



**Medical Assistant ESSB 6237 Rules Workshop
Blackriver Training and Conference Center Renton, WA
Videoconference to Department of Health Spokane, WA
August 27, 2012**

The department held a rules workshop on August 28, 2012 in Tumwater, WA. The purpose of this workshop was to gather stakeholder comments, questions, and concerns to consider during the rule writing process.

Brief introductions, room orientation, and power point presentation by Department of Health staff

Public Testimony/Rules Discussion

- A representative from National Health Care Association (NHA) seeks to obtain approval for Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) exam for Washington Medical Assistants (MAs). He stated that:
 - CCMA certification is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)
 - The CCMA is recognized by the Medical Assisting Education Review Board (MAERB) for meeting Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs in Medical Assisting. This includes the requirements for program director qualifications and the national certification examination performance outcome reporting by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)
 - The CCMA is recognized by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) in meeting standards for graduates of accredited medical assisting programs
- A representative from the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance stated that:
 - The Alliance requires MAs to have certification when hired or obtain within 1 year by American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) or American Medical Technologist (AMT)
 - Supports certification
 - Requests that these two be recognized as the approved exams
- A representative from National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT) states that:
 - NCCT recommends state approval of medical assistant certification exams accredited by either the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) or the American National Standards Institute

(ANSI). The NCCT National Certified Medical Assistant (NCMA) certification examination program is accredited by NCCA and seeks state approval

- The NCMA certification exam is recognized by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) and the Accrediting Bureau for Health Education Schools (ABHES) for use as an outcome measure by their accredited medical assistant (MA) programs
- NCCT tests qualified MA candidates from CAAHEP and ABHES accredited programs, **as well as** qualified candidates from MA programs in colleges that hold institutional accreditation recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). NCCT sees well-prepared MA graduates from both, and recommends state approval of both to avoid unnecessarily limiting the number of well-prepared MA graduates available to meet the state's healthcare needs
- An instructor from a Washington community college stated that:
 - The American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) national body is very active in Washington
 - AAMA requires 60 continuing education hours to recertify
 - AAMA national certification exam should be used because it is connected with a national organization
 - 2 year community and technical college programs include general education studies as well as the MA specific education
 - Applicants should only allowed to take the AAMA national exam 3 times
 - Refresher classes should be available for those who were educated but did not sit for exam
- A representative from the Washington State Society of Medical Assistants (WSSMA) and AAMA:
 - Supports the AAMA as testing body, and commented that
 - The department should also recognize other accreditation bodies
 - Those certified through AAMA should be allowed to keep certification
- A representative from American Medical Technologists (AMT) stated that:
 - AMT certifies MAs and other health providers
 - Started their MA program in 1972
 - Recognizes US Armed Forces training
 - Training programs accredited by CAAHEP and the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) should be recognized by the department
 - Years of practice (5+) be substituted for formal training
 - Exams should be approved by National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and/or ANSI
 - There is confusion between national MA-Registered and MA-Certified and state registration and certification
 - Recognized exams should be administered by not-for-profit organizations

BREAK

Spokane Public Testimony/Rules Discussion

- A representative from the Rockwood Clinic stated that:
 - The clinic employs a large number of MAs, and also
 - Has concerns about the list of medications MAs can administer
 - Would like to know the process that will be used to determine which medications are on list
- An employee for a podiatrists asked:
 - Do people transitioning from HCA to MA have to take an exam if they have not already done so?
 - Can MAs do things beyond what is in the law, i.e., can their specialty personnel perform certain tasks not outline in the Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6237?

Open Public Discussion

Comments by attending stakeholders in the group during the open discussion:

- Schools certified by AAMA should be endorsed
- Believe terminology is confusing and that Washington should not mix state designation with nationally recognized titles
- “Diagnostic and therapeutic agents” should be defined or clarified
- Believe that the language needs to be very specific when defining roles
- Page 12, line 28, radiologist tech should be amended—the word technician should be changed to technologist
- MAs that belong to a national organization requires completion of a certain amount of CEUs, similar CEU requirements should be required at state level
- It would be helpful to have FAQ sheet about some of the things that came out in this workshop
- Did not see any provision allowing determination of number of CE hours
- Will people who have let their HCA certification expire because they have moved into another healthcare field or position be grandfathered in?
- Concerned about terminology relating to surgical technologist
- Bill says that MAs can assist in minor surgery but not in a hospital, would like to see clarification in rule
- “Facility” and “Immediate Supervision” should be defined

Spokane, Open Discussion

None

Meeting adjourned. Attendees encouraged to submit their written comments to medical.assistants@doh.wa.gov