	POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Policy #: HS 3.59	Lead Department: Health Services
Title: Medical Assistants	
Original Date: February 1996	Last Revision Date: July 2006
Approved by: Barbara Flynn, RN	
Applies to: All Lines of Business	

Policy Objective:


To delineate the training, supervision and scope of practice for Medical Assistants.

I. DEFINITION

Medical Assistants are unlicensed persons who have received certificates indicating satisfactory completion of training requirements specified in Chapter 13, Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations.


II. SCOPE OF PRACTICE:

- A. A Medical Assistant may perform technical supportive services such as those specified below, provided that all of the following conditions are met:
1. The service is a usual and customary part of the medical practice where the Medical Assistant is employed;
 2. The supervising physician authorized the Medical Assistant to perform the service and assumes responsibility for the patient's treatment and care;
 3. The Medical Assistant has completed training as specified in section 3 below and has demonstrated competence in the performance of the service;
 4. Each technical supportive service performed by the Medical Assistant is documented in the patient's medical record, indicating the name, date and time, a description of the service performed, and the name of the physician who gave the Medical Assistant patient-specific authorization to perform the task or who authorized the task under a patient-specific standing order.
- B. A Medical Assistant, in accordance with the provisions in section 1.a. above, perform technical supportive services such as the following:
1. Administer medication orally, sublingually, topically, vaginally or rectally, or by providing a single dose to a patient for immediate self-administration. A Medical Assistant may administer medication by inhalation if the medications are patient-specific and have been or will be routinely and repetitively administered to that patient. In every instance,

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prior to administration of medication by the Medical Assistant, a licensed physician or other person authorized by law to do so shall verify the correct medication and dosage. No anesthetic agent may be administered by a Medical Assistant.

2. Perform electrocardiogram, electroencephalogram, or plethysmography tests, except full-body plethysmography. The Medical Assistant may not perform tests involving the penetration of human tissues except for skin tests or to interpret test findings or results.
3. Apply and remove bandages and dressings; apply orthopedic appliances such as knee immobilizers, orthotics, and similar devices; remove casts, splints and other external devices; obtain impressions for orthotics and custom molded shoes; select and adjust crutches for the patient and instruct the patient in proper use of crutches.
4. Perform automated visual field testing, tonometry, or other simple or automated ophthalmic testing not requiring interpretation in order to obtain test results.
5. Remove sutures or staples from superficial incisions or lacerations.
6. Perform ear lavage to remove impacted cerumen.
7. Collect specimens for lab testing by utilizing non-invasive techniques, including urine, sputum, semen and stool.
8. Assist patients with ambulation and transfers.
9. Prepare patients for and assist the physician, Physician Assistant or registered nurse in examinations or procedures including positioning, draping, shaving and disinfecting treatment sites.
10. As authorized by the supervising physician, provide patient information and instruction.


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11. Collect and record patient data including height, weight, temperature, pulse, respiration rate and blood pressure, and basic information about the presenting and previous conditions.
12. Perform simple laboratory and screening tests customarily performed in a medical office.
13. Cut the nails of otherwise healthy patients.
14. Administer first aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation in an emergency.
15. A Medical Assistant may also fit prescription lenses or use any optical device in connection with ocular exercises, visual training, vision training, or orthotics.

III. TRAINING

A. Injections

1. In order to administer medications by intramuscular, subcutaneous or intradermal injection, to perform skin tests, or to perform venipuncture of skin for the purposes of withdrawing blood, a Medical Assistant shall have completed the minimum training as described below:
 - a) Ten (10) clock hours of training in administering injections and performing skin tests, and/or
 - b) Ten (10) clock hours of training in performing venipuncture for the purpose of withdrawing blood; and
 - c) Satisfactory performance by the trainee of at least ten (10) each of intramuscular, subcutaneous, and intradermal injections and ten (10) skin tests, and/or at least ten (10) venipuncture and ten (10) skin punctures.
 - d) For those only administering medication by inhalation, ten (10) clock hours of training in administering medications by inhalation.
 - e) Training in (1) through (4) above shall include instruction and demonstration of:
 - (i) Pertinent anatomy and physiology appropriate to the procedures;
 - (ii) Choice of equipment;
 - (iii) Proper technique including sterile technique;

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- (iv) Hazards and complications;
- (v) Patient care following treatment or test;
- (vi) Emergency procedures; and
- (vii) California law and regulations for Medical Assistants.

