As part of the observation experience, Dr. Penne allowed me to observe the PT treatment of Emanuel with his first patient for the day. Upon heading outside, we observed her assistant Emanuel working with Patient #1 on her gait or manner of walking through a straight walking exercise from one end of the building to the other. Because the exercise location is in the storefront, the patient was not required to walk too far yet the involved distance indicates moderate progress on her PT treatment. The PT assistant had a timer in his hand and was tracking the time it took patient # 1 to walk from one side of the building to the other. The time would essentially indicate the struggle of the patient and establish the progressive result of her gait treatment. The PT assistant also regularly checked and reminded the patient to practice heel-toe walking, maintain straight orientation, and avoid limping on the affected leg during the duration of the exercise. As the patient finished all of the required laps in the exercise, the PT assistant reported back to the physical therapist, Dr. Penne regarding the performance of the patient and her progress. They then discussed the next exercise for Patient #1 after her break as part of the scheduled treatment procedure.

The next part of the treatment was focused on balancing skills. After giving clear instruction regarding the exercise, the assistant had the patient balance on a beam. Throughout the activity, the PT assistant maintained continuous communication with the patient and corrected her whenever she loses her balance hold onto the wall. The corrections were meant as mental and psychological support for the patient to ensure she maintains correct physical movement thus, improving her sense of balance. Afterwhich, the PT assistant moved the patient on a Dyna disk and had her perform calf or heel raises as part of the muscular strengthening aspect of their PT regime. Following this, the PT assistant had the patient perform step-up exercises on a small block by starting with specific instructions to begin with her left leg first and end with the same leg for 2 sets of 10 repetitions. After the second set, the PT assistant asked the patient to repeat the exercise by switching the primary leg. After the step-up, the patient did bi-lateral heel raises in a seated position for 2 sets of 10 repetitions. Throughout the exercise routine, the PT assistant constantly asked the patient if there are any discomfort, pain, or cramps on her legs yet the patient insisted she was fine thus accomplishing all of the involved exercises in the PT routine.

From this observation experience, I have come to understand the wide extent of services and treatment involved in the field of professional physical therapy. Likewise, I was able to appreciate the professional aspect of the physical therapy practice through observing the therapy session of the PT assistant with his patient in terms of conducting an observational assessment of the patient’s progress, comprehensive instruction regarding the involved activities, and ethical responsibilities of ensuring the comfort and welfare of the patient throughout the therapy session.