



MEDICAL ASSISTANT STUDENT HANDBOOK

CNM 
Central New Mexico Community College

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

School of Nursing & Patient Support

Medical Assistant Program

STUDENT HANDBOOK

In the event of a conflict between information contained in the student handbook and the CNM catalog, the catalog takes precedence. Students are responsible to know the information contained in the CNM Catalog and HWPS/NPS Student Handbook.

The faculty has the right to make additions or deletions to the student handbook. The students will be informed of these changes by oral announcements in class and written announcements posted on the designated bulletin boards.

Program Director

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Medical Assistant Program

<https://www.cnm.edu/programs-of-study/programs-a-z/medical-assistant/home>

Description

Medical assistants are multi-skilled health professionals specifically educated to work primarily in ambulatory care settings, such as physician's offices, clinics and outpatient care centers under the direct supervision of physicians, nurse practitioners or physician assistants. Medical assistants perform both administrative and clinical duties.

Mission Statement

The mission of the CNM Medical Assistant Program is to prepare competent entry-level medical assistants who excel in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains in the communities they serve.

Student Responsibility Regarding the CNM Handbook

Students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the information contained in the Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) catalog and this Medical Assistant Program Student Handbook.

Medical Assistant students are required to read the Medical Assistant Program Student Handbook each semester.

As adult learners, students will be provided either a link to, or an electronic copy of this handbook. The handbook is publically accessible and students are held to the rules and guidelines herein. Students are directed to ask the Program Director of the Medical Assistant Program for clarification, if needed. In the event there appears to be a direct conflict between information contained in the Medical Assistant Program Student Handbook and the CNM catalog, the catalog takes precedence. The medical assistant program may have more restrictive policies than the greater CNM community. Medical Assistant faculty reserve the right to make additions or deletions to the posted Medical Assistant Program Student Handbook. The effective date for any changes made will be included in the handbook when it is updated and/or on BrightSpace and/or in oral and/or in written announcements to the students. Significant changes will be communicated to students in a fair and timely manner.

Program Student Learning Outcomes (Program Goals for CAAHEP)

The major goals of the Medical Assisting Program are to:

- to prepare competent entry-level medical assistants that meet or exceed national Medical Assisting Education Review Board standards in cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains,
- instruct students how to safely and effectively perform a variety of clinical and administrative tasks as an entry level medical assistant,
- have students display professionalism in the workplace and communicate effectively both verbally and in writing within a work environment,
- assure standards, policies and procedures of the physician’s office are followed within the medical assistant scope of practice while students demonstrate ethical and legal behaviors.

Program Assessment and Learning Outcomes for the Medical Assisting Program are based on standards set by The Medical Assisting Education Review Board which is a Committee on Accreditation (CoA) of the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), the organization which our program is pursuing accreditation with. CAAHEP is a nonprofit, allied health education organization whose purpose is to accredit entry-level, allied health education programs.

COMMUNICATION

E-mail

E-mail is the primary means of communication in the Medical Assistant Program. Students are required to access and maintain their CNM e-mail accounts. The CNM email address is the only email address that the Medical Assistant Program will use to communicate with enrolled students. Students should check their e-mail daily. While it is possible to forward email from the CNM account to other accounts, it is not recommended because it often results in message failure, which is not considered a valid excuse for missing information. Students are held responsible for the information within the e-mails, whether they read them or not. Students are responsible for contacting the CNM Support Services help desk via telephone at 505-224-4357 or at supportservices@cnm.edu to resolve any e-mail problems. Instructors will answer emails in a timely fashion, but email is not instant messaging. It is reasonable to expect faculty to respond to emails within one to two working days. This does not include off duty hours,

weekends or holidays. If a student feels that an issue is pressing, he or she is encouraged to indicate urgency in the subject line of that email.

CLASSROOM, LAB, AND PRACTICUM

CNM School of Nursing and Patient Support, Medical Assistant Program, Confidentiality Agreement

Any individual requiring access to patient or business information at any clinical site must sign this agreement in order to receive access. This includes access to written as well as electronically stored information. The terms of this agreement apply to oral, written and electronic information. Violations of the terms of this agreement are grounds for immediate legal and/or disciplinary action. This agreement supersedes all prior agreements related to confidentiality or proprietary information.

