



Northampton Community College

Allied Health and Sciences Division

Medical Assistant Specialized Diploma

Program Audit

2013 - 2018

**External Auditor:
Ann M. Osbun, BSN, RN
Practice Administrator
Steward Medical Group - Easton**

**Audit Prepared By:
Karen Stone, RN
Program Manager, Medical Assistant**

**Judith Rex, PhD, RN, BC
Dean, Allied Health and Sciences**

I. Program Purpose:

The Medical Assisting Specialized Diploma program is designed to prepare the entry level Medical Assistant for employment in a physician practice or other outpatient setting, performing basic clerical and clinical skills. The curriculum for the program is was designed and currently still aligns with the practice standards endorsed by the program advisory committee. The coursework is supported by both classroom and laboratory instruction, aimed at developing the student's skills in the academic setting prior to engaging in clinical instruction in affiliated physician practices.

While in the program, students practice patient care related skills in an on-campus lab and then in the final semester of the program they have a clinical practicum of 160 hours which is designed to develop and refine their clerical and clinical skills, supportive to the role of an entry level medical assistant. The curriculum is designed sequentially, to allow the student to master basic skills and competencies first, before progressing to more challenging procedures. Some highlights of the skills and competencies covered in the program are: medication administration, phlebotomy, ECGs.

This program is designed as part of a career ladder which allows successful students to gain employment at the earliest point in their academic program. While supporting their continued professional development, the students can continue their education for a certificate in Health Care Office Specialist or an Associate Degree in Allied Science in Health Care Office Coordinator.

II. Curriculum:

The program curriculum includes a collection of courses in which students develop basic skills for front office or clerical competency and back office or clinical competency. The Medical Assistant Techniques I and II courses include a weekly lab component for skill development and during those courses they do some clinical observations. At this time, none of the program courses are offered in an online format.

The highlight of the program is the capstone clinical externship course which students take in the third semester. During the capstone course, students work in the role of a medical assistant in a physician practice under the supervision of a clinical preceptor. The 160 hours for the externship align with the requirements as prescribed by the American Medical Technologist Association (AMT). The program is accredited by the American Medical Technologist Association and this recognition affords graduates of the program the opportunity to sit for the Registered Medical Assistant (RMA-AMT) Certification Exam. Electronic health record education is provided in the Healthcare Office Administration curriculum.

The program has an active advisory committee and they routinely review the curriculum at annual meetings keeping the curriculum current with clinical practice and employer expectations. The advisory committee recommended to remove the OFAD 101 3 credit Keyboarding class in the industry and this will be effective Fall 2019 and will be going through the curriculum committee to modify the program from 37 credits to 34 credit certificate.

Current Curriculum:

First Semester

COLS101	College Success	1 credit
BIOS130	Basics of Human Anatomy and Physiology	4 credits
MDAS101	Medical Assistant Techniques I	5 credits
HCOA154	Medical Terminology	3 credits
	Total:	13

Second Semester

MDAS105	Medical Assistant Techniques II	5 credits
HCOA172	Health Insurance Basics	3 credits
HCOA175	ICD-10-CM/PCS Coding Methodologies	3 credits
HCOA176	CPT Coding Methodology	3 credits
HCOA240	Medical Office Management Practices	3 credits
	Total:	17

Third Semester

MDAS201	Medical Assistant Externship	4 credits
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Total Credits: 34

III. Recommendations from 2014 Audit:

Recommendation - Based on the assessments that have been performed to date, we recommend a concentration of medication math be incorporated into the curriculum and the need for a math program prerequisite continues to be assessed.

Modification:

- Increasing math course work has been ongoing, with the addition of a basic math assessment early in the fall semester and then again early in the spring semester. This focuses on student ability to perform basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, decimals, and ratio and proportion. Math skills are reviewed and practiced throughout the fall semester. In the spring semester the student applies math skills to medication calculation while learning medication administration. During the externship semester, students attend a 6-hour math skills class that incorporates accurate math work with medication administration. The additional time spent on all math work has given the students increased confidence and accuracy in medication administration.

Recommendation - Based on the positive program outcomes achieved and encouraging enrollment growth, we recommend continuing the program on the Fowler and Monroe campuses with an emphasis on marketing the program more in Monroe County to recruit more students.

