

The CMA (AAMA) Credential: Rise Above the Crowd

Partners in Productivity

In the specialized world of health care, one versatile professional stands out—the CMA (AAMA). This credential represents a medical assistant who has been certified by the Certifying Board of the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA).

Medical assistants are multi-skilled practitioners who assume a wide range of roles in physicians' offices and other health care settings. They are proficient in a multitude of administrative and clinical tasks, and are widely viewed by physicians as vital partners in increasing medical office productivity.

Medical assisting is one of the nation's fastest growing careers. Men and women already in the field—and those entering in the near future—are likely to find a growing demand for their services and ample opportunities for advancement in the years ahead.

Certification: A Commitment to Professionalism

Medical assistants can demonstrate their knowledge and commitment to professionalism by earning the CMA (AAMA) credential. The CMA (AAMA) is awarded to candidates who have successfully completed the CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Examination administered by the Certifying Board of the American Association of Medical Assistants. Like other professional designations, the CMA (AAMA) is evidence of competence in a demanding field.

The CMA (AAMA) enjoys increased respect and recognition from professional peers. Employers recognize the value of the credential. The CMA (AAMA) also benefits from broader career advancement opportunities and enhanced job security. The skills of the CMA (AAMA) are in demand in a wide range of health care delivery settings. And, the credential is valid wherever the medical assistant goes.

Testing for Today's Standards

The CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Exam is a comprehensive test of the knowledge actually needed in today's medical office. The content is drawn from an in-depth analysis of the numerous general, clinical, and administrative tasks medical assistants perform on a daily basis. The consultant for the exam is the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), the leading organization responsible for testing physicians nationwide.

Examination questions are formulated by the Certifying Board's Task Force for Test Construction. This group is composed of practicing medical assistants, physicians, and medical assisting educators from across the United States. Working with NBME, the Task Force updates the CMA (AAMA) Exam to reflect changes in the day-to-day responsibilities of medical assistants, as well as the latest developments in medical knowledge and technology. The examination tests knowledge in three major areas:

- **General medical knowledge**, including terminology, anatomy, physiology, behavioral science, and medical law and ethics
- **Administrative knowledge**, including medical records management, collections and insurance processing
- **Clinical knowledge**, including examination room techniques, medication preparation and administration, pharmacology and laboratory procedures

To be eligible for the CMA (AAMA) Exam, an applicant must be a graduate of a medical assisting program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) or the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES).

The exam is offered year-round at testing centers nationwide. To help appli-



According to the U.S. Department of Labor

Employment of medical assistants is expected to grow much faster than the average for all occupations as the health services industry expands due to technological advances in medicine, and a growing and aging population.

Employers prefer to hire experienced workers or certified applicants who have passed a national examination, indicating that the medical assistant meets certain standards of competence.

About the CMA (AAMA)

The CMA (AAMA) is a skilled professional who has demonstrated knowledge in a broad range of clinical and administrative areas. Versatility and commitment to excellence make the CMA (AAMA) a valued partner in increasing medical office productivity.

The CMA (AAMA) credential is awarded to medical assistants who have passed the CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Examination administered by the Certifying Board of the American Association of Medical Assistants. The exam is a comprehensive test of the knowledge needed to perform successfully in today's medical office.

cants prepare, the *CMA (AAMA) Candidate Application and Handbook* contains a content outline for the exam. The handbook, along with a list of medical assisting textbook publishers and sample exam questions can be found at www.aama-ntl.org.

Recertification: To Stay a Step Ahead

Being a health care professional today means maintaining a lifelong commitment to high standards of practice. The CMA (AAMA) is required to recertify every five years to keep the credential current. The CMA (AAMA) who is employed or seek-

ing employment must have current status in order to use the credential in connection with employment. Certification status is a matter of public record and may be verified by calling the AAMA.

Recertification reinforces the validity of the credential and helps maintain its continued acceptance by physicians, patients, and other allied health professionals.

The requirement can be met in either of two ways:

- By earning 60 recertification points through continuing education
- By passing the CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Exam

Those who elect the continuing education route can choose from hundreds of courses sponsored by local, state, and national AAMA groups. They can take advantage of continuing education articles published in each issue of *CMA Today*, the AAMA's bimonthly publication. Self-study courses are also available through the AAMA Continuing Education Department.

With over 275 chapters nationwide, AAMA is the premier organization serving the professional interests of medical assistants. The AAMA provides numerous services that help medical assistants put their careers on a successful and rewarding track and keep them there.

In addition, AAMA members have access to continuing education opportunities, publications, and a wide range of products and services available at special member discounts. The AAMA is also active in the legislative arena, protecting the right of medical assistants to practice in all 50 states.

The quality and cost of health care provided to our citizens is at the top of the list of challenges facing the United States today. With unique versatility and demonstrated commitment to professionalism, the CMA (AAMA) plays a central role in response to that challenge.



AAMA members are part of a nationwide network of medical assisting professionals who share a common interest in advancing their careers and a common dedication to high standards of patient care.

For More Information

For more information regarding the CMA (AAMA) credential, contact the AAMA at:

Phone: 800/ACT-AAMA
(800/228-2262)

Website: www.aama-ntl.org



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