

# 2026 MEDICAL ASSISTING

## Program Standards

### CONTENT STANDARD 1.0: PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND LEADERSHIP

#### Performance Standard 1.1: Student Leadership in Career Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) and Professional Associations

- 1.1.1 Explore the role of professional organizations and/or associations in the Medical Assisting industry.
- 1.1.2 Define the values, roles, and opportunities provided through career technical student organizations.
- 1.1.3 Engage in career exploration and leadership development.

### CONTENT STANDARD 2.0: THE MEDICAL ASSISTING PROFESSION

#### Performance Standard 2.1: Roles and Responsibilities and Credentialing

- 2.1.1 Describe the duties and responsibilities (e.g., liaison between the health care team and the patient, patient navigator) of a medical assistant.
- 2.1.2 Describe personal and professional qualities of successful medical assistants.
- 2.1.3 Describe the scope of practice for medical assistants based on state/location and facility (e.g., inpatient, ambulatory).
- 2.1.4 Describe the educational requirements for becoming a medical assistant.
- 2.1.5 Describe requirements for maintaining certification and registration.
- 2.1.6 Describe employment opportunities and related requirements for medical assistants.

#### Performance Standard 2.2: Health Care Team

- 2.2.1 Identify professional organizations associated with medical assisting.
- 2.2.2 Describe roles in the health care team and the role of the medical assistant within it.
- 2.2.3 Describe quality assurance standards and procedures throughout administrative and clinical settings.

### CONTENT STANDARD 3.0: PROFESSIONALISM FOR MEDICAL ASSISTING

#### Performance Standard 3.1: Communication

- 3.1.1 Describe communication strategies for relaying information between patients and providers.
- 3.1.2 Identify barriers and solutions to overcome communication barriers.
- 3.1.3 Describe conflict-management techniques and conflict-resolution strategies.
- 3.1.4 Facilitate patient compliance (e.g., follow-up).

#### Performance Standard 3.2: Special Patient Populations and Sensitivity

- 3.2.1 Identify physical, mental, cognitive, and social needs of patients that can affect the delivery of health care.
- 3.2.2 Modify communication with patients and caregivers, based on special considerations (e.g., pediatric, geriatric, accessibility—hearing, vision, cognitive impairment).
- 3.2.3 Define types of special patient populations.
- 3.2.4 Describe the need for cultural sensitivity.
- 3.2.5 Identify accommodations for patients with special needs.
- 3.2.6 Identify issues (e.g., language, age, socio-economic, cognitive) that may impede patient health literacy.

### CONTENT STANDARD 4.0: FUNDAMENTALS OF HEALTH CARE AND BASIC SCIENCE

#### Performance Standard 4.1: Medical Terminology

- 4.1.1 Interpret the common word elements (i.e., prefix, suffix) used in medical terms.
- 4.1.2 Define vocabulary related to body systems.
- 4.1.3 Define vocabulary related to medical procedures.

- 4.1.4 Interpret medical terminology from standard abbreviations, including the Joint Commission's "Do Not Use" abbreviations list.

#### **Performance Standard 4.2: The Human Body**

- 4.2.1 Describe the structures and functions of major body systems.
- 4.2.2 Identify signs, symptoms, and etiology of common disorders and injuries.

#### **Performance Standard 4.3: Law and Ethics**

- 4.3.1 Identify federal and state laws governing health care as it pertains to the scope of practice of a medical assistant (e.g., Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act [HIPAA], Affordable Care Act [ACA], Human Error Root Cause Analysis [HERCA], Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act [HITECH], Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act [CARES], Controlled Substances Act [CSA]).
- 4.3.2 Describe the importance of adhering to HIPAA regulations in patient care.
- 4.3.3 Describe medical directives (e.g., advanced directives, living will, Physician's Orders for Scope of Treatment [POST], health care proxy, medical order for life sustaining treatment) guiding patient care and limitations.
- 4.3.4 Differentiate between personal and professional ethics.
- 4.3.5 Describe requirements for mandatory reporting, including signs and symptoms of abuse, triggers for reporting, and reporting agencies.
- 4.3.6 Describe legal requirements regarding reportable violations or incidents.

### **CONTENT STANDARD 5.0: ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

#### **Performance Standard 5.1: Digital Literacy**

- 5.1.1 Describe technology-based methods for providing health care and health information (e.g., telehealth, virtual, patient portals).
- 5.1.2 Describe standards for appropriate use of social networking and media (i.e., responsible digital citizenship) in the medical field.
- 5.1.3 Describe safety and security best practices guiding information technology use.

#### **Performance Standard 5.2: Clerical Functions**

- 5.2.1 Demonstrate professional telephone techniques and interpersonal skills.
- 5.2.2 Schedule and monitor patient appointments, using electronic and paper-based systems.
- 5.2.3 Complete or update a patient registration, based on urgency/acuity and insurance coverage.
- 5.2.4 Identify the components of a patient's health record.

#### **Performance Standard 5.3: Billing and Coding**

- 5.3.1 Define basic insurance terminology.
- 5.3.2 Interpret basic coding terminology.
- 5.3.3 Describe Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) billing and documentation requirements (e.g., charge capturing).
- 5.3.4 Complete billing, claims, processing, and prior authorization transactions.
- 5.3.5 Prepare patient charges and the related claim form.
- 5.3.6 Describe the process for handling balance sheets, day sheets, and ledger sheets.