All students are held accountable to the following conditions:

1. I will not disclose, release or discuss any patient information, including clinical information of any kind, such as treatment protocols, medical conditions, financial matters/social information or patient demographic information for any purpose except to complete duties assigned. I understand that this includes all patients – even ones that I may know personally. In addition, I understand that state and federal law also require me to keep all patient information confidential.
2. I will not disclose, release, or discuss business (e.g., financial, legal, operational, marketing) or employee information with any third-party without first receiving written authorization from an appropriate clinical site manager who has authority to grant such authorization.
3. I will not seek information about patients, employees or business operations for my own personal use by accessing electronic or written records or through oral communication. I understand that my access to such information is strictly limited only to information that I need to know in order to carry out duties assigned.
4. I will not transmit confidential information about patients, employees or business operations via unsecured networks. I understand that this includes sending unencrypted clinical information on the Internet and the utilization of unsecured cellular phone networks.
5. I will not, at any time, share or disclose usernames, passwords or other authorizations that I use to access information. I understand that this includes posting or writing this information where other individuals can view it. I accept responsibility for all activities undertaken using my access code or other authorization.
6. I will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to computer hardware/software/firmware that is owned by any clinical site or disclose procedures (in whole or in part) to others so that they might do so.
7. I will take reasonable care to prevent the unauthorized use, disclosure or availability of confidential and/or proprietary information including through unattended screen displays and/or unsecured written documents. I understand that business and employee information is confidential and proprietary and should not be made available to persons or entities outside the clinical site. I further agree, upon the conclusion of my clinical rotation, to return all business and patient information in my possession or control to my clinical preceptor/instructor.
8. I acknowledge that the clinical site retains the right to monitor and/or review my access to information at any time for evidence of tampering or misuse, and may, at its own discretion, suspend or terminate my access privileges pending administrative review.
9. I will immediately report any violations of these rules that I know of or suspect to the appropriate authorities.
10. The rules of confidentiality and ethical behavior at the clinical site are available to me for review. I agree to follow these rules and behave in a professional, ethical manner at all times. I understand

that misconduct and/or breaches of confidentiality will be grounds for legal and/or disciplinary action.

Clinical Contract Statements Concerning Students

In addition to the Confidentiality Agreement, CNM – NPS clinical contracts state:

“Students who are assigned to the program will not receive any compensation from the Agency while participating in the program for any purpose, whatsoever, nor will such students be eligible for any employee benefits provided by the Agency including, but not limited to, workers’ compensation.”

“...an Agency has the right, in its sole discretion, to exclude any individual at any time from any clinical area.”

“In the event that a student becomes ill or is injured while in the Agency and requires medical services they are financially responsible for their care, not the Agency.”

Classroom and Practicum Privacy

Due to federal student privacy laws (FERPA) and copy right laws, it is imperative to protect the privacy of enrolled students and the intellectual property offered by the instructors. To promote this, the following applies to students:

1. No videotaping or photography during class, practicum, or lab.
2. No audiotaping of lectures without instructor permission. If permission is granted, recordings will not be posted on the internet or distributed in any way.
3. No photography of instructional materials used in the classroom (examples include but are not limited to slide presentations, videos, etc).
4. No posting of classroom or practicum /lab activities on social media. Group photographs of students and faculty may be posted if the clinical site is unrecognizable, there are no other human beings in the shot, and there is no alcohol, tobacco, or firearms visible. Poses should reflect the highest of professional standards (no offensive gestures, signs, groping, etc). When in doubt, ask a Medical Assistant faculty member prior to posting.
5. Further, during exam reviews, students are not allowed to have any electronic devices on their person (all electronic devices will be stowed in a backpack or purse, etc). This includes watches of any kind. Students are not allowed to take notes during exam reviews. Students who do not follow these policies will be handled as per the CNM Academic Code of Conduct policies.

Medical Assistant Student Handbook Acknowledgement

All students enrolled student in the CNM Medical Assistant Program as an expectation of professional performance, are held accountable for the following:

1. I am familiar with and will adhere to each of the Student Policies and Codes found in the CNM Course Catalog that includes but not limited to cheating and plagiarism.
2. I have been informed about Contagious Diseases. I have had the chance to ask any questions I might have. I understand the information and agree to follow its guidelines.
3. I certify that I have been informed about the Bloodborne Pathogens policy. I have had the chance to ask any questions I might have. I understand the policy and agree to be bound by its terms.
4. I certify that I have read about Latex Allergies and have had the chance to ask any questions I might have.

