



eEDUCATE

An electronic brief for clinical faculty of The Commonwealth Medical College

Spring 2015

How to Describe Your Student:

- articulate
- assertive
- attentive
- compassionate
- conscientious
- cooperative
- curious
- dedicated
- dependable
- enthusiastic
- ethical
- flexible
- hands-on
- intellectual
- life-long learner
- mature
- motivated
- organized
- patient
- personable
- reliable
- resourceful
- responsible
- self-starter
- well-read
- willing

Faculty Development Meetings

South

May 12, 6 PM, The Woodlands

West

May 13th, 6 PM, DiSalvo's Restaurant

North

May 21st, 6 PM, TCMC

Effective Letters of Recommendation Are Key to Residency Success



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 Assistant Professor &
 Director of Admissions*

“Letters of recommendation are a critical component of a medical student’s portfolio when applying to residency programs. According to the Results of the 2014 NRPM Program Director Survey (2014), “Letters of Recommendation in the specialty were second in terms of importance for programs citing each factor and mean in importance rating for each factor in selecting applicants to interview” (p. 3). Realizing how important letters of recommendation are, if you cannot write an excellent one for a student who has requested it, please tell them so. Below you will find helpful information when crafting your letters of recommendation.”

Letter of Recommendation (LoR) Outline

Opening Paragraph:

Detail how you know the students and how long you worked with them as:

- Third-year preceptors
- Chairpersons
- Mentor during an away elective
- Faculty members

Paragraphs 2, 3 and 4:

Document strengths with evidence as it relates to medicine:

- Skills, passion, character
- Knowledge/Intellectual capacity
- Professionalism
- Potential in residency
- How they interact with patients
- How they interact with patients’ families

Final Paragraph:

- Summarize why you recommend the student

Helpful Hints:

- Include your contact information
- Limit to one page on letterhead
- Sign the letter, scan it, save it as a PDF to upload to ERAS

Sample LoR

Applicant: XXXXX AAMC ID#: XXXXX

Date: August 17, 2015

Dear Program Director:

XXXX has indicated that this letter be confidential and therefore waives his right to see it under the "Family Rights and Privacy Act."

It is a great pleasure for me to write this letter of strong support for XXXX. I have known him since his XX year of medical school. He is a thoughtful, dedicated, and hard-working student. I have worked with XXXX in his transition from a pre-clinical medical student to a third-year clinical clerk, and most recently I have worked with him on his Medicine Subinternship.

On the Medicine Subinternship, XXXX participated in the care of a man who presented to the hospital with drowsiness, lethargy, and a change in mental status. He clearly made the diagnosis of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and recommended that constipation from the patient's fentanyl patch was making his encephalopathy worse and recommended an alternate plan of care. He also had a close relationship with the patient and his wife which was evident on rounds. XXXX was able to make this connection even though the patient and his wife spoke Spanish. During chief rounds, XXXX always offered a recent article pertaining to the care of one of his patients. He did this, however, in a non-assuming and non-threatening manner and facilitated the learning of both students and house-staff.

During a conversation with a member of the faculty, XXXX's third-year internal medicine preceptor commented that XXXXX had an enormous fund of medical knowledge and was the most intelligent medical student with whom he had worked over the last 25 years. He quickly followed this with the statement that XXXXX has an excellent rapport with patients and staff and works to truly understand the patient's experience of illness. Since we train students in a Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship in which students remain with one primary clinical preceptor throughout the third year in both the inpatient and outpatient setting, this is based on one-year of observation, and is high praise. XXXX received Honors for his third-year Internal Medicine core clerkship. As mentioned above, I have worked with XXXX during his inpatient subinternship in Medicine, and I agree with this evaluation completely.

As you look through XXXX's application, you will note that he has many interests and talents. He is fluent in XXXXX. In addition, his service to our community is evident in his work with the Leahy Clinic at the University of Scranton. The Leahy Clinic is a free clinic that serves the people of the City of Scranton. XXXX has been involved with both clinical and bench research. Even more impressive is his dedication to learning. During our "Masterclass" series in Internal Medicine, XXXX would routinely quote the medical literature appropriate to the patient case we were discussing, and routinely took on the role of teaching his fellow students. I remain impressed with his fund of knowledge and his ability to share this with his colleagues. It has been a pleasure to work with XXXX.

I would also like to comment on the fact that XXXX is a member of our charter class. This is an added credential for him. The Commonwealth Medical College is one of the "new" medical schools in the United States. All students participate in a Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship in the six core disciplines of Medicine, Surgery, Family Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, and Psychiatry simultaneously over one year. XXXX has shown the maturity, dedication, and self-determination to not only complete this curriculum, but to excel in it.

I give XXXX my highest recommendation. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any further assistance. Sincerely,

Your Name
TCMC Title