### **CONTENT STANDARD 6.0: CLINICAL PROCEDURES**

#### **Performance Standard 6.1: Patient Documentation**

- 6.1.1 Complete a medical intake (e.g., social, family, patient identifiers, past medical history [PMH], screening).
- 6.1.2 Differentiate between paper chart and Electronic Medical/Health Record (EMR/EHR).
- 6.1.3 Demonstrate accurate and legal documentation in medical records.

#### **Performance Standard 6.2: Patient Care**

- 6.2.1 Identify the normal range of each vital sign.
- 6.2.2 Obtain vital signs.
- 6.2.3 Document vital signs.
- 6.2.4 Assist provider with general and specialty physical examination.

- 6.2.5 Compare complementary and alternative medicine.
- 6.2.6 Prepare a patient for procedures, including providing patient education.
- 6.2.7 Describe dietary needs related to diseases and conditions (e.g., diabetes, kidney disease, eating disorders, celiac disease).
- 6.2.8 Identify public health resources.

#### Performance Standard 6.3: Psychological and Behavioral Health

- 6.3.1 Identify signs and symptoms of common mental health conditions (e.g., anxiety, depression, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder [PTSD], Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder [ADHD]).
- 6.3.2 Identify environmental and socio-economic stressors.
- 6.3.3 Describe procedures for handling a patient emergency.
- 6.3.4 Describe the end-of-life process and stages of grief.
- 6.3.5 Describe Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and stages of human development.

#### Performance Standard 6.4: Point-of-Care Testing

- 6.4.1 Describe procedures for collecting non-blood specimens.
- 6.4.2 Describe the Clinical Lab Improvement Act (CLIA) and the role of the Commission on Office Laboratory Accreditation (COLA).
- 6.4.3 Describe the procedures for performing CLIA/COLA-waived testing.
- 6.4.4 Describe the procedures for reporting in-range and out-of-range laboratory and test values.
- 6.4.5 Describe the procedures for matching and labeling specimen to patient and completed requisition.
- 6.4.6 Describe the procedures for processing, handling, and transporting collected specimens.
- 6.4.7 Describe the procedures for vision and hearing testing.
- 6.4.8 Describe the procedures for respiratory testing.
- 6.4.9 Identify common testing errors leading to testing discrepancies and inaccurate results.

#### Performance Standard 6.5: Venipuncture and Capillary

- 6.5.1 Verify an order.
- 6.5.2 Select site and supplies.
- 6.5.3 Determine order of draw.
- 6.5.4 Describe procedures for newborn screening.
- 6.5.5 Process specimens for laboratory.
- 6.5.6 Identify common adverse reactions to venipuncture and standard responses.

#### Performance Standard 6.6: First Aid and Safety

- 6.6.1 Demonstrate universal precautions in the practice of first aid.
- 6.6.2 Demonstrate the technique for performing Basic Life Support for the Health Care Provider Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation/Automated External Defibrillator (CPR/AED).
- 6.6.3 Demonstrate basic first aid on an adult, child, and infant.
- 6.6.4 Describe the emergency action plan function and components (e.g., pull – aim – squeeze – sweep [PASS] fire extinguisher technique, fire drill, AED, crash cart, emergency medications).
- 6.6.5 Describe signs and symptoms related to urgent and emergency situations (e.g., diabetic shock, heat stroke, allergic reactions, choking, syncope, seizure).
- 6.6.6 Describe treatment for common injuries (e.g., bandaging, ice, elevation).
- 6.6.7 Describe the importance of adhering to regulations and guidelines when treating common injuries (e.g., animal bites, lacerations, abrasions, fractures, sprains, burns).

#### Performance Standard 6.7: Electrocardiogram (EKG/ECG) and Cardiovascular Testing

- 6.7.1 Identify types of electro-leads.
- 6.7.2 Identify anatomical electrode placement.
- 6.7.3 Perform EKG/ECG test.
- 6.7.4 Describe normal results.

6.7.5 Describe common artifacts and how to address them.

#### **CONTENT STANDARD 7.0: PHARMACOLOGY**

##### **Performance Standard 7.1: Fundamentals of Pharmacology**

- 7.1.1 Identify common drug classifications (e.g., diuretics, hypoglycemics, analgesics, over-the-counter) and indications for commonly prescribed medications.
- 7.1.2 Differentiate between side effects and adverse effects and between indications and counter-indications.
- 7.1.3 Identify forms of medications (e.g., tablet, patch, capsule, injectable).
- 7.1.4 Compare pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics.
- 7.1.5 Identify patient rights of medication administration.

#### **CONTENT STANDARD 8.0: EMERGENCY AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

##### **Performance Standard 8.1: Medical Office Safety and Compliance**

- 8.1.1 Identify Center for Disease Control (CDC) regulations, including bloodborne pathogen standards.
- 8.1.2 Interpret the information included on safety data sheets (SDS) and instructions for use (IFU).
- 8.1.3 Describe Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations as they apply to the workplace.
- 8.1.4 Identify federal, state, and local laboratory regulations and safety procedures.

##### **Performance Standard 8.2: Infection Control**

- 8.2.1 Demonstrate handwashing and sanitizing procedures.
- 8.2.2 Demonstrate using personal protective equipment (PPE), including donning and doffing.
- 8.2.3 Describe the chain of infection, including aseptic and infection control measures.
- 8.2.4 Differentiate between surgical and medical aseptic procedures.
- 8.2.5 Compare standard, universal, and transmission precautions.
- 8.2.6 Describe procedures for biohazard (i.e., sharps) and waste disposal.

## **IDCTE Document Control Information**

### **Program Standard Revision: HPPS Medical Assisting**

| Date | Standard # | Original | Summary of Change | Revised By | Approved By |
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