5. I certify that I have been informed about the Suspected Impairment policy and have had the chance to ask any questions I might have. I understand the policy and agree to be bound by its terms.
6. I acknowledge The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 prohibits the release of any portion of a student's educational records to individuals without the student's consent. I therefore allow CNM to release information to a clinical site or testing site if it is determined to have a "legitimate need to know." This includes information required for external compliance and facility credentialing.
7. I agree to comply with credentialing deadlines and am aware that failure to meet these deadlines may result in a clinical failure, regardless of classroom and clinical performance.
8. I have read and understand the Admissions Eligibility document. I certify that I have been informed about the Medical Assistant Program Student Handbook. I have had the chance to ask any questions I might have and agree to be bound by its terms.

Classroom Attendance

<https://www.cnm.edu/student-resources/academic-records/academic-records-list/attendance>

1. Data shows that successful medical assistant students attend all classes. A student who must be absent from class should email the instructor of the absence before the class begins.
2. Attendance is taken at all class sessions.
3. Students are responsible for obtaining handouts and announcements given during absences.
4. Per CNM policy, students with excessive absences may be dropped from the course for non-attendance at the program's discretion (instructor team and Medical Assistant Program Director). The Medical Assistant Program requires no more than 15% absence from each course. Students that have more than 15% absence for any Medical Assistant course may be dropped.
5. Most in class assignments cannot be made up. In the event a student misses an exam or a written assignment during an absence from class, they should refer to the Grading and Evaluation section of the syllabus.

Practicum and Lab Attendance

Practicum is an unpaid, supervised clinical training of 180 contact hours in an ambulatory healthcare setting, demonstrating the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of the MAERB Core Curriculum in performing clinical and administrative duties and must be completed prior to graduation. On-site supervision of the student must be provided by an individual who has knowledge of the medical assisting profession.

Students are required to attend all practicum hours. This includes on-campus lab and days as well as practicum attended at healthcare partner sites. Practicum days should not be missed for vacation, study for other classes, or other non-illness/emergency related issues. The program will ensure that all applicable cognitive objectives and psychomotor and affective competencies be achieved prior to the start of any practicum.

The program will ensure that the practicum experience and instruction of students are meaningful and parallel in content and concept with the material presented in lecture and laboratory sessions. Sites will afford each student a variety of experiences.

Clinical/Practicum/Lab Attendance

Students are required to attend all clinical/practicum/lab sessions. This includes on-campus lab and simulation days as well as clinicals attended at healthcare partner sites. Clinical/practicum/lab days should not be missed for vacation, study for other classes, or other non-illness/emergency related issues.

1. If an emergency or illness prevents attendance, the student should call the clinical instructor one (1) hour before the beginning of the clinical day or as specified by the clinical instructor. You may be asked for supporting documentation and/or a return to work release from your primary care provider.
2. More than one (1) day of clinical/practicum/lab absence per term will result in attendance suspension of the student. Attendance suspensions result in a failing grade for the clinical course. Students may appeal attendance suspension (See Attendance Suspension and Appeal).

Clinical/practicum/lab absence is defined as:

1. Arriving fifteen (15) or more minutes late at the clinical/practicum/lab site and/or
2. Being unable to perform patient care due to the lack of preparation and/or
3. Lack of demonstration of required professional behaviors, and/or
4. Leaving the clinical/practicum/lab site more than fifteen (15) minutes prior to the end of the clinical day.
5. Those students on attendance suspension from the clinical/practicum/lab site should continue in the clinical/practicum/lab area while awaiting the appeal.

Tardiness/Leaving a Clinical/Practicum/Lab Site Early

Students are expected to arrive on time and remain for the full clinical time. Students should plan to arrive early at the clinical site to compensate for traffic, parking, and other unforeseen issues. Tardiness or leaving a clinical site early is a behavioral issue and addressed through the clinical evaluation tool and the Communication System procedure.

Tardiness is defined as:

1. Arriving on the clinical/practicum/lab unit late but less than fifteen (15) minutes after the designated start time
2. Leaving the clinical/practicum/lab site less than fifteen (15) minutes prior to the end of the clinical day.

Any tardiness event will result in documentation of the following communication system procedure:

1. First offense: a documented verbal warning on the anecdotal notes including the amount of time the student was tardy from the clinical/practicum/lab start time until the student arrival time.
2. Second offense: the student will submit a written plan to prevent future tardy to the clinical instructor before the end of the clinical/practicum/lab day.
3. Third offense: a program level success plan.

4. Fourth offense: removal from the clinical/practicum/lab site for the rest of the day which constitutes a clinical absence.

