



## Medical Patient Encounter Application

### Overview:

The MPE project is a PDA-based patient encounter tracking system used to collect information about the patients you see. Third-year Medical students are required to record a certain number of first-hand patient encounter experiences. Clerkship Directors are required to review students' encounters to ensure that students are receiving an appropriate mix of experiences. The data collection software consists of a patient log for recording simple demographic and diagnostic information about each patient seen during the clerkship.

You will find help in using the MPE system at the following URL:  
<http://library.cpmc.columbia.edu/cait/mpehelp.html>

### Objectives:

- Timely tracking of patient encounters by clerkship
- Complete analysis of students' experiences by clerkship to allow mid-clerkship corrections to improve experiences
- Assure that students in our diverse settings are having experiences that meet Columbia's standards

### Recommended PDA:

All third year medical students are required to own PDAs. Up to \$350 may be included in your financial aid package for the purchase of a PDA. If you will be purchasing a new PDA we recommend the following specifications and models:

#### Recommended

Operating System = Palm OS 5.x  
RAM = 32MB internal  
Resolution = 320 x 320  
Removable storage = 256MB card  
Model: [Palm Tungsten E](#)  
Approximate cost with card: \$200

#### Highly Recommended:

Operating System = Palm OS 5.x  
RAM = 256MB internal  
Resolution = 320 x 480  
OFFICE MOBILITY (Documents-to-Go)  
Model: [Palm Tungsten T5](#)  
Approximate cost: \$400

Operating System = Palm OS 5.2.1  
RAM = 64MB internal  
Resolution = 320 x 320  
OFFICE MOBILITY (Documents-to-Go)  
Model: [Palm Tungsten C](#)  
Approximate cost: \$400

## The Differences:

The Tungsten E has a square screen, while the T5 has a larger rectangular screen. The T5 has more internal memory, and can be used like a "memory stick" to transfer files between computers.

### Notes:

Wireless (WiFi, Bluetooth, cellular) is not required with either configuration and currently not supported on the campus network. If buying a new Palm brand device, we suggest that you consider purchasing the [PalmOne Care](#) (\$50) which extends the warranty 12 months, provides for one free broken screen replacement, and gives toll free phone support.

*If you already own or will be purchasing a PDA model outside of the recommended devices, please be sure that it meets the following requirements:*

#### ***Palm OS***

- *Operating System = Palm OS 4.x or higher*
- *RAM = 32MB internal*
- *Resolution = 160 x 160*
- *Removable storage = 64MB card*

#### ***PocketPC***

- *Operating System = PocketPC 2000 or higher*

## **Palm OS vs. Pocket PC**

Handheld devices come in two types of operating systems, Palm OS and Windows CE (Pocket PC). While Palm OS PDAs are recommended for their lower cost, broad variety of software, and better reliability, students can use Pocket PC PDAs if they choose to do so. Generally the Pocket PCs cost \$25-\$50 more for the same features and do not offer any significant advantages over the Palm PDAs. Much more medical software is available for Palm than Pocket PC. The comparative difference is the operating system (Palm OS vs. Window CE). If you are more familiar with the Windows interface and interested in the multimedia features, then a Pocket PC PDA might appeal to you. Otherwise, we suggest the Palm PDA. Pocket PC is strongly not recommend for users that own Apple computers. If you prefer to buy a Pocket PC, however, we would suggest you consider the following models.

**For more information:** <http://www.pcworld.com/howto/article/0,aid,111825,00.asp>

### **Recommended PocketPC**

[HP iPAQ rz1720](#)

256 MB memory card

Approximate cost with card: \$250

### **Deluxe**

[HP iPAQ hx2110](#)

256 MB memory card

Approximate cost with card: \$349

**The Differences:** The "deluxe" model has a faster processor and bluetooth, (Bluetooth is a short range networking not commonly used), but the less expensive "recommended" model is actually smaller and lighter, and we think a better value.

### **SmartPhones- PDA:**

There are several companies offering devices that include cell phone, PDA, digital camera, and MP3 player rolled into one. The big advantage is that you can check you email, browse the web, instant message, or use it as a phone and PDA. The additional functionality of these devices does increase the cost of your cell phone plan.

You don't need this type of device for medical school, but you might find it convenient to have one device instead of two or three. If you are interested in this option, we recommend you consider the Treo SmartPhones 600 or 650 from Palm. They can be purchased either from Palm or Sprint and cost from \$300-\$500, plus the cost of a 256 MB memory card (\$30) and your monthly calling/data plan. For details see [PalmOne](#) or [Sprint](#).

**PalmOne:** <http://www.palmone.com/us/products/smartphones/>

*Sprint offers Columbia University Students a 5% discount plus free features and accessories*

**Sprint:** <http://www.pcsorders.com/columbiastudents/index.php?p=home>

### **Other Uses for PDAs:**

There is a rich collection of PDA medical resources available online, including databases of drug information, disease information, manuals, and medical dictionaries. Some of these resources are free and a few (including ePocrates and MICROMEDEX) are made available to students via the Health Sciences Library.

<http://library.cpmc.columbia.edu/hsl/sq/sqdisplay.cfm?subid=20>