



**DATE:** January 26, 2026

**TO:** Physician Assistant Class of 2028

**SUBJECT: IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING THE DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL EQUIPMENT  
REQUIRED FOR ALL INCOMING PA STUDENTS**

Welcome to PA school! As the beginning of the 2026-27 academic year approaches, it is time to plan the purchase of the medical equipment that you will use during the Physical Diagnosis course and throughout your medical career. The following pages describe the **required medical equipment** for all incoming physician assistant students. These are pieces of equipment that you will use regularly in class, in clinic, and in individual practice in order to master your physical examination skills.

If you receive financial aid, your packet will include the money necessary to cover the expense of this purchase and payment can be delayed until your first financial aid disbursement is received if ordering through The Medical Store (please see accompanying *The Medical Store Instructions 2026* flyer). Additionally, the program has a limited number of used diagnostic kits available for students to borrow for the first (didactic) year only. If you are interested in borrowing a diagnostic kit from the program please contact Claire Hull, course director for the Physical Diagnosis course at [hulc@ohsu.edu](mailto:hulc@ohsu.edu).

**Any equipment you already own must be this level of quality or better.**

There are many resources for purchasing medical equipment. Here are a few to consider:

- The PA Program has partnered with The Medical Store for incoming students who would like the option to purchase quality equipment from an organization that also provides a student warranty and discounted pricing. Included with this memo is information on how to order your equipment through this vendor if this is the option you choose. Please refer to the attached flyer and order form for specific information if you wish to place your medical equipment order through this organization. Instructions for postponing payment until the first financial aid disbursements are included on the order form.
- If you prefer, you can purchase the required equipment directly from the manufacturer, or authorized dealers such as Steeles, Amazon, or other medical equipment suppliers. Some sources may offer discounts for students, so we recommend that you compare prices prior to any purchase.
- You may consider purchasing used equipment from former students, eBay, craigslist, etc. While the cost savings are appealing, be sure the equipment is in good operating condition and is new enough to satisfy the quality requirements. Most equipment gets more sophisticated every year, so some hand-me-down equipment may not be sufficient, especially if it is more than a few years old.

**We recommend purchasing the equipment in late May – early June to allow time for shipping in order to have it on hand when we begin the Physical Diagnosis course – the lab begins the first week of class. Orders placed through the Medical Store must be submitted by May 29 and will be distributed the first week of school.**

The faculty and staff are looking forward to the start of a full and exciting year and the opportunity to get to know each member of the Class of 2028. In the meantime, begin locating your medical equipment and enjoy the rest of your spring!

## **REQUIRED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT**

**The major components of your personal medical equipment set include a diagnostic set, a stethoscope, and a blood pressure cuff. A few additional pieces are also required (such as tuning forks and reflex hammers) to complete the purchase. Please review the information below, then determine whether you wish to purchase equipment on your own or order through the Program's vendor.**

**DIAGNOSTIC SET:** The diagnostic set is the most expensive item you will purchase as it includes an ophthalmoscope, an otoscope, a rechargeable battery, and a hard case for protection. Welch-Allyn is the standard of the industry in the United States and has an excellent warranty program.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Purchase the **regular-sized** unit - the pocket penlight version does not have the same optics, is inadequate for your needs.

**CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS for the DIAGNOSTIC SET (full product descriptions on the last page):**

**Welch-Allyn 71-SS2CXX – 3.5V Student Economy Set** - this standard set has a rechargeable NiCad battery for up to 180 minutes of use and a handle that can convert to C-cell batteries for portability and use in settings where there is limited access to electricity. This basic set is perfectly adequate for your needs as a student and a clinician.

OR

**Welch-Allyn 71-SM2CXX – 3.5V Classic Set** - this set has a rechargeable NiCad battery for up to 180 minutes of use and a handle that can convert to C-cell batteries for portability and use in settings where there is limited access to electricity. It also has an LED otoscope head for a brighter view.

OR

**Welch-Allyn 71-SM2LXU – 3.5V Smart Set** – this set has the LED otoscope, a rechargeable Lithium Ion battery with 360 minutes of use and a mini-USB charger.

OR

**Welch-Allyn 71-PM2LXU – 3.5V PanOptic Smart Set** - this set has a rechargeable Lithium Ion battery with 360 minutes of use and a mini-USB charger. In addition, it has the LED otoscope and a small PanOptic ophthalmoscope head. Those with visual limitations may wish to consider this option as it provides a larger view of the inner eye. The ophthalmoscope head on this unit is different than what is found in medical offices.

