Frequently Asked Questions: Clinical Medical Assistant

Medical assistants perform routine clinical tasks to keep the offices of physicians, podiatrists, chiropractors, and optometrists running smoothly. Clinical duties may include taking medical histories and recording vital signs, explaining treatment procedures to patients, preparing patients for examination, and assisting the physician during the examination.

Medical assistants collect and prepare laboratory specimens or perform basic laboratory tests on the premises. They instruct patients about medication and special diets, prepare and administer medications as directed by a physician, authorize drug refills as directed, telephone prescriptions to a pharmacy, draw blood, prepare patients for x-rays, take electrocardiograms, and change dressings.

Upon successful completion of the Clinical Medical Assistant program, you will have the skills necessary to gain employment in a number of capacities. Job opportunities will be prevalent in physician’s offices, clinics, chiropractor’s offices and outpatient facilities. The occupational outlook handbook, states that employment of medical assistants is expected to grow 35 percent from 2011 to 2016, much faster than the average.

Jobs in this field in Syracuse pay $22,000 - $27,000 depending on the medical specialty.

What is the course description?
This program includes 140 hours of classroom lectures and hands on labs and a clinical externship opportunity at a local healthcare provider. Students will be trained to assist physicians by performing functions related to the clinical responsibilities of a medical office. Instruction includes among other things preparing patients for examination and treatment, routine laboratory procedures, diagnostic testing, technical aspects of phlebotomy, and the cardiac life cycle.

Students will review important topics including phlebotomy, pharmacology, the proper use and administration of medications, taking and documenting vital signs, cardiology including proper lead placements, a professional workplace behavior, ethics and the legal aspects of healthcare.

To be eligible for the 160 hour clinical rotation, students must successfully complete the 140 hour program, submit to a thorough background check, drug screening and meet other requirements.

Classes meet on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturdays. Only two missed classes are permitted.

What are the course pre-requisites?
Students must possess a high school diploma or GED equivalent
How do I register for the course and what is the refund policy?
You can register online at www.sunyocc.edu/community, by mail or fax, or in person. The class is limited to 25 students. Course refunds will be granted up to three business days prior to class start date.

What is the course tuition fee?
Tuition is $2,399. Payment can be made by cash, check or money order made payable to OCC, or Visa, MasterCard, and Discover Card credit cards. The course fee includes the class textbook. This course is not eligible for Federal Student Aid (FASFA).

Are there additional fees?
If you choose to take the certification exam, there will be an additional fee of $159.43. Also, students may be required to wear scrubs, carry a stethoscope, or complete a simple background check for their clinical experience.

What is certification?
Certification is the process by which a non-governmental association or agency grants recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications specified by that association or agency.

Upon successful completion of this program, students would be eligible to sit for the National Healthcareer Association Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) national examination.