Student Removal from an Off-Campus Instructional Site or On-Campus Laboratory

NPS students are often engaged in experiential learning, both in the community and in on-campus sites. These sites serve clients, patients, employees, and students whose safety and well-being must be protected. Additionally, CNM, NPS and the site's policies and procedures must be strictly upheld to maintain the integrity of the site's services. Students must read about the HWPS/NPS removal policy which is located in the HWPS/NPS student handbook at this URL:

<http://www.cnm.edu/programs-of-study/health-wellness-public-safety/documents/StudentRemovalPolicy020614.pdf>

OFFICE OF VERIFICATION AND COMPLIANCE

Expectations

As part of our contractual agreements with our clinical partners, medical assistant students are expected to be in compliance to numerous standards. These include, but are not limited to, immunizations, criminal background checks, drug screening, and various healthcare and hospital-specific requirements. Students are expected to complete all credentialing requirements by the deadlines provided each term. All medical assistant students are held to the standards listed in the HWPS/NPS student handbook which can be located at the following URL: <http://www.cnm.edu/depts/office-of-verification-and-compliance>.

Failure to credential will result in an inability to place the student at the assigned practicum location and subsequent clinical failure. When the student is given a deadline by CNM personnel, the deadline is for when the requested documentation, including lab results, are to be received by the Office of Verification and Compliance. "In process" documentation will not be accepted as meeting the stated deadlines. The student will not be offered an alternate clinical site for non-credentialing reasons unless they are deemed to be truly outstanding (e.g., serious illness or injury resulting in non-attendance of training). If a student does miss a required deadline, the student may be required to show proof of serious illness or injury.

Practicum Policies and Professional Behavior

<http://www.cnm.edu/programs-of-study/health-wellness-public-safety/documents/StudentRemovalPolicy020614.pdf>

<https://www.cnm.edu/programs-of-study/health-wellness-public-safety/documents/suspected-impairment.pdf>

Practicum Code of Conduct

We are pleased that you have chosen the field of Medical Assisting as your profession. We look forward to accepting you as a member of this chosen profession upon completion of your training. As professional members of the health care team, you are expected to uphold the professional

responsibilities inherent in this field. As trainees of this profession, you have accepted the same professional responsibilities as a Medical Assistant. Your ability to fulfill these responsibilities will be observed and evaluated throughout your training to aid in your professional development. Student medical assistants should strive to appreciate and value these standards. To this end, program faculty have outlined the standards of conduct required for all MA students. Violations of published standards may result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal from the program. As is the case with all health-related areas, patient care, comfort and safety are the primary concerns. The primary responsibilities of health care workers, whether certified medical assistants or students, lie in assuring at all time that these patient concerns are fulfilled. In order to enhance your entrance into the patient oriented clinical settings, the following considerations inherent in basic professional conduct and good patient care are hereby offered:

1. Be on time; report to the clinical setting 10 minutes prior to the scheduled time so that you are ready to begin your clinical experience at the assigned time.
2. Report to the clinical/practicum preceptor or designated supervisor upon arrival, and then proceed to your assigned work area.
3. Any departure from the assigned work area should be cleared with the clinical/practicum instructor.
4. Of utmost importance are patient comfort and safety. Basic steps for good patient care are strictly enforced to include checking patient identifiers, following hospital protocols, and respecting privacy and HIPAA regulations at all times. Do not discuss or diagnose any patient's illness or condition with the patient or with others.
5. Any accident or incident involving a patient in the clinical setting must be reported immediately to the clinical instructor. Written accident and/or incident reports must be filed at once by persons witnessing the event.
6. No unnecessary conversation should be held within the hearing of a patient. This includes conversations about patient conditions, coffee breaks, lunch plans, dates, etc.
7. Always exhibit friendliness – "Be friendly but not familiar."
8. Obtain a complete medical history on each patient BEFORE proceeding with any examination.
9. Follow all recommended infection control policies to ensure the safety of the patient and to protect yourself. Report any variations of the policy to your clinical instructor.
10. Students must adhere to their assigned clinical site's policies regarding smoking, dress code, and parking. NO smoking is allowed by students while at the clinical facilities and/or while in CNM uniform.
11. Perform only skills and procedures in accordance with your scope of practice and experience.

Electronic Device Policy

Students are expected to turn their cell phones to silent or on vibrate when entering a practicum site. Cell phones may be used for personal use ONLY during assigned break periods or at lunch, otherwise phones must remain with student's belongings in the designated storage area. In case of an emergency only, the Clinical/practicum Instructor may allow cell phone use. At no time may an electronic device be used to take a picture or video recording of a patient or anything related to a patient on file.

