July 16, 2010

All Residents:  

Re: Letters of Recommendation

Your program director will write a letter of reference or evaluation and I am not referring to that here. A letter of reference is balanced while a letter of recommendation is always positive.

During your professional career, you will be asked to provide letters of recommendation. Perhaps the next time will be when you seek your first job position or a fellowship training opportunity.

Many physicians do not have experience at writing letters of recommendation and they will appreciate some guidance which you may provide them, giving them suggestions from your training program.

Try to select physicians who have worked closely with you and know you professionally. I suggest then asking if they are comfortable writing a letter of recommendation. They should say ‘no’ if they do not know you well enough. You should indicate whether the letter of recommendation is one you would like to review (have mailed to you) or whether it is a letter where you are waiving the right to review the letter which case the author will mail it directly to the addresses you provide.

Attached are two documents you can give to potential authors. The first is a general guideline for a letter of recommendation. The second document is an example of a letter of recommendation for a fellowship position.

Good luck!

Sincerely,

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