SCOPE OF PRACTICE FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANTS

DONNA QUERIM, RN, BS, MS, JD
DEFINITION OF CERTIFIED MEDICAL ASSISTANT

• An individual who: is a graduate of a post-secondary medical assisting education program accredited by the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation of the American Medical Association, or its successor, the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools, or its successor or such other certificate program as the commissioner of public health shall approve

• Is employed in the medical practice of a licensed primary care provider

• Who performs basic administrative, clerical and clinical duties upon the specific authorization and under the direct supervision of a licensed primary care provider. (MGL; Chapter 112 Section 265 Administration of immunization by certified medical assistant effective November 8, 2016)
PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

- A health care professional qualified to provide general medical care for common health problems who
  - Supervises, coordinates, prescribes or otherwise provides or proposes health care services
  - Initiates referrals for specialist care
  - Maintains continuity of care within the health care professional’s scope of practice

- (MGL; Chapter 112 Section 265 Administration of immunization by certifies medical assistant effective November 8, 2016)
A primary care provider (PCP) is a person you may see first for checkups and health problems. PCPs can help manage your overall health. If you have a health care plan, find out what type of practitioner can serve as your PCP.

The term "generalist" often refers to medical doctors (MDs) and doctors of osteopathic medicine (DOs) who specialize in internal medicine, family practice, or pediatrics.

Obstetrician/gynecologists (OB/GYNs) are doctors who specialize in obstetrics and gynecology, including women's health care, wellness, and prenatal care. Many women use an OB/GYN as their primary care provider.

Nurse practitioners (NPs) are nurses with graduate training. They can serve as a primary care provider in family medicine (FNP), pediatrics (PNP), adult care (ANP), or geriatrics (GNP). Others are trained to address women's health care (common concerns and routine screenings) and family planning. NPs can prescribe medicines.

A physician assistant (PA) can provide a wide range of services in collaboration with a doctor of medicine (MD) or a doctor of osteopathic medicine (DO).
SCOPE OF PRACTICE

• In some states Medical Assistants have a specifically stated scope of practice (Rhode Island)
• In Massachusetts there is no specific law to address this issue.
• MGL states that the Medical Assistant works under the direct supervision of a licensed primary care provider. (Title XVI Chapter 112 Section 265)
MEANINGFUL USE

Meaningful use is using certified electronic health record (EHR) technology to:

• Improve quality, safety, efficiency, and reduce health disparities
• Engage patients and family
• Improve care coordination, and population and public health
• Maintain privacy and security of patient health information
• Ultimately, it is hoped that the meaningful use compliance will result in:
  • Better clinical outcomes
  • Improved population health outcomes
  • Increased transparency and efficiency
  • Empowered individuals
MEANINGFUL USE

• Meaningful use sets specific objectives that eligible professionals and hospitals must achieve to qualify for Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) incentive programs.

• Previous rule: Only licensed health care professionals were allowed to enter orders

• August 23, 2012 final rule: Credentialed Medical Assistants are also allowed to enter medications, laboratory, and radiology orders for meaningful use.
Only “credentialed Medical Assistants” (as well as licensed health care professionals) are permitted to enter medication, laboratory, and radiology orders into the EHR and have such entry count toward meeting the meaningful use requirement on the Medicare and Medicaid EHR incentive programs. (effective January 1, 2013)
WHO ARE CREDENTIALED MEDICAL ASSISTANTS?

• Credential must come from an organization other than the organization employing the medical assistants.