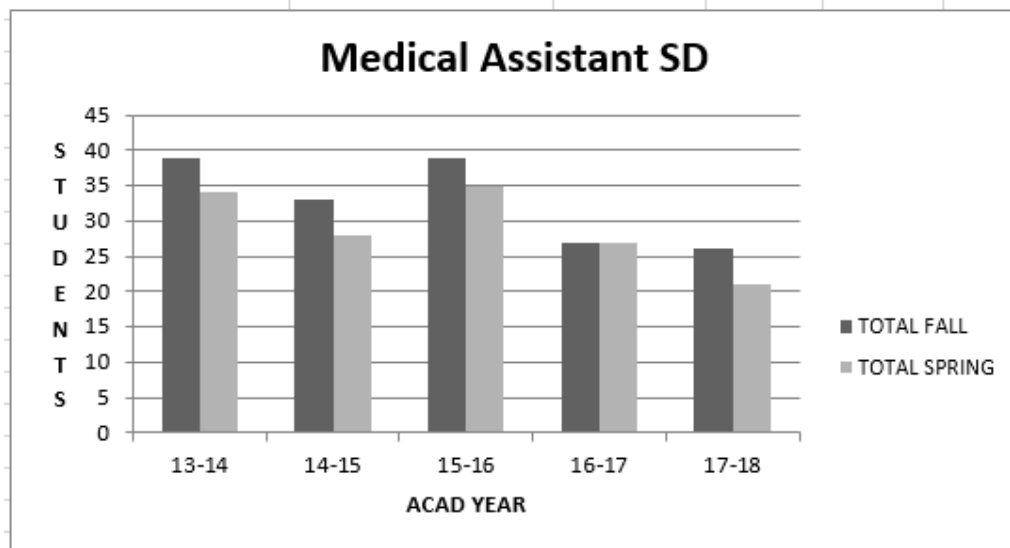
Modification:

- Marketing efforts focused on the Monroe area for students, on average 150 apply only 40 meet the eligibility requirements and prerequisites.
- With the increased enrollment, a classroom lab assistant was hired to assist with the lab time at Fowler Campus weekly, and at Monroe Campus as needed. The addition of this role has benefitted the student by providing increased individual teaching time in the lab setting for skill practice.

IV. Enrollment

The enrollment trend since the program started in 2007 has been stable. In 2011, NCC began offering the program at the Monroe campus in response to workforce needs in that area. The Monroe program runs on a weekend schedule to accommodate those who work during the week. The enrollments in Bethlehem have ranged from a low of 5 when the program started to a high this current semester (SP19) of 20. The Monroe enrollment has remained low with the current enrollment (SP19) at 4 students.

Medical Assistant SD		TOTAL ENROLLMENT					
MDAS		ACAD YR	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18
FALL							
FULL-TIME			12	18	13	7	11
PART-TIME			27	15	26	20	15
TOTAL FALL			39	33	39	27	26
SPRING							
FULL-TIME			12	15	18	13	11
PART-TIME			22	13	17	14	10
TOTAL SPRING			34	28	35	27	21



V. Faculty

Judith Rex, PhD, RN, BC, Dean of Allied Health and Sciences, provides administrative oversight for this program. Karen Stone, RN, Program Manager, has been teaching the Medical Assistant program since the start in 2007 and Edward Quinn, RN, BSN, teaches the section at the Monroe campus. Gayriel Lester, RN, MSN, is the lab assistant for both Fowler and Monroe campuses. In addition to teaching the MDAS courses Karen and Ed coordinate and oversee the students during the externship course.

VI. Program Outcomes

The retention rates for the programs ranged from a low of 42% for the first year of the program in 2007-08 to a high of 100% at Fowler in 2016-17 and Monroe in 2009-10. Over the past three years, the range has been between 67-100% retained. Graduate employment is 100%. Job placement data continues to be very sparse due to low response rates from graduates. Graduates of the program are not required to take the RMA certification exam, and some choose not to take it. It is nearly impossible to obtain accurate pass rates for the RMA exam as the student is not required to report this data to NCC.

The details can be viewed in Appendix A -Program Outcomes
Employment data from NCC Career Services can be viewed in Appendix B

VII. Program Costs

The program income has consistently run ahead of program costs by approximately \$500-600 annually. Most of the costs are associated with adjunct faculty salary expenses. As enrollments increase, the program leadership anticipates more contribution to the bottom line.

