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What is a Medical Assistant?

By Danni R., CMA, CCMA, CMAA

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Medical assisting is a field full of opportunity for those who enjoy working side by side with physicians and others in a medical office or clinic, regardless of gender. Traditionally, medical assisting has been a profession dominated by women, mostly because of biased counseling and recruiting, and misconceptions about the workforce. A study called "Title IX and Equal Opportunity in Vocational and Technical Education" conducted in June 2002 showed that male students made up less than 14 percent in courses offering medical assisting training in the 12 states surveyed.

However, contrary to certain stereotyped preconceptions and believes male medical assistants are highly valued and respected colleagues. Just like their female counterparts they usually are very much liked by the patients in a modern healthcare facility and it is encouraging to see that recently more and more male medical assistants are beginning to enter into this very rewarding profession!

Medical assisting is a dynamic field that is always changing and always growing. In this day and age where medical assistants are being asked to undertake increasingly complex tasks in either the front or back office there is room for everybody! The common goal of all medical assistants, whether male or female is the care and treatment of patients.

Front office tasks mostly consist of administrative duties, such as answering the phones, scheduling appointments, and assisting patients to fill out their information forms; whereas back office duties consist of clinical tasks, revolving around patient care, such as taking vital signs, performing simple diagnostic tests, and sterilizing and cleaning equipment and examination rooms.

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<http://www.certmedassistant.com>

Medical Assistant Net

<http://www.medicalassistant.net>

Danni R. is a certified medical assistant through the AAMA and NHA, and MA Instructor at such well known vocational training institutions. Her background is a unique blend of healthcare sciences and freelance web design and graphic arts, which makes her the ideal author for medical assisting articles and online courses. It is this fusion of contrasting disciplines that makes her work so successful on the Internet!

Considerations in Distance Education for the Medical Assistant Instructor

By Dr. Mark Stout

Medical Assistant distance education is emerging to meet the demands of a new generation of students in the twenty first century. St. Augustine Medical Assistant School distance education program for medical assistant presents a good model for this integration of technology with medical assistant education. Distance education, particularly in its most recent form, online education, is being integrated into even the most cautious and conservative of educational institutions. Yet the impact of these alternative forms of teaching and learning on students, faculty, and institutions has yet to be broadly or deeply studied. New models such as that at St. Augustine Medical Assistant School are immerging. St. Augustine Medical Assistant School is available at:

Distance education is not new, and can be traced as far back as the first century. The Apostle Paul wrote to the early Christian churches, instructing them from a distance (even when he was under 'house arrest' in Rome). This was probably the first type of 'correspondence course', which was the only method of learning at a distance until the advent of the telephone. Today, distance education and in particular online medical assistant instruction calls upon an impressive range of technologies to enable medical assistant instructor and the medical assistant student who are separated by distance to communicate with each other either in real time (synchronous) or delayed time (asynchronous). Currently and asynchronous model used at St. Augustine Medical Assistant School to instruct medical assistant students. This has proven to be a very effective model however the medical assistant program is currently investigating the benefits of synchronous online medical assistant instruction and the benefits it may have for the medical assistant student.

Medical Assistant distance learning epitomizes the move away from institute based learning to a more direct, student centered approach. As a concept, distance learning has existed for over a century, notably in the form of paper based correspondence courses including the less formal correspondence education for medical assistants. Now however, distance education is depending increasingly upon technology for its success and technological innovations ensure that distance learning for the medical assistant continues to evolve and grow as a valid and potent force in all forms of education for the medical assistant.

The task of the medical assistant distance educator is therefore to obviate these problems as much as possible by mixing and matching techniques, creating and maintaining a stimulating environment, and

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offering opportunities for medical assistant students to communicate with each other and with the medical assistant teaching staff on a regular basis. The medical assistant educators will also need to change their traditional role as well. Many remote medical assistant students need a great deal of social support, and medical assistant distance educators may find themselves spending more time offering one-to-one tutorials and less time lecturing. St. Augustine Medical Assistant School at is leading today's technology in medical assistant education.

When designing medical assistant educational systems and materials for medical assistant distance in delivery the medical assistant teacher must consider not only learning outcomes, but also centered requirements and technical constraints for the medical assistant. Also to be considered are the needs,

characteristics, and individual differences of both the students, the teachers and future medical assistants.

Medical assistant distance education for the medical assistant then, should not be viewed as a means of reducing costs, but as an opportunity to raise standards. It is also about providing quality medical assistant learning opportunities for those who, for one reason or another, have previously been excluded from this basic human right. Medical Assistant distance education will quickly become the norm and not the exception for the twenty first century medical assistant. St. Augustine Medical Assistant School distance education program for medical assistant presents a good model for this integration of technology with medical assistant education. The St. Augustine Medical Assistant model can be reviewed at:

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