• An individual whose CMA (AAMA) is not current cannot use the credential for any purpose and is not credentialed under the CMS rules.
CONSEQUENCES IF CMS RULES ARE NOT FOLLOWED

• All core objectives of the Medicare and Medicaid EHR incentive programs must be met in order for an eligible professional to receive the incentive payments
• Failure to meet even one core objective would result in non-receipt (or forfeiture) of the entire incentive payment
• Order entry by someone other than a credentialed Medical Assistant or a licensed health care professional could result in a loss of 100% of the incentive payment.
MEDICAL ASSISTANT DUTIES

• Welcome the patient and escort them to the examination room
• Measure and record vital signs
• Record patients demographics and basic information about their past and present complaints
• Medication reconciliation
• Arrange examination room instruments and equipment
• Change simple wound dressings and obtain wound cultures
• Remove sutures and staples from superficial incisions and lacerations
CONTINUED

- Can administer medications IM, SC, PO, topically
- Immunizations
- They can collect blood specimens via capillary and venipuncture techniques
- Filing and book keeping
- Process insurance claims
- Book appointments
- Call in prescription orders or refills to the pharmacy, **but only as ordered and approved by physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant; never for narcotics.**
WHAT MEDICAL ASSISTANTS CANNOT DO

• Cannot independently perform telephone triage since they cannot legally interpret data or diagnose symptoms they cannot assess!!!!

• Independently diagnose or treat patients

• Can not give out medication samples

• Give intravenous medications

• Advise patients about their condition or treatment regimen

• Operate laser equipment.
Where Medical Assistants are trained:

- Public Community College- Certificate or Associate Degree
- Private proprietary schools; for-profit or non-profit

Considerations:
- Time
- Money
- Need
CONCLUSION

• Huge asset to any medical practice or health care facility
• Very important that once they become certified they maintain that certification
• Need to support them in maintaining their certifications
• Recognize that they are an important part of the health care team
REFERENCES

- HTTP://WWW.MEDSCAPE.COM/VIEWARTICLE/580647_2
- MGL; Chapter 112 Section 265 Administration of immunization by certifies medical assistant effective November 8, 2016)
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- HTTPS://MEDLINEPLUS.GOV/ENCY/ARTICLE/001933.HTM
- HTTPS://WWW.CMS.GOV/REGULATIONS-AND-GUIDANCE/LEGISLATION/EHRINCENTIVEPROGRAMS/INDEX.HTML?REDIRECT=/EHRINCENTIVEPROGRAMS/01_OVERVIEW.ASP
The Importance of a Medical Assistant Certification/Credential

Patricia Barbosa
Bristol Community College
Project Coordinator and Liaison to Southcoast Health
Discussion Topics

• Brief overview of the Project and SHS Commitment
• Credentialing, Certification and Accreditation
• Benefits from an employer standpoint and individual
• Accredited organizations and CE requirements
History of Project

• In 2013, Center for Medicaid Services (CMS) ruling requirements became more strict

• Commonwealth Corporation awarded Southcoast Health funds to support training for the frontline staff

• The grant Quality Enhancement through employee Development (QED) was established to support SHS mission with consistency in approach and treatments for all patients through education and certification.
Southcoast Health Commitment

• Certify 100% of MA staff

• 100% of staff attend a hands on skills day to standardize approach

• Practice managers and clinical coordinators support MA with their renewal of certification through coaching, leadership, and reviews

• Only Nationally Certified/Credentialed MA will be hired to work for SHS
What is Credentialing?

Credentialing is an umbrella term used to refer to concepts such as professional certification, certificate programs, accreditation, licensure, and regulation.
The Institute for Credentialing Excellence (*ICE*)

- ICE is a professional membership association that provides education, networking, and other resources for organizations and individuals who work in and serve the credentialing industry.

- ICE is a leading developer of standards for both certification and certificate programs.

- National Commission of Certifying Agencies (NCCA)
  - Developed to help ensure the health, welfare and safety of the public.
  - When a program is accredited by NCCA it demonstrates a high quality program.
What is Accreditation?

*Accreditation* is the process by which a credentialing or educational program is evaluated against defined standards by a third party.

