Documentation Guidelines for Mobility and/or Chronic Health Impairments

Baylor College of Medicine's goal is to ensure that all community members are given every opportunity to fully participate in the academic environment and do their best work. Therefore, Baylor College of Medicine is committed to providing access to needed services for individuals with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. To gain access to services and accommodation, individuals covered under these laws must provide documentation verifying the diagnosed disability by a qualified medical professional.

Because the provision of services and accommodation is based upon assessment of the current impact of the diagnosed disability on academic and clinical performance as well as access to educational activities, it is in a student’s best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation as soon as possible. Below are guidelines for the documentation required for student’s seeking services and accommodation related to mobility and/or chronic health impairments.

1. Qualifications of the Evaluator
   Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses of mobility and/or chronic health impairments must be qualified to make such diagnoses and recommendations for accommodations. Information indicating the professional’s name, title, professional credentials and licensure/specialization must be included in the documentation.

   Use of diagnostic terminology indicating a mobility and/or chronic health impairment by someone without training and experience in these fields is not acceptable. Additionally, diagnosis by a family member even when the family member is qualified by virtue of training, licensure and/or certification will not be accepted.

2. Current Documentation and Comprehensive & Diagnostic Evaluation
   In general, documentation submitted regarding mobility and/or chronic health impairments should be no more than three (3) years old. Accommodations are based on the assessment of the current impacts of the impairment on academic functioning therefore; documentation must address a student’s current level of functioning and the need for accommodation. If documentation does not address the student’s current level of functioning and the need for accommodation(s), additional information may be requested.

   Medical records, evaluations or reports should be based on a comprehensive diagnostic/clinical evaluation that must include:
   a. a clear statement on the medical diagnosis from a qualified medical provider,
   b. when the mobility and/or chronic health impairment began,
c. how long the medical provider has treated the student for the mobility and/or chronic health impairment,
d. whether the mobility and/or chronic health impairment is stable or progressive, temporary or permanent,
e. a description of present symptoms, which meet the criteria for diagnosis,
f. a description of the substantial limitation(s) to a major life activity present,
g. current prescribed medications with possible side effects and/or prescribed regimens,
h. degree and range of functioning for chronic or progressive impairments,
i. a list of any adaptive equipment currently being used

If the documented mobility and/or chronic health impairment has a related transportation/parking requirement, then the following information must be included:

a. maximum walking distance (in feet)
b. an indication of any difficulty negotiating stairs
c. whether or not the student could ride the campus shuttle
d. whether or not the student has a valid, state issued handicapped parking placard or plate

Other tests/measurements may be submitted in support of the evaluation/report.

3. Rationale for Recommended Accommodation(s)

The diagnostic report should include specific recommendations for accommodations that are reasonable, with the understanding that Baylor College of Medicine has the sole authority for determining what is reasonable. Therefore, a detailed explanation should be provided as to why each accommodation is recommended and should be correlated with specific functional limitations determined through interview, observation, and/or testing. Please be aware that the provision of a past accommodation in another setting does not ensure that the requested accommodation will be implemented at this time or at Baylor College of Medicine. However, providing information regarding a previous accommodation is useful and will be considered when evaluating current accommodation requests.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) governs the use and dispersal of student educational records containing personally identifiable information, including students with disabilities. The U.S. Department of Education has ruled that evaluative information pertaining to a student, including medical and psychological reports authored by third parties, constitute “educational records” governed by FERPA. University of North Alabama, 104 LRP 58746 (FPCO 2004). In general, information contained in such records may not be released absent the written consent of the student. Please be aware that there are a number of important exceptions that permit disclosure without such consent, including when a health and safety emergency exists or when disclosure to a “school official” is justified for educational reasons. See 34 C.F.R. §§99.31(a)(1) and (10).

Documentation and questions should be directed to the attention of the Student Disability Coordinator in the Office of Student Services.