

South Dakota Board of
Technical Education

April 9, 2024

Lake Area Technical College
1201 Arrow Ave. NE
Watertown, SD 57201

**RE: South Dakota Board of Technical Education Approval of:
Non-Substantive Program Application
Diploma in Medical Assisting**

To whom it may concern:

After review, the executive director has approved above application.

Per Board Policy 303.3, the receipt of this letter completes the SDBOTE's approval process, and the technical college may proceed with program implementation.

The SDBOTE's approval is valid for three years upon the date of this letter. If a technical college does not implement an approved program within three years, approval is terminated.

A technical college must update the program's profile in the SDBOTE's Academic Program Database by June 30 prior to the year in which students are first enrolled or at least 30 days prior to enrolling students, whichever is first.

Sincerely,

Scott DesLauriers
Deputy Director
South Dakota Board of Technical Education
800 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57006
Scott.DesLauriers@state.sd.us
(605) 295-7033

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Institution	Lake Area Technical College
Program Identifier Code (If applicable)	MA
Program Title	Medical Assisting
Program Award Level:	<input type="checkbox"/> Short-Term Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Long-Term Certificate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Associate of Applied Science <input type="checkbox"/> Associate of Applied Science Option
CIP Code (6 Digit)	51.0801
Projected Implementation Date	Fall 2024
Approved Parent Program Title (If applicable)	Medical Assisting
Approved Parent Program Identifier Code (If applicable)	51.0801
Location	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Main Campus <input type="checkbox"/> Other:

SUMMARY

Type of Non-Substantive Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Program created using subset of existing courses (B.1.1) <input type="checkbox"/> Creation of associate of applied science option (B.1.2) <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidation of existing programs (B.1.3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Program award level change (B.1.4) <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
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Describe the change the institution is seeking approval of.

Lake Area Technical College seeks approval to change our Medical Assisting (MA) degree level from an Associate's Degree to a Diploma. We seek to suspend the AAS option, making our MA program diploma only.

The purpose of this change is to create a degree level for our Medical Assisting program that aligns with the Board of Technical Education's goal of Affordability while still providing a high-quality education that successfully prepares students for a high-demand field and meets accreditation requirements.

We will offer a MA educational opportunity that will provide a positive return on investment for students. The proposed MA diploma consists of 38 credits and costs approximately \$8,300. By contrast, the current AAS includes 67.5 credits and costs an average of \$16,728. The South Dakota data from the U.S. Census Bureau states the average wage for a Medical Assistant is \$18.49 per hour (75p) per the Codington County demographic data. At that rate of pay, an 11-month diploma program is a more economically responsible option for students than the AAS degree.

LATC's current MA program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHE) upon the recommendation of the Medical Assisting Review Board (MAERB). CAAHE recognizes a diploma as an approved degree level for Medical Assistants. The process to determine which courses, concepts and skills would be retained from the two-year MA Associates' Degree course outline and then transferred to the one-year diploma program was carefully considered and measured by the present MA department head and instructional staff and monitored by the LATC Academics Department. In order to determine which classes remained, the curriculum was thoroughly reviewed against the MAERB objectives. All required skills for cognitive, psychomotor and affective learning outcomes necessary for degree completion were maintained and assessed; thus, the program continues to meet the CAAHE requirements and expectations. Upon completion of the aforementioned process, the LATC MA Advisory Board reviewed and approved all curriculum changes during the January, 2024 meeting.

The need in South Dakota for Medical Assistants is expected to increase by 21% from 2023-2033, with an estimated 228 additional openings by 2033, according to the Lightcast Q4 2023 Data Set report for Medical Assistants. The Medical Assisting program at LATC is vital to filling this workforce need for South Dakota communities.

CRITERION 2: DEMAND

The program leads to meaningful employment, adequate student enrollment, and/or fulfills needs not being met by existing education and training providers.

- 2.1. The program leads to high-wage occupations that have an average/mean wage greater than the median wage across all occupations.
- 2.2. The program leads to high-demand occupations that have project annual openings (a measure of demand for workers) greater than the average across all occupations or is shown as an economic and/or labor market emerging field for the state of South Dakota and its regions.
- 2.3. The program's student enrollment is adequate to justify program existence.
- 2.4. The program fulfills a demand not being met by existing education and training providers in the region and/or state.

2.1. Describe the wage projections for occupations associated with the proposed program by completing Appendix 2.A.

2.2. Describe the demand projections for occupations associated with the proposed program.

A. Complete Appendix 2.A.

B. If an emerging field for the state of South Dakota, describe the field. Letter(s) of support, detailing demand, should be attached as appendices.

Not an emerging field.

