Personal Statement: Master's in health informatics at George Mason University, VA

Growing up in a country where educational preferences were given to boys, my father went against the social norms and encouraged me to get higher education. With his guidance and my thirst for knowledge, I was accepted into a Midwifery BSc program. Growing up, I have experienced and seen firsthand the problem of women's health, and my life goal has been to work in the healthcare system to improve those crucial social problems. In the summer of 2019, when writing a paper on women's health, I read an article entitled "advancing women's health in Africa via a data-driven roadmap." In this fascinating paper, the author argued that by focusing on women’s health, it is possible to realize social and economic progress globally, and to accomplish it, robust data on women’s health and the ability to benchmark and track it over time on a global level is a prerequisite. This was when I started asking my husband, a data scientist by profession, about data and researching more on information science. It fascinated me that this multidisciplinary field includes hardware, database, network, and people.

While researching health informatics and its role in patient care, I have learned how it helps the healthcare sector by focusing on how information is acquired and stored, emphasizing technology and emerging healthcare technologies. The role of informatics is rapidly growing in the healthcare sector, and I am completely enthralled by how healthcare informatics is helping to provide adequate healthcare to patients. What interests me more in choosing healthcare informatics is the technical knowledge, structural approach, and advanced programming skills used for more scalable health. More importantly, the information technology infrastructure field helps us approach the future challenges of implementing health information technology.

My goal is to pursue my studies again in a field in which I want to give my best and with which I can build a career. Healthcare informatics is one field in which I can see myself working on exciting projects and having several opportunities to develop my skills to fulfill my purpose of improving women's health through a technology-driven approach. Since childhood, I have been one of the top students in middle and high school. In addition to my academic performance, I participated in various school competitions and cultural activities.

After I passed the national university entrance exam with an excellent grade, I got admitted to the BSc program. While attending the undergraduate program, I spent four weeks at the Kombolcha ITC center each summer, a program designed by a regional government for high achiever female students. At the center, I trained in the basics of computers and Information technology. Being introduced to computers and technology at the high school level has greatly impacted my life and helped me understand the foundational concepts of computer science and explore how computing and technology can impact the world around me.

After my undergraduate degree, I was offered a midwifery Nurse position at Dessie referral Hospital, Ethiopia. After working for two years, I moved here to the United States and got my associate degree in Nursing, and I am licensed as a Registered Nurse in D.C., MD, and V.A. Since the end of 2020, I have been working as a Nurse at MedStar Hospital Center, Washington, D.C. At Medstar, I work with multidisciplinary teams, including surgeons, physicians, specialists, assistants, and health technologists. As a Nurse, I can use my clinical skills to maintain accurate and detailed records and provide emotional support to patients and their families, implementing and assessing care plans and much more. In addition, I was introduced to different types of patient record data, health record management software, and another level of working culture, which is unique and rewarding and provides me another inertia to continue my studies in Health Informatics.

Given my academic background, work, and family support, I am convinced I should pursue my master's and put up something to understand a subject that has given me so much gratification. I believe I have the dedication and capacity to commit to a career after my master's.

I am self-assured that I have the motivation to make a relevant contribution to my chosen field.

Of this aspiration, I am applying to the health informatics MSc Program at George Mason university. I hold the basic proficiency and tenacity to sustain the motivation needed for the program. As I begin this stage of life, my step toward acquiring an education from your university will provide me with the best environment to achieve my goals.

Rabia Endris, RN