Program costs can be viewed in Appendix C - 2017-2018 Financial Data

VIII. Auditors Report



February 13, 2019

Judith Rex, Ph.D., RN, BC

Dean of Allied Health & Sciences
Northampton Community College
3835 Green Pond Road
Bethlehem, PA 18020

Subject: Northampton Community College Medical Assistant Program audit

Dear Ms. Rex:

Thank you for the opportunity to be involved with the Medical Assistant program audit. In preparation for the audit, I had the opportunity to review past audits, the current program statistics, a class observation, along with speaking to faculty and students.

After reviewing the information and statistics, I believe Northampton Community College (NCC) offers an excellent Medical Assistant program. They do an excellent job with the enrollment process; accepting qualified candidates into the program. This is evident with the retention rates significantly improving since the last audit, in 2014.

The program provides the students with sufficient in classroom course work, hands-on laboratory instruction, and an onsite clinical practicum within a physician office setting. NCC graduates are well prepared for the workforce. This is noted by the positive feedback from local healthcare organizations. The students are professional, have excellent basic clinical skills, and are eager to learn.

The medical assistant profession is ever changing. In response to the advisory board and the last independent audit, NCC has made changes to the program. The suggestion of

adding math course work has been implemented with positive feedback from the students, faculty, and board. In addition, due to the changing skills of the students, the advisory board suggested the elimination of keyboarding. This is taking effect in 2019. NCC has also identified the need for a classroom lab assistant, this has proven beneficial for the students needing individual instruction.

The program curriculum is all-encompassing of the clinical and clerical role of a medical assistant. With the mentioned changes, the course offerings are current and relevant to the expectations of the industry.

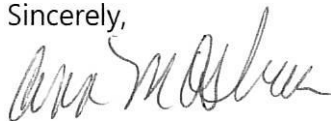
Based on the increased needs in our communities, I recommend offering the students the option of taking Community Health Worker courses in addition to their current curriculum. The addition of this elective would be a great compliment to an already robust curriculum.

There is a growing number of people/patients who are in need of resources. For the third time in a row, the Office of Disease Prevention affirmed this by listing "eliminating health disparities" in Healthy People 2020. Familiarizing medical assistant students with community programs and how to advocate for their patients will assist with linking the healthcare setting with available social service resources.

Based on the feedback from the advisory board, I recommend the need for incorporating soft skills education into the current curricula. These skills include but are not limited to communication skills, interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, problem-solving, time management, collaboration, etc... There is an increased emphasis by employers to hire a candidate with good soft skills.

Please accept my assessment of the Medical Assistant Program and recommendations. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you should have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ann M. Osbun".

Ann M. Osbun, BSN, RN
Practice Administrator
Steward Medical Group - Easton

IX. Conclusions and Recommendations:

Areas of Strength

The ability to identify knowledge, abilities and skills relies heavily on our workforce partners in reviewing the curriculum and identifying key areas for improvement. Based on those recommendations we are currently focused on the appropriate key areas for our students to be ahead of the curve for employment as all of the students completing their externships were offered employment positions for the past three years. The development of critical thinking and clinical skills are also stellar.

Areas of Improvement

Ideas for improvement are taken from the auditor to insert the social services component of the community health worker in alignment with *Healthy People 2030* and soft skills as areas that all employees need an understanding of social components and communication, team building, conflict resolution skills. We are hoping to pilot the 40 hours during this year practicum during their 160 total hours.

Recommendations

We plan to pilot the 40 hour community health worker curriculum and soft skills into the externship this Summer 1 component and this will allow students to have an additional certificate of completion for Community Health Worker and Mental Health First Aide as well as additional skills to take into the workplace.

Karen Stone

Professor

Judith Rex, PhD, RN, BC

Dean, Allied Health & Science Division

Appendix A – Program Outcomes

MEDICAL ASSISTING PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Survey Results		2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018	
		Main	Monroe	Main	Monroe	Main	Monroe	Main	Monroe	Main	Monroe
Retention Results	Admitted	29/26	9/6	32/28	---	27/22*	12/11*	15/17*	11/10	22/16**	6/4**
	Graduated	26	6	28	---	22	11	17*	10		
	Retention Rate	90%	67%	88%	---	82%	92%	100%	91%		
	Comments	* One student in each class finished externship in 2017. ** To date.									
Graduate Placement Results	Graduates employed as an MA within one year	12	---	12	---						
	Graduates Continuing Education	1	---		---						
	Graduates placed			7	---						
	Graduates receiving the RMA credential	12	---	14	---						
Graduate Survey Results	Distributed	26	6		---						
	Returned	3	0		---						
	Return Rate	12%	0%		---						
	Rating	5	---		---						
Graduate Satisfaction Results	Comments:										
Employer Survey Results	Distributed	2	---		---						
	Returned	0	---		---						
	Return Rate	0%	---		---						
	Rating	---	---		---						
Employer Satisfaction Results	Comments:										

