

# BRADENTON HERALD

**Attention:** Bh Circ Nie/pie  
**Ad Number:** F39577  
**Description:** Jcp  
**Ad Size:** 6 x 21.25"  
**Ad Builder:** Julie Beacham-Hooie  
**Insertions:** 1

**Code:** 001300000  
**Revision No.:** 1  
**Sales Rep:** Blank #1  
**Rep Phone:**  
**Rep Fax:**  
**Date:** Thu, May 24, 2007 - 9:48 AM

Client Approval  OK As Is  OK After Corrections Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Insertion Date: Thu, May 31, 2007  
 Publication: Local

Newspaper in Education presents

**BRADENTON HERALD**  
 Manatee County's Newspaper since 1922

**careerbuilder**  
 bradenton.com/careerbuilder

## THE JOB CENTER

### MEDICAL ASSISTANT



Medical assistants often handle a variety of administrative duties, such as updating patient records and greeting patients, along with clinical duties, such as performing lab tests and removing sutures.

**R**outine administrative and clinical tasks are the domain of medical assistants. They are employed by hospitals, clinics, and a variety of health care practitioners to keep office and clinical functions running smoothly.

Duties vary according to location, size, and specialty. Medical assistants usually work as "generalists" at smaller practices, dealing with both administrative and minor clinical duties. Typically they report to an office manager, physician, or other health care practitioner. Those employed by larger practices or hospitals generally specialize in a particular area, such as ophthalmology or dermatology.

Administrative duties generally include answering telephones, greeting patients, updating and filing patient records, completing insurance forms, handling correspondence, scheduling appointments, arranging hospital admissions and laboratory services, and dealing with billing and bookkeeping. They may also purchase and maintain supplies and equipment.

Clinical duties are specified according to state law. They may include recording medical histories and vital signs, describing treatment procedures to patients, preparing patients for examination, and assisting physicians during exams.

Medical assistants also may collect and prepare lab specimens or perform basic laboratory tests on premises. They may dispose of contaminated supplies and sterilize medical equipment. They prepare and administer medications as directed by a physician, authorize drug refills as directed, telephone prescriptions to pharmacies, draw blood, prepare patients for X-rays, administer electrocardiograms, remove sutures, and replace dressings. They also maintain, clean, and organize waiting and exam rooms.

Some medical assistants specialize in a particular area. For instance, podiatric medical assistants make castings of patients' feet, take and develop X-rays, and assist podiatrists in surgery. Ophthalmic medical assistants provide basic eye care, such as measuring and recording vision, testing eye muscle function, and conducting diagnostic tests. They may also demonstrate how to insert, remove, and care for contact lenses, and maintain optical and surgical equipment.

Professional certifications exist for medical assistants working in a variety of fields. There is no licensing required for medical assistants. However, some states may require assistants to pass a test or course before an they can perform certain tasks, such as taking X-rays or drawing blood.

#### SKILLS REQUIRED

Medical assistants must be able to pay attention to detail. They must also be compassionate, patient, and possess excellent written and verbal communication skills.

#### WHERE/HOW TO GET TRAINING

##### Schooling

Most employers of medical assistants prefer to hire graduates of formal medical assisting programs. Formal training and education for medical assistants usually takes one year to complete at a technical college, while an associate degree requires two years of study. Most medical assisting programs consist of both medical and administrative courses, including anatomy and physiology, medical terminology, typing, transcription, record keeping, and insurance processing. Laboratory techniques, clinical and diagnostic procedures, pharmaceutical principles, medication administration, and first aid are also covered. Accredited programs usually require an internship in a physician's office, hospital, or other health care facility.

Experienced workers fare the best in obtaining employment, as do certified applicants who have passed a national exam. Such exams include: the Certified Medical Assistant credential, awarded by the American Association of Medical Assistants; the Registered Medical Assistant credential, awarded by the American Medical Technologists; and the Podiatric Medical Assistant Certified credential, awarded by the American Society of Podiatric Medical Assistants.

##### Financial Aid

Grants, scholarships, loans, and work/study programs are available for students. For most of this aid, prospective students must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, available from high school guidance offices and postsecondary financial aid offices.

For more information on federal financial aid programs, visit the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov>.

**For information on federal student aid, call: (800) 4FEDAID**

#### FUTURE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Job opportunities for medical assistants are expected to grow faster than average through 2010 as the health services industry expands

due to technological advances in medicine, plus a growing and aging population. In general, medical assisting is considered one of the fastest growing occupations.

#### WORK ENVIRONMENT

Work environments are well-lit, clean, and professional. Medical assistants constantly interact with people and may be required to

juggle many responsibilities at once. They usually wear comfortable clothing or uniforms, such as surgical scrubs.

#### RESOURCES - HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

##### ONLINE:

- [www.aama-ntl.org](http://www.aama-ntl.org) (The American Association Of Medical Assistants)
- [www.abhes.org](http://www.abhes.org) (Accrediting Bureau Of Health Education Schools)

##### GENERAL:

Registered Medical Assistants Of American Medical Technologists  
 710 Higgins Rd.  
 Park Ridge, IL 60068-5765

##### LOCAL:

Jeanell Copeland, Early Childhood Education  
 751-7900, ext. 2017  
[copeland@manateeschools.net](mailto:copeland@manateeschools.net)

## Q&A

**Q:** Must medical assistants be licensed?

**A:** According to American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA), there is no licensing for medical assistants. However, some states require medical assistants to pass a test or course before performing certain tasks.

**Q:** Which high school courses are helpful?

**A:** Mathematics, health, biology, typing, bookkeeping, computers, and office skills. Volunteer experience in the health care field is also helpful.

**Q:** What is a typical work schedule?

**A:** Most full-time medical assistants work a regular 40-hour week. Others work part-time, evenings, or weekends.

**Q:** Where do most medical assistants work?

**A:** In 2000, about 60 percent worked in physicians' offices, and about 15 percent were in hospitals, including inpatient and outpatient facilities. The rest worked in nursing homes, offices of other health practitioners, and other health care facilities.

**Q:** What other occupations are similar?

**A:** Dental assistants, medical records and health information technicians, medical secretaries, occupational therapist assistants and aides, pharmacy aides, and physical therapist assistants and aides.

#### JOBS IN THIS FIELD

Job titles	Place of work	Kind of work	Average salary*
Medical Assistant	Physician's office, health care clinic, hospital	Assists with routine clerical and clinical duties as determined by a physician.	\$19,000-\$32,000

\*Salaries may vary depending on region, experience, and size of company. Sources: U.S. Department of Labor, Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance.

**MANATEE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE**  
 School District of Manatee County  
 Main Campus  
 5603 34th Street West  
 (941) 751-7900

**MANATEE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE**  
 School District of Manatee County  
 East Campus  
 5520 Lakewood Ranch Blvd.  
 (941) 752-8100

[www.manateetechnicalinstitute.org](http://www.manateetechnicalinstitute.org)



Bradenton Beauty and Barber Academy  
[www.beauty.academy.us](http://www.beauty.academy.us)



Newspaper in Education  
[www.niemanatee.com](http://www.niemanatee.com)