

Dear members of the Penn State College of Medicine Class of 2018,

Congratulations and welcome! We are looking forward to your arrival and wanted to give you some information about the Foundations of Patient Centered Care (FPCC) course which you will attend in both the Fall and Spring semesters. You will receive additional and more specific information at the beginning of the course.

One component of this course is to teach you physical examination skills. Certain equipment items are essential for you to successfully practice and acquire these skills, including a stethoscope, a diagnostic kit (with ophthalmoscope and otoscope), a reflex hammer, tuning fork and Electrocardiogram calipers. The following information is guidance from the physicians who will oversee the different components of the course. You are not required to purchase any specific brand or model of the equipment, but we thought this guidance would be helpful. **Note: You will need your stethoscope by July 21, 2014 for the Profession of Medicine (POM) course. You will need your diagnostic kit by November 10, 2014.**

**For the diagnostic kit:**

The recommended brand is Welch-Allyn because of its long history of high-quality equipment. Although the 2.5 V instruments (“Pocket scopes”) are more compact to carry around, the ophthalmoscope in this set is felt to be more difficult to use and this set is not recommended. A traditional 3.5V diagnostic set with a coaxial ophthalmoscope would be better. These sets come with a power handle that either contains a rechargeable lithium-ion battery or a traditional rechargeable nickel cadmium battery. The ophthalmoscope and otoscope heads are interchangeable. The Welch Allyn 97200-MC (approximately \$495) is the set recommended by Dr. Cantore. He also indicated that the 97200-MS is more expensive, but very nice, much smaller and has a lighter handle. More information may be found at <http://www.steeles.com>.

**For the stethoscope, Dr Zelis has provided the following information:**

1. Make sure there are 2 heads, a real bell and a diaphragm. A single head tunable diaphragm is difficult to use for a beginner. If one of the two heads has a tunable diaphragm, it is fine but an expensive luxury. (Don't worry if someone gave you a gift of a \$200 Littmann Master Cardiology single head stethoscope. You can learn to use it!)
2. Make sure there are multiple earpieces including a variety of soft ones. The ear pieces must fit snugly and be comfortable. If possible try it on.
3. The length should not be too short (18"). The beginner is uncomfortably close to the patient. I think 24-26" has reasonable acoustics and is easy to manage. 27-28" is a bit long if you have short arms. Try it on to decide.

4. You can get the best acoustics with a double tube model but it is not necessary for the beginning student up to resident. At that point you can decide if you need the extra acoustics quality, and want to pay for it. The majority do not. If you decide on a double tube model, get a model with both tubes enclosed in one sheath so it looks like a single tube. Two separate tubes bang together and create unwanted noise unless you are very careful.

5. You can get a high quality stethoscope for under \$100 (e.g. Littmann Classic II S. E. with two separate heads), and a starter reasonable one for about \$20-\$30 (on the internet). For example, the Allheart Cardiology Stethoscope is a dual head (non-tunable diaphragm) for approximately \$25. If you want to get a superior stethoscope with two tunable heads, dual enclosed tubes, which is available in 22" and 26", you can look at the Littmann Cardiology III for about \$135.

**For the reflex hammer and tuning fork, Dr Kothari has made the following recommendation:**

The students should choose the Tromner hammer and a 128 Hertz tuning fork, as these are the best for learning the neurological examination components.

**Reference Materials:**

In addition, the other resources for this course are listed below. These resources are recommended, but not required. Throughout the course, we will provide you with reading materials and the syllabus will have information for several websites as resources.

**Seidel's Guide to the Physical Examination 8<sup>th</sup> edition. Seidel**

(There is a choice of a hardcover or electronic version of this text available).

**The Medical Interview: Mastering Skills for Clinical Practice, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Coulehan and Block**

We hope this information is helpful to you as you prepare for your arrival at the College of Medicine. We look forward to meeting you and to a successful year.

Sincerely,

Lisa Sherwood, MD  
Director, Foundations of Patient Centered Care