B. Infection Control


Each Medical Assistant shall receive instruction in the use of Universal Precautions as outlined in the Centers for Disease Control guidelines for infection control

C. Administration of training

1. Training required above (in accordance with Sections 1366, 1366.1 and 1366.2, Chapter 13, Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations) may be administered in either of the following settings:
 - a) Under a licensed physician or podiatrist, who shall ascertain the proficiency of the Medical Assistant, or under a registered nurse, licensed vocational nurse, Physician Assistant or a qualified Medical Assistant acting under the direction of a licensed physician or podiatrist, who shall be responsible for determining the content of the training and the proficiency of the Medical Assistant. Training to administer medication by inhalation shall be provided by a licensed physician or respiratory care practitioner.
 - b) In a secondary, postsecondary, or adult education program in a public school authorized by the Department of Education, in a community college program, or a postsecondary institution accredited or approved by the Council on Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education. A licensed physician or podiatrist shall serve as advisor to the Medical Assistant training program.

The instructor in a public school setting shall possess a valid teaching credential issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

D. Documentation of Training

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1. The supervising physician shall certify in writing that the appropriate training for the Medical Assistant has taken place, and sign the certification (see attached sample).
2. More than one task or service may be certified in a single document; separate certifications shall be made for subsequent training in additional tasks or services.


IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF POLICY

- A. To ensure compliance with the requirements outlined above, the Alliance will monitor each office site where Medical Assistants are utilized. This will be done as part of the medical records/office audits which take place for all primary care providers annually.
- B. At the time of audit, documentation of the Medical Assistant's training will be requested and reviewed.
- C. The office medical records audit will include review for proper documentation of tasks or services performed by Medical Assistants.

Attachment A: Sample Letter “Medical Assistant Training Certification”

Revision History:

Review Date	Revised Date	Approved By
December 1998		Barbara Flynn, RN
July 2000		Barbara Flynn, RN
July 2002		Barbara Flynn, RN
July 2006		Barbara Flynn, RN

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MEDICAL ASSISTANT TRAINING CERTIFICATION

Date:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that _____ has demonstrated and completed on-the-job training as a "MEDICAL ASSISTANT" under the auspices of the undersigned as follows, and in compliance with the California Code of Regulations, Title 16, Chapter 13, Sections 1366, 1366.1, 1366.2, 1366.3 and 1366.4:

- A. Ten clock hours of training in administering injections and performing skin tests.
- B. Ten clock hours of training in venipuncture and skin puncture for the purpose of withdrawing blood.
- C. Satisfactory performance of at least ten each of intramuscular, subcutaneous and intradermal injections and ten skin tests, and/or at least ten venipunctures and ten skin punctures.
- D. For those only administering medication by inhalation, ten clock hours of training in administering medication by inhalation.
- E. Training in A through D above has included instruction and demonstration in:
 - 1. Pertinent anatomy and physiology appropriate to the procedures
 - 2. Choice of equipment
 - 3. Proper technique including sterile technique
 - 4. Hazards and complications
 - 5. Patient care following the treatment or test
 - 6. Emergency procedures
 - 7. California law and regulations for Medical Assistants
- F. The above named individual has been trained and has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the instructor, understanding of the purposes and techniques of infection control following the CDC's "Guidelines for Infection Control in Hospital Personnel" (July 1983).

MD Signature (Type name and professional status)