

RE: The Medical Assisting Profession

To whom it may concern,

A Practice Manager is always looking for innovative and efficient ways of running the business, often with diminishing resources at their disposal. The introduction of the role of the Medical Assistant is a new and exciting employment option for workforce solutions for any practice.

Medical Assistants are members of the Medical Practice team who are formally trained to provide administrative and clinical assistance to health practitioners working in ambulatory care settings. Medical Assistants are multi-skilled team members, and perform tasks at the direction of the registered health professional. Medical Assistants undergo formal training to obtain the Certificate IV in Medical Practice Assisting (HLT47715), a nationally accredited course under the Australian Qualifications Framework Level 4.

Role Scope

Medical Assistants perform delegated clinical and administrative duties within the supervising health professional's scope of practice, consistent with national and state legislation, the healthcare practices' protocols and the Medical Assistant's education, training, experience and scope of practice. It is important to stress that these duties do not constitute the practice of medicine, but support the practice of medicine.

It is also important to understand that Medical Assistants are not independent practitioners, and do not make decisions regarding the care of patients. Medical Assistants do not determine investigations to order, do not diagnose, and do not refer or prescribe. Medical Assistants do not provide counselling services to patients, apart from providing instruction and education as per the health practitioner's directions.

Supervision

Supervision of medical practice assistants should be active and continuous, but does not necessarily require the physical presence of the supervising health professional at the time and place that support is provided.

According to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) Decision-making framework, a registered nurse must accept responsibility for supervision of the activity of a Medical Practice Assistant and ensure an appropriate supervisory framework is in place.

Qualification HLT47715

This qualification reflects the role of Medical Assistants whose work includes a broad range of administrative functions combined with tasks to support registered health professionals in the delivery of care to clients. These tasks are completed under the direct or indirect supervision of a medical practitioner.

Role Description

Medical Assistants are trained to be flexible, able to cover front desk duties as well as perform a wide range of common treatment room procedures. Some healthcare practices choose to utilise their Medical Assistants solely in the treatment room, while others roster them onto the front desk on certain days and the treatment room on others. Many Medical Assistants also fulfil a practice management function, helping with human resource management, handling financial accounts, rostering, and office management.

Administrative Duties

Medical Assistants are fully trained to fulfil the wide range of administrative tasks required in a medical practice setting including:

- billing
- appointment scheduling
- recalls and reminders
- telephone technique
- managing medical records
- office related inventory control
- handling mail
- managing the waiting room
- extracting financial and clinical data
- maintain Work Health and Safety protocols
- contribution to Policy & Procedures

Clinical Duties

Medical Assistants are also fully qualified to undertake clinical duties while assisting a health professional including:

- Height, weight, BMI (excluding venepuncture)
- Blood glucose testing
- Onsite Urinalysis & pregnancy testing
- Visual acuity & colour blindness testing
- Audiometry
- BP & TPR measurement
- Peak flow measurement
- Spirometry
- ECG
- Provide assistance with removal of plasters
- Provide assistance with plastering
- Provide assistance with PAP tests
- Provide assistance with minor operations
- Assisting with nebulisation
- Specimen collection
- Bandaging
- Provide Assistance with application of splints and slings
- Provide Assistance with Removal of sutures and clips
- Provide Assistance with Application of wound dressings
- Assisting with medical emergencies
- Maintaining medication and other stocks
- Cold chain management
- Onsite Sterilisation
- Maintaining Infection Control Procedures
- Assisting with coordination of patient care

If you would like to know more about the course contact UNE Partnerships on 1800 066 128 or go to <https://www.unep.edu.au/courses/health-and-medical/> for more information. UNE Partnerships are currently educating and training groups across Queensland and New South Wales. Government funding may apply.

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Smith".

Gary Smith

Academic Director of Medical Practice Assisting Studies