When in compliance with these standards, it is awarded recognition.
The Value of Accreditation

• Demonstrates that their program has met the stringent standards set by the credentialing community

• Enhances a program's credibility

• Provides organizations with a way to answer the question "Who reviewed your certificate/certification program?", a question often posed by members of an occupation, employers, and sometimes, the courts.
What is Certification

A Certification Program is designed to test the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform a particular job, and, upon successfully passing a certification exam, to represent a declaration of a particular individual’s professional competence.

In some professions, certification is a requirement for employment or practice.
Importance of MA Certification

• The National Certification establishes a baseline of knowledge and competency through 3rd party testing and requires Continuing Education (CE) current and relevant to healthcare

• National Certification will allow MA to work to their full scope of their profession

• MA will become more marketable internally and externally throughout the industry

• MA will become more knowledgeable and the education will translate into better patient care

• CEs help standardize approach as well as teach MA’s to apply health management with disease prevention strategies current to today’s changes in healthcare
Benefits for the Medical Assistant

• Improve earning potential
• Career advancement by achieving short term and long term goals
• More competitive in an aggressive market
• Opens the door to future opportunities
• Establishes a foundation and baseline of knowledge
• Being associated with a certifying organization and using an acronym after your name builds a solid reputation
• Staying current with education by engaging in CEs
Benefits for Employers

- Increases the competency level by establishing a baseline
- Through education, staff is committed to high standards and quality care
- Continued Education of knowledge and skills
- Minimize errors by having MAs work to their scope of practice
- Helps establish a career path for MAs who demonstrate excellence
- Increase efficiency and reduce cost
- Receive higher incentive if employer is an ACO
Certifying/Credentialing Organizations

• The top 5 credentialing organizations recognized by ICE and accredited by NCCA are:
  • AAMA
  • NHA
  • AMCA
  • AMT
  • NCCT

• There is no qualitative difference between organizations as the same credentialing process is followed
## Certifying Organizations Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credentialing Organization</th>
<th>Credentials to be used after MA’s name</th>
<th>How often to renew and renewal costs?</th>
<th>Re-certification Requirements</th>
<th>Total Recertification Cost*</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</table>
| American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA)  | (CMA) Certified Medical Assistant      | Every 5 years plus the cost of CEU’s. Medical Assistants certified can become a member of the AAMA for cheaper CEU rates. | 60 total CEU: 10 clinical, 10 administrative, 10 general. 30 of which have to be done with the AAMA and the other 30 with approved programs | Option 1: retake exam after 5 year $250  
Option 2: $15-$40 per CEU with the AAMA plus 30 more outside CEU’s  
Option 3: purchase AAMA workbook will give them 60 CEU’s | aama.net or (800) 228-2262 |
| American Medical Certification Association (AMCA)  | (CMAC) Clinical Medical Assistant      | Every 2 years and once expired $80 CEU fee for 10 outside CEUs or $159 if CEU’s are done with AMCA | 10 CEU’s /1 clock hour= 1CEU                                                                 | Option 1: 10 CEUs are required to renew there is no renewal fee just $80 payment for 10 outside CEUs  
Option 2: $159 if CEU’s are done with AMCA | amcaexams.com or (201) 874-4788 |
| American Medical Technologists (AMT)               | (RMA) Registered Medical Assistant     | Every 3 years/$50 annual fee          | Full time employees can recertify with a Physician’s signoff may change in 2016 | $50/annually no additional CEU cost if they are full time 40 hours | americanmedtech.org or (847) 823-5169 |
| National Healthcare Association (NHA)              | (CCMA) Certified Clinical Medical Assistant | Every 2 years/$159 once expired     | Can be done on the job or with NHA                                                      | $159 every 2 years includes 10 online CEUs plus $40 for 4 more | NHAnow.com or (800)499-9092 |
| National Center for Competency testing (NCCT)(NCMA)| (NCMA) National Certified Medical Assistant | $77 per year includes CEU’s done online with NCCT | 14 CEU’s with NCCT or on the job                                                       | avg of $77/annually includes online CEU cost                           | NCCTINC.com or (800) 875-4404 |

