recovering before discharge. I could pray with them as they rehabilitate. Another specific instance would be that I could praise God in front of them if they got good news back from labwork or a scan. Another specific opportunity could be if a patient is to be told bad news, I could try to ease their pain by telling them that God is in control or about God Himself. For hospice patients, I could ask them if they know the Lord or would like to know the Lord and perhaps help them get saved before they pass. There would definitely be specific challenges to my faith. For instance, in the Emergency Department or Pediatrics Department, which both see domestic abuse most often, I would be challenged in my morals and faith if treating a patient who had been abused by a family member. It would really anger me and challenge me not to speak out in wrong terms or to do something rash. I would be challenged in my faith in the same way also if a patient were to lash out at me in a hurtful way, because I would have to try to remain Christ-like and respond with love and professionalism. My faith would also be specifically challenged whenever one of my patients were to get diagnosed with a progressive terminal disease such as cancer, because I would be frustrated with the Lord probably about why the person had to get that prognosis and why good people have to die early and suffer. It would challenge me to remember His sovereignty and His inerrant will.

(543 words)

Journal Entry 4

“What is the starting salary for this kind of employment? What is the future salary potential? What other benefits does this job include (tangible or intangible)? What motivates employees to work here?”

I interviewed the Charge Nurse (head Registered Nurse) of one of the units at Suburban to gather the following information. The usual starting salary for a Registered Nurse most certainly depends on the employer, especially whether it be at a private doctor’s office or a hospital, and if at a hospital, whether it be at a specialized hospital for trauma or pediatrics or cancer, for example, or a general hospital. Second, the starting salary depends on the amount of education that the nurse has earned. A nurse with less education will likely receive less pay, and have a harder time landing a job. A nurse that chooses to work for a private practice will be likely to make less pay, starting off with a yearly salary of around \$62,000. A typical nurse with a Bachelor’s degree that works in a general hospital usually has a starting yearly salary of \$70,000. A nurse with a Bachelor’s degree working at a specialized hospital can receive a starting salary of \$75,000. The salary potential for a nurse working in a general hospital with a Bachelor’s degree can be up to \$96,000 over time. The salary potential for a nurse working in a specialized hospital with a Bachelor’s degree can be up to \$108,000. Nurses, however, can further their education by specializing in certain fields, which can increase their salary as well. For example, I would like to become a Certified Nurse Anesthetist, whose salary ranges from starting at \$180,000 to a potential of \$200,000 a year. This job

includes benefits of meeting all kinds of people that can influence you for the rest of your life, or people that perhaps can provide windows and connections for you later in life for your family or even your job opportunities. This job also provides the benefit of provided healthcare and insurance paid by the hospital. Also, this job provides flexible work schedules such as 3 days of 12-hour shifts that allow nurses to be off and at home doing as they please for the rest of the 4 days of their week. Also, this job provides the benefit of job security because people will always become ill and need assistance in the hospital no matter the state of the economy, therefore nurses will always be in demand. Employees are motivated to work here because of their colleagues, their patient satisfaction, and their flexible schedules. Employees said that they love working here because their coworkers are so friendly and do all their work always without slacking. They love the environment that the coworkers create and that Suburban Hospital encourages through their signs, decorations, and rules of conduct. They are motivated by the satisfaction that they receive when a patient is healed and discharged, and by the look of joy and health in their eyes when they are all better. They are also motivated by their flexible schedules because it allows them to be available for their kids if they are mothers or fathers, or to be there for their friends or spouse if they have one. They said that they loved to be able to work a solid three days and then be able to be work-free for a whole 4 and do whatever they want.

(547 words)

Journal Entry 5

“Summarize your internship experience. What did you learn about this type of work or about yourself? Would you like to pursue this kind of employment in the future? Why or why not? If you were working here, what unbiblical values and assumptions would you face? Would your Christian worldview be welcomed in this workplace?”

