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 willing to provide assistance to individuals with temporary impairments or health conditions. To gain access to assistance and/or accommodation, individuals must provide documentation verifying the diagnosed impairment or condition by a qualified medical professional.

Because the provision of assistance and/or accommodation is based upon assessment of the current impact of the diagnosed impairment or condition 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 temporary medical or health impairments including pregnancy.

1. **Qualifications of the Evaluator**
   Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses of temporary medical or 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 temporary medical/health impairment by someone without training and experience in the specific field of impairment 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, 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.

Examples of acceptable documentation are medical records, evaluations or reports that are based on a comprehensive diagnostic/clinical evaluation which include:

a. a clear statement on the medical diagnosis from a qualified medical provider,
b. when the medical/ health impairment began and estimated duration of the condition,
c. how long the medical provider has treated the student for the medical/health impairment,
d. whether the medical/health impairment is stable or progressive,
e. a description of present symptoms, which meet the criteria for diagnosis,
f. a description of the limitation(s) present,
g. current prescribed medications with possible side effects and/or prescribed regimens

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

Due to the potentially changing nature of the medical/health impairment, Baylor College of Medicine may require a student to provide periodic updated documentation in order to evaluate the need for adjustments to assistance or accommodations.

3. Rationale for Recommended Accommodation(s)
The medical records, evaluations or 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 limitation(s) stated. 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.