

December 2, 2014

Re: Letter of Recommendation for Jake Wiersema

To whom it may concern:

It is my pleasure to recommend Mr. Jake Wiersema from DePaul University as a candidate for medical school. Since summer 2014, Jake has been working with me as a Research Assistant for a study examining the quality of hospital care at the University of Chicago Medical Center. During his time here I have been consistently impressed with his dedication, ability and hard work.

The research project, The Hospital Medicine Program, in which he has worked has three specific aims: (1) to assess whether hospitalists (doctors who dedicate at least 25% of their practice to inpatient care) affect the cost and quality of inpatient care, (2) to assess the mechanisms by which hospitalists may affect the cost and quality of care, and (3) to assess the effects of hospitalists on housestaff and medical student education and satisfaction.

His initial responsibilities included performing telephone interviews with patients after their discharge from the hospital and abstracting data from their medical records. After demonstrating that he had acquired these skills, he advanced to the more challenging role of interviewing patients in person. Interviewing patients during their hospitalization is central to our research because it is the time when we seek consent for patients to participate in the study and patients can be reluctant to participate in a voluntary interview and permit researchers to review their medical records unless they have full confidence in the research team. We therefore allow only our best staff to perform this role, and require consistent attendance to retain this responsibility. Jake performed admirably in this particular task. His polite and persuasive demeanor allowed him to create genuine connections with patients and engender a willingness to participate in the research process.

He distinguished himself on my team as an exceptionally dedicated research assistant. Jake proved himself to be one of the best research assistants so my team entrusted him with the task of training other research assistants to interview patients in person. His consistent and reliable performance was an excellent example for other research assistants, and he deserves much credit for the current success of his trainees.

Throughout all his work on our research studies Jake has been an exceptionally valuable member of our research team. In the time he has been here, he has become independent in his routine activities and excelled in the special projects we have assigned to him. He is attentive to the complicated process of our data collection and is quick to ask questions so that he can better understand our research process. Jake has demonstrated interest in other aspects of the project outside of typical research assistant duties; his curiosity has allowed him to take on more roles and expand his duties to include medical record abstraction, a responsibility given to less than 10% of our RAs. All members of my team have been consistently impressed with his ability to take on multiple responsibilities. It was a pleasure to work with him, as it is evident that he shared our concern with the success and integrity of the project.