* Please check with your credentialing agency for changes and updates on CEU Requirements
Contact Information

Patricia Barbosa
Bristol Community College Workforce and Community Education
Staff Associate / Project Implementation
1082 Davol Street
Fall River, MA  02720
Patricia.Barbosa@bristolcc.edu
774.357.3589
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- [http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/](http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/)
- [https://www.amcaexams.com/](https://www.amcaexams.com/)
- [https://www.americanmedtech.org](https://www.americanmedtech.org)
- [https://www.ncctinc.com/](https://www.ncctinc.com/)
Role of Medical Assistants

Diane E. Howes RN, MSN, MHA
Director of Clinical Integration and Practice Optimization

Changing Role of Medical Assistants
April 28, 2017
Southcoast Health
Southcoast Physicians Group
Mission:
To promote the optimal health and well-being of individuals in the communities we serve.

Vision:
Southcoast is a vibrant health care system chosen for clinical excellence, recognized for safety and service and renowned for improving the health of our communities in partnership with patients, physicians and employees.
• Clinical Excellence
• Specialties Comparable with Boston
• Exceptional Customer Experience
• Transforming Care as an ACO
• Driven by Quality and Safety
• Adapting to the Changing Healthcare Landscape
• Disciplined Strategic Growth
Director of Clinical Integration Role

- Oversight of clinical policy and procedure for system and medical group
- Practice operations committee chair for medical group
- Facilitate system and medical group performance improvement projects
- Collaborate with organizational partners to facilitate clinical integration (People, Process and Technology)
- Clinical oversight of RN/LPN and Medical Assistants
  - Onboarding and Training
  - Competency development, implementation and monitoring
  - Refinement of systems and processes that support practice transformation initiatives
Medical Assistant Role
Medical Assistant Responsibilities

Desk MA

- Forms
- Emails/Messages
- Results
- Monitor provider folders
- Pre-authorizations procedures/medications
- Patient Calls

Rooming MA

- Pre-visit Planning
- Room Patient for Visit
- Immunization injections as directed
- Stock & Clean Rooms
- EKGs & Phlebotomy*
- Assist with Approved Procedures*

*Additional competency needed
Background for Training Initiative
• As a certified ACO Southcoast is actively engaged in care transformation activities:
  – Improve the health of the communities we serve
  – To contain healthcare cost
  – Establish patient-centric care teams (PCMH)

• Acquired practices began to unite under Southcoast Health System in 2012

• Enterprise Electronic Healthcare Record (EHR) implementation in 2014
• CMS requires credentials for documentation in EHR

• MAs had different titles, roles & responsibilities depending on the practice and supervisory provider

• Variable competencies and skill sets delivered inconsistent patient experiences and outcomes

• Lack of trust among providers with role of MA

• Not functioning at the top of their skill set

• In other instances outside scope of practice
% OF MAS IN PRIMARY CARE VS SCOPE OF PRACTICE

MA SCOPE OF PRACTICE

- Blood Pressure: 89%
- Pulse: 81%
- Respiration: 56%
- Pulse Oximeter: 89%
- Height: 89%
- Weight: 89%
- BMI: 36%
- Peak Flow: 28%
- Medication: 49%
- Subcutaneous: 63%
- Intramuscular: 75%
- Snellen Eye: 78%
- 12 Lead EKG: 60%
- Rapid Strep A: 47%
- Rapid Influenza: 68%
- Blood Glucose: 55%
- Urinalysis: 30%
- Wound Care: 23%
- Depression: 18%
- Isolation: 29%
- Patient Care: 53%
Training Eligibility & Review Course Requirements
Training Eligibility

- Employed by SPG in a MA role
- If certified, test out and participate in skills only
- If 30% of tasks fell in MA scope
- Completed an MA training program or worked 2 years previously in an MA role and not presently in role at SPG
Southcoast Requirements