In summary, my internship experience was thrilling, eye-opening, affirming, joyful, rigorous, engaging, and one of the best things I have ever experienced. I learned that most of the things that I thought about nursing were true when I did this internship. However, I did see a side of nursing that I did not know of before, which was the comradery that the nurses had amongst each other, which really inspired me and made me excited to become a nurse. I also got to witness first hand the stress and high intensity of this work, which made me acknowledge that I would have to toughen up a lot to do this job and that I would have to be very smart. I learned a lot about myself during this internship. I experienced waves of affirmation which brought me great joy and a thankful heart. I learned that I truly have such a passion for medicine and nursing and for being in the hospital environment as well as the human body. Also, I learned that I am a lot more intuitive than I thought, because I remained alert at all times and I was asking way more questions than I thought I would have. I quickly got comfortable and felt at home which surprised me. I also jumped into the work environment and work flow with my professional speech and attitude almost immediately, which surprised me a little as well because most people told me that they could not believe that

I was in high school. That taught me that I am a professional person inside. I would most certainly pursue this career and am going to as soon as possible. I loved every portion of it, even the not-so-likeable parts were bearable and engaging. I felt mentally stimulated and challenged at all times and on edge. I loved the environment, atmosphere, people, job duties, schedule, salary, and everything else about the job. I can definitely feel God calling me to do this career in my future. If I were working at Suburban Hospital, some unbiblical values that I would face would be dealing with couples having children out of wedlock, dealing with patients with sexually transmitted diseases out of wedlock, having to work on Sabbath, hearing patients or family members using God's name in vain, and probably much more. However, I do not doubt at all that my Christian worldview would be welcomed in this workplace because most people in hard times such as patients in hospitals usually look to religion or a higher being in control to soothe their pain or explain it. I believe it would be welcomed by my colleagues as well because a lot of nurses are religious because a lot of religious people feel called to serve by nursing God's people back to health. Also, I met a lot of nurses that made Christian references to either songs or church or God, which made me feel comfortable. Also, Suburban Hospital has a Christian chaplain that makes rounds on the floors (and is available to patients upon request at any time) and everyone smiles and greets him with politeness.

(522 words)

Spiritual Application Page

“Select a verse or passage from the Bible and discuss an attitude or character trait that is necessary for your internship work experience.”

Colossians 3:23 says, “And whatever work you do, do it with all your heart. Do it for the Lord and not for men.” This verse is of utmost importance for a Registered Nurse and for my internship work experience. As a Registered Nurse, it is crucial that you are motivated to do your job by God instead of any man, because coworkers and supervisors are all human at the end of the day and can make mistakes and perhaps irritate you to the point where you might not want to work so hard that one day. If you acknowledge that it is God that you are serving, you will have an easier job not allowing humans to deter your work ethic, because God is who you are working for ultimately. Also, as a Registered Nurse it is important that you work at your job with all of your complete abilities, doing the quality of work that God would expect from you. This is because if you do not work that hard at your job and perhaps aren't as nice as you could be to your patient, or as efficient as you could be with that task, you aren't doing God's work to the proper measure that it deserves to be done since it is God's work. In nursing especially, it makes so much of a world of a difference if the nurse puts in 100% effort versus 90%. It can completely change a patient's experience and perhaps even affect their physical as well as spiritual life. You could be the reason someone gets saved. As an intern that recently completed her internship experience, this verse contains the traits of remembering that God is your master and that you must work with all your abilities.

This applies to my internship experience and was so crucial to remember during my internship experience, because there were times when I got tired or my attention might have wandered, and because I was an intern someone wasn't necessarily there every second to remind me of my duties because they had their own jobs to take care of. I had to remember that I wasn't serving them, I was serving God, who was watching me every step of the way and saw if I were to slack off or take an unnecessary break. It motivated me during my internship experience to stay on task, to stay alert, and to control my thoughts as well about patients or about a coworker, because I told myself, "God is watching you right now. God is listening to you right now. And you are doing His work, not some human master's. This is for God." It helped me hold myself to higher standards which, in the end, made me receive the most I could have out of my internship experience. Because I used that to keep myself in line, I was able to not miss a thing that went on and to walk away from the internship feeling educated. The other important character trait found in this verse that helped me in my internship experience was the trait of working with all my abilities. This also helped me stay on task and get the most out of my internship because I went the extra mile to do extra things for patients and ask extra questions whenever the nurses did a new task. Not only did I get the most out of my internship because I focused on how God wanted me to put all my effort into my duty, but I also felt like I touched a lot of people's hearts that I encountered along the way because of the way that I went above and beyond what was expected out of patient care. I took the time to talk to a couple patients and some frustrated family members and I feel like those connections made a really big difference

on them, which would not have happened had I not had my heart open to this verse's main points of working for God with every bit of your ability.

Thank You Verification Page

“I wrote and mailed a thank you note to my internship supervisor on this date:

December 1, 2016.”