Uniforms: Policy and Uses

a. Students are expected to be neat and clean in appearance and appear professional at all times in the clinical setting. Uniforms should adhere to CNM Medical Assistant, which are royal blue scrub bottoms

and White top with a CNM Medical Assistant patch on the left shoulder. Uniform scrubs are worn in practicum and in all MA courses and labs. "Uniform" includes: CNM student ID worn at the collar level, MA shoulder patch, and stethoscope when needed.

b. Closed-toe/closed-back shoes and socks in good repair are to be worn by all MA students in the clinical/practicum setting. Clogs and open-toed sandals are not permitted, unless specifically ordered for an orthopedic problem.

c. Jewelry to be worn with the uniform is limited to a conservative band on the watch, wedding ring or a single ring on one finger. Earrings should be no longer than the ear lobe and should be limited to no more than 2 adornments per ear.

d. NO Facial Piercings. Nose rings, eyebrow rings, tongue rings, cheek rings, dermal implants/piercing, etc., will not be worn– LEAVE AT HOME. Other body piercing with ornamentation cannot be visible. If student is unable to remove piercing(s), they must be covered.

e. Gages must be filled with a solid plug. No patterned design; must be a solid, conservative color.

f. All visible tattoos from the neck to the wrist must be covered with black, white, or flesh colored material. If visible tattoos on the head or the hands are deemed offensive by program faculty or clients/members of the clinical institutions, those tattoos may be requested to be covered or the student may be removed from said clinical setting.

g. Students will not wear artificial nails of any type including tips, acrylic and gel overlay; nails will be cut short (not longer than ¼" in length). No nail polish allowed.

h. Extremes in make-up, hair styles, hair ornaments are not permitted. Nonnaturally occurring hair color is not permitted. Hair must be pulled back at/or above the line of the collar. Perfume/cologne, aftershave lotion or scented lotions may be offensive to patients and should not be used. Hair, to include facial hair and long sideburns, must be neatly trimmed at all times.

i. For colder weather, only a blue lab coat with the MA patch on the left shoulder may be worn over the scrub shirt. A long sleeve shirt worn under the uniform scrub top is also permitted. Undershirt hem may not be visible by hanging lower than the scrub top.

j. NO smoking while in uniform. Students are allowed to change clothes (including scrub top and scrub bottom) and smoke in designated smoking areas while on CNM campus.

If a medical assistant student is not in compliance with the Uniform: Policies and Uses policy, they will be marked absent for the clinical/practicum/lab site.

Accessibility Services (formerly known as the Disability Resource Center)

CNM Accessibility Services assists students with physical, mental, learning, visual, speech or hearing disabilities. <https://www.cnm.edu/depts/accessibility-services>

Here are some examples of the services provided by Accessibility Services, depending on disability:

- Coordination with community support agencies
- Extended time testing and alternative testing formats
- Reader Writers and access to notetaking software
- Signed language interpreters
- Adaptive equipment such as FM transmitters, smartpens, & video magnifiers
- Instructional materials in alternative formats such as Braille
- Classroom accommodations such as adaptive furniture

Cell Phone/Electrical Device Policy

Students have the right to uninterrupted classroom and clinical experiences. Phone calls and text messages can disrupt the learning environment for the person sending/receiving the messages and the student peers in proximity.

- Classroom and On Campus Labs: When making or receiving personal calls, students should step out of the classroom/lab. Cellphones or other electronic devices can be on the student's person, but must be in "silent" or "off" mode. Any disturbance, including the sound of a vibrating alert, by a student's cellular phone/electronic device is considered rude and disrespectful. The person with the obtrusive cellular phone/electronic device will be asked to leave the classroom.
- Students will not have cellphones/electronic devices on their person at all during exams or exam reviews. They must be stowed in a purse or backpack (or left with the proctor until the activity is completed).
- Clinical Areas: Cell phone and electrical device use will be at the discretion of the clinical instructor and in compliance with the facility's policy.
- Family emergencies: Students may use the UNMHSC office number as an emergency contact number (505-925-8669). Students will not be called out of class or clinical experiences unless the nature of the emergency is explained by the person calling. If a student feels that the family situation warrants greater availability than a message relay, the student should consider attending to those issues instead of attending class or clinical. See attendance policies.