

MEDICAL ASSISTING (CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION)

Overview

(65 credits)

Program Description

Are you interested in a career in health care, but are not sure where to begin? Medical assistants play a unique role, combining clinical training with administrative skills to work in the office, exam room, and medical lab. They work closely with patients and medical staff to provide excellent service and ensure a patient's stay is as comfortable and beneficial as possible. Medical assistants are able to start working in the health care field with a shorter amount of formal training compared to a 4-year degree or medical school.

The Medical Assisting Program provides the administrative and clinical knowledge and skills necessary for employment as a Medical Assistant. This includes cognitive, psychomotor and affective skills essential for assisting physicians and other healthcare practitioners with many aspects of medical practice, including administrative and clinical procedures. Examples of administrative procedures taught in the program include: Electronic Medical Records (EMR) simulation; Medical insurance billing and referrals; diagnostic and procedural coding; daily financial practices; medical records and appointment management. Examples of clinical procedures explored in the program include direct patient care such as: obtaining patient vital signs; entering patient data into EMR's; assisting with physical examinations, phlebotomy (blood draw), administering injections, performing electrocardiograms (EKG's); instrument processing and assisting in sterile procedures.

Career Opportunities

Graduates may be hired in a variety of settings to perform routine administrative and clinical tasks to keep healthcare delivery running smoothly. The duties of Medical Assistants vary from office to office, depending on office location, size, and specialty. In small practices, Medical Assistants are usually generalists, handling both administrative and clinical duties and reporting directly to an office manager, physician, or other health practitioner. Those in large practices tend to specialize in a particular area under the supervision of department administrators. An experienced Medical Assistant might advance to office administrator or clinical lead Medical Assistant. According to the Bureau of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook, Medical Assistant Job Outlook through 2029 projects a 19% growth rate, which is much faster than the average of 4% for other occupations.

Other Options:

- Medical Secretary
- Medical Administrative Assistant

Program Accreditation

The SPSCC Medical Assisting Certificate Program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), 9355-113th St. N. #7709 Seminole, FL 33775, <http://www.caahep.org/>, on recommendation of the Medical Assisting Education Review Board (MAERB), <http://maerb.org>.

CAAHEP requires all Medical Assisting Programs to make public measurable program outcomes. These outcomes are from the **2024 Annual Report Form** for the 5-year average for years 2019-2023:

- Exam Passage Rate: 95%
- Retention Percentage: 74.79%
- Employer Satisfaction 2023: 100%
- Graduate Satisfaction 2023: 100%

Outcomes

South Puget Sound Community College believes that all students need to develop a broad range of abilities that will not only make them more effective in their professional pursuits but will enhance their capacity to relate well to others in their daily lives.

- Evaluate self-improvement while mastering clinical and administrative skills
- Adjust communications techniques to interact effectively with colleagues and patients who have diverse backgrounds, expectations, and needs
- Incorporate legal, ethical and professional considerations into delivery of healthcare
- To prepare medical assistants who are competent in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains to enter the profession

The SPSCC college-wide abilities are embedded into each program:

- Effective Communication
- Information Literacy
- Analytical Reasoning
- Multicultural Awareness
- Social Responsibility

Requirements

Program Admissions and Other Requirements

Program Entrance Requirements:

- Complete all SPSCC admission requirements
- Successfully complete all pre-requisites prior to start of MED program courses, with a C or better
- Interview with medical assisting faculty one to two quarters prior to enrolling in MED 150 in fall quarter.

Additional Program Requirements:

- Must be 18-years of age or older, to meet the criteria for clinical externship placement
- Successful completion of a high school diploma or equivalent as part of the WA Department of Health certification application process
- Proof of up-to-date immunization record and/or immunity test to meet program and clinical site requirements
- Proof of current AHA Basic Life Support (BLS) certification for healthcare professionals, offered spring quarter

- Clearance of a National criminal, WA State Patrol, and US Sex Offender background check
- A grade of C or better required in all classes to advance to the next quarter
- Successfully complete a supervised and meaningful unpaid practicum of 198 contact hours in a healthcare setting

Certification

The South Puget Sound Community College Medical Assisting Certificate program is accredited by the [Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs](http://www.caahep.org/) (CAAHEP) upon the recommendation of Medical Assisting Education Review Board (MAERB).

Successful completion of the Medical Assisting program student is eligible to take the national CMA (AAMA) Certification Exam. Upon passing the exam, they will earn the Certified Medical Assistant (CMA, AAMA) credential, which is recognized nationally. The SPSCC MA certificate and degree are aligned with the Washington state RCW 18.360.060 authorized duties of a medical assistant.

Health and Safety

Prior to the beginning of their second quarter in the program, students registered in the Medical Assisting Program are required to have started the Hepatitis B vaccination series. Documentation for this requirement must be presented by the first day of class of the second quarter of the program.

Practicum

The capstone course is the student practicum (MED 159 Externship for Medical Assistants). All cognitive objectives and psychomotor and affective competencies must be completed prior to the practicum. It is highly recommended that all required coursework for the AAS degree be completed prior to the start of the practicum. The practicum allows the opportunity to use your administrative and clinical skills under the guidance of a mentor in an ambulatory healthcare setting. The practicum is a 198-hour non-remunerative arrangement.

Entry into the Medical Assisting Program does not guarantee students a job placement, nor does it guarantee a practicum placement in Thurston County. Practicum placements require successful interviews and background checks. Due to increased competition for practicum placements with other schools in Washington State, South Puget Sound Community College cannot guarantee that the practicum will be in the last quarter of the program.

Courses By Quarter

Courses by Quarter

Code	Title	Credits
Quarter 1		
MED 105	Integrated Medical Terminology	5
MED 150	Basic Clinical Procedures	5
MED 151	Administrative Ambulatory Care	5
Select one of the following:		5
CMST& 210	Interpersonal Communication: Diversity	
CMST& 220	Public Speaking	
CMST& 230	Small Group Communication: Diversity	

CMST& 240	Intercultural Communication: Diversity	
Quarter 2		
MED 152	Disease and the Human Body	4
MED 153	Medical Assisting Career Development	2
MED 154	Advanced Clinical Procedures	5
MED 157	Medical Insurance, Coding, and Accounting Basics for the Medical Assistant	4
Select one of the following:		5
BUS 260	Principles of Management: Diversity	
HUM 121	Multicultural America: Diversity	
PSYC 116	Psychology of Human Relations: Diversity	
Quarter 3		
MED 155	Medical Laboratory for Medical Assistants	4
MED 158	Law, Ethics, Professionalism for Medical Assistant	5
MED 156	Pharmacology for Medical Assistants	4
MED 160	Medical Assisting National Exam Preparation	1
Select one of the following:		5
CMST& 220	Public Speaking	
CMST& 240	Intercultural Communication: Diversity	
PSYC& 200	Lifespan Psychology	
Quarter 4		
MED 159	Externship for Medical Assistants	6