

## Medical Assistant Performance Essentials

Performance essentials or essential functions are defined as those physical, mental, and psycho-social characteristic that are necessary to meet the demand of the MA educational process and eventual therapeutic care of patients and all tasks associated with that function.

Becoming a medical assistant requires the completion of a technical education program that is both intellectually and physically challenging. The purpose of this policy is to articulate the demands of the program in a way that will allow students to compare their own capabilities against these demands.

There are times when reasonable accommodations [i.e.: hearing devices to improve communication with the hearing impaired] will be made in order to assist a student with a disability. Reasonable accommodation does not mean that students with disabilities will be exempt from certain tasks; it does mean that we will work with students with disabilities to determine whether there are ways that we can assist the student toward completion of the tasks.

If admitted, a student with a disability who wishes reasonable accommodations must request it through Special Services and the Coordinator of the Medical Assistant Program. An offer of admission may be withdrawn if it becomes apparent that:

- The student cannot complete essential tasks even with accommodations.
- Accommodations are not reasonable and would cause undue hardship to the institution
- Fulfilling the function would create a significant risk to the health or safety of others.

## Performance Essentials for the Classroom/Lab/Practicum Experience

### Students must:

- Meet class standards for course completion throughout the curriculum
- Complete readings, assignments, and other activities outside of class hours
- Be able to read, write, speak, and understand English at a level consistent with successful course completion and development of appropriate relationships with peers, instructors, patients, family, other health science professionals, and the community.
- Have interpersonal skills as needed for productive classroom discussion, respectful interaction with classmates and faculty, and development of appropriate medical assistant-patient relationships.
- Collect decision-making data during patient assessment activities in class or in the clinical setting without the assist of an intermediary such as a classmate or an aide.
- Perform treatment activities in the class or in the clinical setting
- Apply critical thinking to their work, exercise sound judgment and follow safety procedures established in the classroom and the ambulatory setting
- Maintain personal appearance and hygiene conducive to classroom and clinical settings
- Pass a cardiopulmonary resuscitation course at the health professional level
- Demonstrate appropriate health status prior to class enrollment per medical examination
- Follow standards and policies specified in the Student Handbook
- Demonstrate ability to perform typical physical and mental functions (listed on following pages) required of the medical assistant

## Typical Physical Functions Required of the Medical Assistant

- Uses auditory, tactile, and visual senses to collect data regarding patient status and to provide patient intervention. (e.g. auditory cues to hear breathing sounds, take blood pressure measurements; tactile cues to monitor pulse, feel muscle contractions; visual cues to inspect skin)
- Applies universal precautions regularly in the classroom and ambulatory setting – regular hand washing (free of skin conditions irritated by frequent washing), applies mask, gown, gloves (applies without assistance of another individual)
- Provides sufficient support to safely assist patients/classmates when they are moving from sitting positions or from one surface to another (e.g. chair to exam table)
- Provides sufficient support to patients/classmates to safely assist with standing or walking activities
- Able to stand or sit for prolonged periods of time

## Typical Mental Functions Required of the Medical Assistant

- Attentively listens to patients
- Controls verbal and nonverbal behaviors when communicating with others
- Accurately self-assesses own strengths and weaknesses
- Modifies behaviors after receiving corrective feedback
- Takes responsibility for own actions-does not blame others for situation or behaviors
- Behaves honestly and truthfully
- Concentrates on task at hand for extended period of time
- Utilizes problem-solving skills to meet needs of situation
- Handles stress of an intensive training program in preparation for clinical situations
  - Heavy academic demands
  - Fast paced clinical situations
  - Psychosocial responses of patients with disabilities