

Documentation Guidelines for Chronic Health Disabilities

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a "qualified individual with a disability is one who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provisions of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or participation in programs or activities provided by a public entity". A person with a disability is anyone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of such major like activities as walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, caring for self, performing manual tasks, working or learning. Chronic health impairments (such as, but not limited to, AIDS, arthritis, Crohn's disease, cystic fibrosis, fibromyalgia, heart disease, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, respiratory conditions) are considered disabilities under the ADA if a major life activity is substantially limited.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaboration with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation from family members, immediate or otherwise, is not acceptable. Recommended documentation includes:

1. Diagnosis (clear statement of the medical diagnosis of the condition);
2. Date of the original diagnosis;
3. Date of the most recent evaluation (usually within a year, the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, current status, and the student's request for accommodations);
4. Diagnostic criteria/assessment procedures used to make the diagnosis;
5. Description of the present symptoms;
6. Description of current impact of the condition (including impact of medication);
7. Treatments/medications/devices or services currently prescribed;
8. Expected duration, stability, or progression of the condition;
9. Functional impact or limitation of the disability on learning or other major life activity;
10. Medical information with signature of appropriate physician on letterhead stationary.

Students requesting housing modification based upon a chronic health disability must contact the Director of Disability Support Services for an application to be completed by the student and a physician completed form entitled "Special Needs Housing Request".

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if coexisting learning disabilities or other disabling conditions exist. Documentation may be submitted to the Student Disability Services in person, by fax (989-774-1326) or by mail: Student Disability Services, CMU, 120 Park Library, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858