

Medical assistant ethics

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There are numerous ethical issues that a medical assistant may encounter in a daily office or hospital setting. It is unethical to have a conversation with a fellow coworker regarding a patient. The patient may overhear or worse they may be related to someone in the office. It is no one's business as to why the patient had an appointment. Another unethical behavior that is unacceptable is foul language in front of the patients. They do not need to hear that kind of language under any circumstances.

When a patient comes in to see you and smells of urine or alcohol, be courteous to the patient and do not judge the patient. This patient may not have the means to shower daily or they may be sick and are unaware of the odor. A good thing to remember when dealing with an ethical issue is always do the right thing at the right time and it will never become an issue. Medical Assistants need to put themselves into the shoes of the patient. They need to ask themselves, how would I want to be treated? How would I like to be recognized in the eyes of the healthcare worker?

How would I want my family treated? In doing this little experiment on a daily basis they will come to realize that we all are human and need to be treated equally, no matter what the situation may be. The general skills of a Medical Assistant consist of basic customer service. They must be able to communicate between the doctors and the patients. They need to do this within the legal and ethical boundaries. Document every conversation because if it is not documented then the conversation never happened. Educate the patient within the scope of practice.

Let the patient know of community resources for future reference of patients' needs. Operational functions are also a part of the daily duties of a Medical Assistant. Performing inventory of supplies and equipment so items can be replenished. Doing these functions will always help in maintaining the highest quality of care for the patient. Clinical skills of the CMA of general patient care to make them as comfortable as possible.

Many diagnostic procedures are required of the CMA; from collecting specimens to performing radiology tests.

Fundamental principles consisting of sterilizing rooms and equipment are skills that a CMA will do daily. Doing these clinical skills while practicing standard precautions must be a high priority for everyone in the health care facility. Administrative skills are essential for a CMA to do the job that is required of them. It is all done via computer so their typing skills must be adequate for them to succeed. From patient schedules to bookkeeping to insurance forms, all is done on a daily basis. Licensure is when a government agency authorizes individuals to work in a job.

A CMA does not need a license to work. Professions needing licenses are nurses and therapists. Registration is a professional organization in a specific health care field that administers exams and/or maintains a list of qualified individuals. CMA's can apply for a registration credential. This would give them a better paying job and more responsibilities at their present facility. Certification involves the issuing of a certificate and credentials by a professional organization to someone who has met the experience and education guidelines of that organization.

This basically tells everyone that you have finished your schooling for Medical Assisting. For a Medical Assistant to maintain his/her certification they must recertify either by passing the CMA exam again or by receiving sixty recertification points, thirty of which must be AAMA approved CEU's. The points must be as follows 10 administrative, 10 clinical, 10 general and 30 from any combination of the above three categories. You must also submit proof (photocopy of the card and length of program) of current, provider level CPR certification.

Continuing education units (CEU's) can be received by reading online books and taking a test when finished. The AAMA sponsors many workshops, seminars, and county, state, and national conferences for MA's to remain current in their field and earn the CEU's. For the safety of the patient and employee, an MA should never perform any tasks that are outside the scope of the MA practice. Outside the scope of a Medical Assistant's practice would be suturing a wound, administering a pap test for a female patient, or possibly giving the patient the diagnosis of the symptoms they are experiencing.

A physician should never delegate the full range of physical therapy to anyone other than a physical therapist. Under no circumstances should the Medical Assistant do any duties that are outside their scope of practice. If I were approached by my supervisor to perform outside of my scope of practice, I would calmly and rationally refuse the request. I do not feel that any job is worth losing if you are asked to perform it wrong.

I would explain to my supervisor politely that I am not qualified to perform the task asked and I would suggest someone else in the facility that is capable. I would let them know I would be willing to help out with any other task that is within my scope of practice. In order to find the article listed, I went to google.com and found an article from AAMA website on scope of practice act for Wisconsin. You can also go to AAMA website. Click on site map. Go to CMA today and scroll down. Click on Public Affairs Articles. Scroll down until you see the article found on google.

If I were approached by a patient or a fellow coworker and referred to as a nurse, I would explain to them that I am a Medical Assistant and explain some of my job functions. I would let them know that there is a big difference and the title does need to be corrected. I would let them know that if I were to acknowledge the comment of being called a nurse, I could lose my job as well as my career. They may not understand that it is a very serious offense. I would explain them that the actual nurses would not be able to be titled as a doctor so the same holds true for me.

When a medical assistant misrepresents herself/himself, they are in fact making the entire profession look bad in the eyes of the patient. The disciplinary results that could happen to the medical assistant are far greater than the prestige of stating you are who you are not. State disciplinary actions can result in fines and other criminal penalties. All office personnel should avoid referring to the medical assistant as a nurse also not just the patient. The doctor can also lose his career and/or a fine. I could lose my certification also.