

8 April 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR Class of 2016

SUBJECT: Letters of Recommendation from the Department of Medicine

To support you in your applications for internship and/or residency, the Department of Medicine is available to write letters of recommendation. This memorandum will provide you with information on our Departmental policy for these letters, and we hope you will read it carefully. (It will also be available on: <http://www.usuhs.mil/med/pdf/MedicineDepartmentLORLettertoStudents.pdf>.)

Departmental letters of recommendation are based on your performance in the Clerkship and on evaluations from final year rotations in Medicine that we have at the time we write the letter. These letters give residency program directors an overall assessment of your progress toward independence shown in our rotations; grades are explained in terms of our departmental grading profile, and are supplemented with remarks about a student as an individual.

Faculty members from the Division of Educational Programs write departmental letters. Departmental letters are reviewed and also signed by Louis N. Pangaro, Professor of Medicine, Chairman, Department of Medicine. Students applying to Internal Medicine programs should speak with the faculty member writing the letter (see below).

If you are applying for an Internal Medicine residency training program, a departmental letter is strongly recommended. (Additionally, personal letters of recommendation, from faculty you have had as an attending or preceptor, may be useful. Letters from house staff are usually not helpful outside their own hospital).

If you are applying to residency programs other than Internal Medicine, we would also be happy to provide a departmental letter. Those on the list below may write a departmental letter. Alternatively, you may ask any individual faculty member with whom you have worked for a personal letter of recommendation.

Whom Should You Contact for the Departmental LOR:

If you have worked personally with any one of the individuals below from our division (e.g. as an attending or preceptor) you may ask that person to write your departmental letter, even if not in your own branch of service. Otherwise, the following individuals will be writing departmental letters of recommendation this year.

Army - Medicine, Transitional, Other:	Brian Hemann, LTC, MC, USA	301-319- 3480	Brian.hemann@usuhs.edu
	William Kelly, COL, MC, USA	240-753- 5689	William.kelly@usuhs.edu
Navy - Medicine, Transitional, Other:	Todd Gleeson, CDR, MC, USN	410-404- 9206	Todd.Gleeson@usuhs.edu
	Paul Hemmer, MD, MPH Col (ret), USAF, MC	301-295- 9411	paul.hemmer@usuhs.edu
Air Force- Medicine, Transitional, Other*:	Paul Hemmer, MD, MPH Col (ret), USAF, MC	301-295- 9411	paul.hemmer@usuhs.edu
	Dr. Steven Durning, MD, PhD	301-295- 3603	steven.durning@usuhs.edu
	Jeffrey LaRochelle, Lt Col (sel), USAF, MC	301-295- 0187/9922	jeffrey.la-rochelle@usuhs.edu

* Air Force students may wish to have a letter from Dr. Rechell Rodriguez, Lt Col, USAF, MC (rechell.g.rodriguez.mil@mail.mil) or Dr. Benjamin Morrow, Maj, USAF, MC (benjamin.d.morrow4.mil@mail.mil) at SAMMC. If so, they should email Dr. Rodriguez or Dr. Morrow a brief statement regarding the type of training desired. An in-person interview is not required. If you wish to discuss your letter or have questions about Air Force Programs, please provide a phone number where you can be reached.

Timing of the LORs, Interviews, and Information Requested:

Letters of recommendation to program directors are usually written during August and September. Although a face to face interview with the person writing a departmental letter is not mandatory, it is strongly recommended in order to make the letter as personal and useful as possible. If a face to face interview is not possible due to your rotation schedule, a telephone interview and discussion should be arranged. During the interview, we will discuss the timing of the letter as well as your plans for visiting prospective internship sites. As such, we ask that you provide us with a list of your planned rotations for your final year, a curriculum vitae, or any other information you think will help us write an effective letter for you.

Who Receives the LOR?

We will send one copy of the letter of recommendation to the Office for Student Affairs for inclusion in your residency application file. We do not provide copies of letters directly to you or to the Registrar. If you are applying for a civilian residency program (e.g., USPHS students, or those who will be training in a specialty likely to be deferred or sponsored), please let us know; if any part of the application process is not part of ERAS, please note that we will send a maximum of ten letters of recommendation.

Other Questions?

If you are not certain how strong a letter the Department of Medicine can write for you, we will discuss this frankly with you during your interview and you can decide whether you wish us to write. Students who have any questions regarding their clerkship grades should contact Dr. Kelly, william.kelly@usuhs.edu.

We recognize the strong effort you made on our rotations, and we have worked hard to get to know you, and to evaluate you with fairness and consistency. If you feel a letter from the Department of Medicine can help you in your application process, we would be very happy to offer our support.

Paul A. Hemmer, MD, MPH
Col (ret), USAF, MC
Professor of Medicine
Vice-Chairman for Educational Programs
Department of Medicine