G:\CPJ\MA\MA Surveys\Survey Results Chart - MA 04.04.2018

MEDICAL ASSISTING PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Survey Results		2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010		2010/2011		2011-2012		2012-2013	
		Main Only	Main Only	Main	Monroe	Main	Monroe	Main	Monroe	Main	Monroe
Retention Results	Admitted	9	13	14	6	16	8	24	7	23/16	13/9
	Graduated	5	9	11	6	13	6	16*	6**		
	Retention Rate	42%	69%	79%	100%	81%	75%	67%	86%	70%	70%
Graduate Placement Results	Graduates employed as an MA within one year	0/5	2/3 that responded	4/11		2/3 that responded	3/3 that responded	1/1 that responded	0/0 that responded	0/0 that responded	0/0 that responded
	Graduates Continuing Education		2/3 that responded			1	0	0/1 that responded	0/0 that responded	0/0 that responded	0/0 that responded
	Graduates placed		2/3 that responded	4/11		2/3	3/3	1/1 that responded	0/0 that responded	0/0 that responded	0/0 that responded
	Graduates receiving the RMA credential	3/60%	5/56%	9/81%	4/67%	6/46%	6/100%	6/38%	4/66%	0%	0%
Graduate Survey Results	Distributed	5	9	10	5	13	6	16	6	0	0
	Returned	3/5	3/9	1	0	3	3	1	0	0	0
	Return Rate	60%	33%	10%	0%	23%	50%	7%	0%	0%	0%
	Rating	2	5	4	N/A	4.71/5	4.04/5	3.43/5	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduate Satisfaction Results	Comments: * One student resigned before externship to take a full-time position with Lehigh Valley Hospital as a Technical Partner. ** One student transferred from Main to Monroe Class for Externship.										
Employer Survey Results	Distributed	5	3	4	0	0	2	1	0	0	0
	Returned	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Return Rate	60%	33%	0	0	0	50%	0	0	0	0
	Rating	2	5	0	0	0	4.125/5	0	0	0	0
Employer Satisfaction Results	Comments:										

Appendix B – Employment Data from Career Services

Medical Assistant	Aug. '12	Aug. '13	Aug. '14	Aug. '15	Aug. '16	Aug. '17
	Dec. '12	Dec. '13	Dec. '14	Dec. '15	Dec. '16	Dec. '17
	May '13	May '14	May '15	May '16	May '17	May '18
# of Graduates	23	25	32	27	32	
employed	11	14	16	21	11	
job hunting	0	2	1	0	1	
continuing ed.	5	4	4	1	8	
other	7	5	11	5	12	
Employed Graduates	11	14	16	21	11	
Additional Data Not Avail.	–	–	–	–	–	–
related	10	12	16	19	11	
unrelated	1	1	0	1	0	
unrelated by choice	0	1	0	1	0	
Median starting salary (if >2 reported)	\$11.75	\$11.50	\$13.00	\$13.50	\$13.75	–

Appendix C Financial Data

ACADEMIC AUDIT
FINANCIAL DATA

Medical Assistant

	FY2018	FY2017	FY2016	FY2015	FY2014
Program Income					
Tuition	117,642	118,845	174,996	136,365	117,642
Local Reimb	19,522	19,499	28,102	22,133	19,522
Operating Reimb	44,575	44,848	51,208	38,333	44,575
Stipend Reimb			41,925	33,660	
Total Income	181,739	183,192	296,231	230,490	181,739
Program Costs					
Direct Costs	74,474	80,338	99,309	83,069	74,474
Indirect Costs	83,921	80,032	115,042	89,998	83,921
Total Costs	158,395	160,370	214,351	173,067	158,395
FTE	24.32	25.16	37.53	30.49	24.32
Income per FTE	7,472	7,282	7,893	7,560	7,472
Cost per FTE	6,512	6,375	5,711	5,677	6,512
Inst Avg Cost per FTE	7,075	6,703	6,416	6,144	7,075
Rank	84 of 126	81 of 132	116 of 129	84 of 119	84 of 122