- 23 Competencies developed for MA tasks
- Developed detailed step by step competencies
- ELearning/Classroom hybrid approach
- Skills day component (10 clinical stations)
- Written assessment
- National certification exam
Curriculum

More than medicine.
Hybrid (Online/Classroom) Course

- 47 hour/10 week training
- Syllabus
- Rubrics for discussion board and class participation
- Weekly instructor lesson plan
  - Class handouts
  - Pre/post-test and quizzes, case studies, PowerPoints
- Weekly hands-on competencies
- SPG allowed 2 hours/week of study on job
Skills Day

• Skills day training included 10 competencies stations
  - Vital signs, height, weight, BMI
  - Spirometry, peak flow
  - Medication/vaccination administration
  - Eye exam
  - EKG
  - CLIA waived testing
  - Dressing change & wound culture
  - Isolation procedures
  - Depression screening
  - Patient positioning & instruction
Surveys

• Multiple surveys were developed

• Pre and Post instructor and course survey

• Pre and Post personal growth assessment, and a survey on the MA’s education path after becoming credentialed

• All these survey tools were used to collect data for grant reporting and to inform refinement of program
Implementation Barriers
• Change in Leadership
  – Director of Clinical Integration engaged in the project
  – Attended skills day and refined per clinical guidelines
  – Project Manager reassigned roles and responsibilities

• Medical Assistant Engagement
  – 50% did not see the value
  – Defining roles and responsibilities of care team

• Competitive fair market value for MA
  – Advocated for merit increase upon completion of requirements and annual review
  – Across the board market increase for MA
Sustainability

More than medicine.
Conferences

- 2 Southcoast Health Conferences for MAs
  - Breakout sessions
    - Wellness
    - Infection Prevention
    - Performance Improvement
  - Keynote speaker addressing importance of teamwork and impact of stress in workplace
  - Vendors
  - CEUs awarded for breakout sessions
• Development of HR checklist for employee files that will transition to electronic management in September 2017
  – Documentation of credentials
  – Healthcare BLS
  – Completion annual skills day/mandatories

• Leadership training for Practice Manager and Clinical Coordinators:
  – Coaching/Mentoring
  – Support opportunities for CEU attainment
  – Importance of annual reviews
Outcomes
Southcoast Health Employees

• Overall 301 SPG employees (MAs, Clinical Coordinators and PMs) received training through the BCC grant collaboration

• 98% (191) of Medical Assistants achieved all requirements

• 65 Practice Managers and Clinical Coordinators received leadership training

• 10% of MA are advancing careers through higher education
Total Trained on QED Grant

- PMs and CCs trained: 18%
- MAs trained: 65%
- Certified MAs Skills only: 17%
1. Increase friendliness/courtesy of medical assistant staff
2. Improve awareness of the MA sensitivity to the patient’s problem

<table>
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<th>MA metric question</th>
<th>Baseline December 2015 based on AHA region</th>
<th>Baseline April 2016 based on AHA region</th>
<th>Proposed Target</th>
<th>Actual Results April 2017</th>
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<td>23rd percentile</td>
<td>40th percentile</td>
<td>50th percentile</td>
<td>83rd percentile “above excellence”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question 2</td>
<td>21st percentile</td>
<td>32nd percentile</td>
<td>50th percentile</td>
<td>57th percentile “at target”</td>
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PHQ9

- Improved completion of the patient self-assessed depression screen PHQ-9.
- The PHQ-9 is a tool designed to assist the provider in capturing patients with depression and promoting early diagnosis and treatment.
Medical Assistant Turnover

• Improvement of the MA turnover rate with a goal of 12%
• Over the course of the 2 year program SPG had an annualized turnover rate of 18.4%
• Qualitative responses MAs shared after receiving their credential
  “Since receiving my credential,
  “I have received a pay increase”
  “I have been promoted to a new role with more responsibility”
  “I feel more confident in my role”
  “I am taking on new tasking in my office”
Key Takeaways
• MA are key partners of the healthcare team