**If the diagnostic set does not include an insufflator bulb, please purchase the following attachment for your otoscope: Insufflator Bulb Welch-Allyn 21504**

**STETHOSCOPE:** These instruments vary widely in quality. A stethoscope is a personal item and is often chosen for how comfortable it feels while it is worn. In addition to comfort, you must also consider the quality of the sound you can hear. Therefore, it must have a **diaphragm AND bell** (either separately or combined in a “tunable” diaphragm) and should have double tubing (within a single tube) to enable you to discriminate between subtle sounds. While there are more expensive stethoscopes than the ones we have listed, these will provide excellent auscultatory acoustics.

**3M Littman - Cardiology IV Diagnostic Stethoscope**

OR

**Welch Allyn - Harvey Elite Stethoscope**

OR

a stethoscope of equal or better quality

Anyone who might have limitations in their hearing may wish to consider investing in an Electronic Stethoscope such as Littman model 3100 or 3200.

You may already have a stethoscope that has served you well in other settings. Keep in mind that you are now stepping into a provider role in which you will need to be able to identify subtle sounds that might be difficult to hear on a standard scope of lesser quality. Purchasing a high-quality scope can aid in your diagnostic skills.

**SPHYGMOMANOMETER:** A regular adult-sized, non-latex, **aneroid cuff** is required. An aneroid sphygmomanometer is a **manual** blood pressure cuff that consists of a cuff, gauge, and bulb. You can find relatively inexpensive ones like this one on [Amazon](#) or [this one](#) ~ or you stick with [Welch-Ally DS44 model](#).

If you already have a cuff you’d like to use, that is perfectly acceptable. Just be sure it is correctly calibrated – if it is, it will be fine for our purposes. Finger cuffs, wrist cuffs, home blood pressure monitors, cuffs that attach to your phone – are not acceptable alternatives to the standard non-latex blood pressure cuff.

**ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT:** In addition to the diagnostic set, stethoscope and blood pressure cuff, there are some smaller items used routinely that must be included in your medical kit.

**Tuning Forks:** You need two different tuning forks to assess hearing acuity and vibratory sensation.

(1) [128 Hz](#)

(1) [512 Hz](#)

**Percussion Hammer:** Several styles **are available**. The most common design is the [triangular style](#) (sometimes called the tomahawk or Taylor hammer). The [neurological style](#) is acceptable as long as the sensory testing pin is discarded for safety against blood-borne pathogens. The [queen square](#) reflex hammer is also acceptable.

**Penlight:** Purchase inexpensive penlights in quantity or consider one with replaceable batteries.

**DO NOT** purchase a penlight with a halogen bulb as they are too bright to use in the eye.

**Rosenbaum Pocket Eye Chart:** These are pocket-sized, laminated charts to assess near visual acuity. **DO NOT** purchase a pocket-sized Snellen chart – Snellen charts are used to assess distance vision, which is not as useful at the bedside. (*Rosenbaum included with the purchase of diagnostic set through our vendor.*) Rosenbaum chart through [Amazon](#).

**Antibacterial Hand Gel:** a small bottle to keep with your medical equipment to ensure you can wash your hands in any circumstance.

**Please obtain the above items no later than June 26th to assure readiness to begin the Physical Diagnosis course the first week of class.** Orders placed through program vendor, The Medical Store, will be shipped directly to the PA Program and distributed the first week of school.

#### **OTHER ITEMS YOU WILL NEED AS A PA STUDENT:**

**White Coats** – There is **no need** to purchase a white coat prior to entering. The Program will provide you with two (2) short (hip-length), long sleeved, blazer style white jackets embroidered with the OHSU school logo. These are worn at all clinical experiences while you are a student at OHSU. During the first two weeks of school, the program will provide sample sizes for you to try on. The program will place a single order for white coats for all first-year students; the coats will be distributed prior to the beginning of fall term. The two coats you are issued are intended to last you through graduation.

**Scrubs (any color except for light blue)** – the summer FOCA (Foundations of Clinical Anatomy) will include opportunities for students to participate in the cadaver lab.. To prepare for these future experiences, students will need to obtain a set of scrubs. You may decide to purchase the scrubs now or wait until summer. Scrubs can be purchased at various locations including:

- ScrubMed <https://www.scrubmed.com/>)
- The Medical Store order form
- Target, Amazon, etc.

**An inexpensive set, or a used set, is just fine.**

**PLEASE NOTE: Light blue scrubs are only allowed in OHSU surgical settings for patient safety reasons. Make sure your anatomy scrubs are a different color. If your old scrubs are light blue you will need to obtain a set in a different color.**