• Imperative to achieve and maintain competency

• Ongoing professional learning through CEU programs

• Clear roles and responsibilities

• Important infrastructure to drive outcomes in a value-based model of care
Contact Information

Diane E. Howes  RN, MSN, MHA
Director of Clinical Integration and Practice Optimization
Southcoast Physician Group Administration
Southcoast Health
200 Mill Road, Suite 180
Fairhaven, MA
howesd@Southcoast.org
Office phone: 508-973-2053
Cell Phone: 508-737-0216
Changing the Role of Medical Assistants

By Elisa Rodriguez,
Associate Site Operations Manager
Greater Lawrence Family Health Center
About
Greater Lawrence Family Health Center

- 5 clinical sites
  - 2 school based sites in the High Schools
  - 1 site in Lawrence General Hospital
- Over 100 Medical Assistants
- We serve about 60,000 patients
Medical Assistants at GLFHC

- Medical Assistants
  - Little experience in the field
- Senior Medical Assistant
  - Medical interpreter
  - Preceptor
- Team Leader Medical Assistant
  - Medical Interpreter
  - Preceptor
  - In charge of the team of medical assistants
- What is a team?
  - 4 Doctors/ Residents
  - 1 nurse
  - 4 medical assistants
Responsibilities of Medical Assistants

- Perform Vital Signs
- Run in house tests
- Perform ECG
- Assist in procedures
- Schedule follow up appointments
# Advanced MA Curriculum

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<td><strong>Quality Improvement Model</strong></td>
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<td>The Model for Improvement and Using PDSA Cycles</td>
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<td><strong>2. Building Relationships</strong></td>
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<td>Evidence Based Care - Chronic Disease Management - CVD</td>
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<td>Evidence Based Care - Chronic Disease Management - Diabetes</td>
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</tbody>
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| 4. Reducing Barriers to Care | **Patient Centered Interactions** | Evidence Based Care - Chronic Disease Management - Hypertension |
|                            |        | Screening for Depression in Primary Care |
|                            |        | Evidence Based Care - Preventative Care |
|                            |        | Infection Control in the Primary Care Setting |
|                            | **Enhanced Access** | Patient Centered Interactions |
|                            |        | Coaching Patients for Self-Management |
|                            |        | Customer Service |
|                            | **Care Coordination** | Enhanced Access |
|                            |        | Care Coordination |
Role of Medical Assistants and How it is Changing

- Patient Education
  - COPD and Asthma
  - CVD
  - Diabetes
  - Hypertension
  - Depression Screening
  - Preventative Care
Advanced Medical Assistant Training

Asthma

This course was developed by:

- MassAHEC Network
- Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers
- Qualis Health & the North Shore Physician
- The Greater Lawrence Family Health Center
THE CHANGING ROLE OF MEDICAL ASSISTANTS

Alberon Gundim Jr., RMA
04/28/2017
The Changing Role of Medical Assistants

• Graduated Lincoln Tech 2010
• RMA 2014
• Currently enrolled in RN at Middlesex Community College
Training Class

• 8 sessions; 8 hours per session
• Multiple topics: Asthma, COPD, Diabetes, PCMH, Arthritis, Heart Disease, Stroke, Obesity, Hypertension, Depression, Insurance coverage.
• Cohort met at Lahey office space and was made up of staff from multiple practices
• Two instructors
Training Process

• My experiences as part of the training cohort
Training Process

• Most worthwhile part of the training for me
Training Process

• Impact on Patient Care
Training Process

Suggestions for practices thinking about delivering training to M.A.s.

• Mixed cohorts from different practices; small group sessions
• Full day training sessions
• Integrating hands on clinical training with classroom instruction
• Frequent quizzes to test knowledge gain
QUESTIONS?