2.3. Describe projected student enrollment for the proposed program by completing Appendix 2.B.

2.4. Describe how the proposed program fulfills a demand not being met by existing education and training providers in the region and/or state.

A. Identify closely related program(s) that currently exist at other public higher education institutions in the system or state. If none, write "None."

Southeast Technical College offers a 41-credit Diploma in Medical Assisting with a four-year average of 35 students enrolled. The program consists of one year.

Western Dakota Technical College has a 39-credit Diploma in Medical Assisting with a four-year average of 11 students enrolled. This program consists of one year.

Mitchell Technical College has a 67.5 credit AAS in Medical Assisting with a four-year average of 26 students enrolled. This program consists of four semesters.

The above enrollment numbers come from the SD Board of Technical Education's Fall, 2023 Enrollment Report.

B. If applicable: Describe the ways in which the demand is not currently being met by the aforementioned program(s) and provide justification as to why the program should be approved by addressing the following conditions that warrant duplication ([BP 303.2](#)). Select all that apply.

Unmet Demand (C.5.1.1)
 Industry Partnership (C.5.1.2)

Increases Student Access (C.5.1.3)
 Other:

I. For each condition selected above, provide a brief justification.

There is an unmet need for Medical Assistants in South Dakota currently, and that need is expected to increase in the next 10 years. According to Lightcast projections, the number of Medical Assistant openings in the next 10 years in South Dakota is expected to increase by 228, which is a 21% increase. The US Bureau of Labor and Statistics projects a 14% growth rate for Medical Assistants nationwide for 2022-2032. This means that South Dakota will see more growth in the Medical Assisting field than most of the country. In addition, Lightcast shows that 10% of the MA workforce in our region is likely set to retire in the next 10 years. Changing LATC's MA degree from an AAS to a Diploma will reduce the time it takes students to receive their training and enter the workforce, helping fill this workforce need more quickly and efficiently.

A number of local healthcare employers in our region have contacted us regarding their overwhelming need for Medical Assistants. In October, 2023, Sanford Health reported 238 openings for Medical Assistants systemwide, with 71 of those openings in South Dakota. Additionally, Avera reported 16 openings at that same time.

According to Lightcast projections, the need in Watertown for Medical Assistants will increase 15.1% by 2033. We realize this increase is considerable but not as significant as other communities in our state, where the increase will be closer to 20%. To help fill the need in other regions, we plan to make our MA diploma accessible in a blended format starting Spring, 2025. Students will be able to complete the majority of their coursework online with limited trips to in-person labs on the LATC campus for skill development and checkoffs. We are excited to be the first SD technical college to offer MA in this flexible format.

CRITERION 3: DESIGN

The program's learning assessment strategy, program of study, and delivery methods are designed to provide students with the necessary competencies, as demonstrated through program learning outcomes.

- 3.1. The program is aligned to competencies, as demonstrated through program learning outcomes, that are developed with and continually validated by relevant stakeholders.
- 3.2. The program has a learning assessment strategy to validate student mastery of the program learning outcomes.
- 3.3. The program has an integrated program of study designed to develop and reinforce the program learning outcomes.
- 3.4. The program, when appropriate, includes a work-based learning component that develops and reinforces the program learning outcomes.
- 3.5. The program, when appropriate, offers flexible delivery methods to increase student access.

3.0. Describe the proposed program's alignment with the program award level requirements established in [BP 301.1](#).

A. Does the program align with the requirements?

- Yes
 No (Requesting Exemption)

B. If no: Provide a detailed rationale for program exemption. Specify which requirement(s) in BP 301.1 are not met; cite specific policy sections (e.g., B.3.4), when appropriate. If external organizations are involved (accreditation, regulatory, licensure, etc.), reference the organization name(s), specific requirements (including citations), and a justification for why the exemption should be approved.

3.1. Describe the program learning outcomes.

A. Provide a list of program learning outcomes for each proposed award level. Learning outcomes should be specific to the program.

The graduate of this program will be able to:

1. Safely and effectively perform a variety of clinical and/or administrative tasks as an entry-level Medical Assistant.
2. Display professionalism in the workplace and communicate effectively both verbally and in writing within a work environment.
3. Communicate, interact, and work appropriately and effectively with patients, patients' family, peers, staff and supervisors.
4. Follow standards, policies, and procedures of the physician's office within the Medical Assistant scope of practice while demonstrating ethical and legal behaviors.
5. Display safe work practices to prevent injury and illness by adhering to the health and safety policies and procedures.
6. Discuss the value of lifelong learning and being an active member of a professional society.

B. Describe the how the program learning outcomes were developed and validated.

The program learning outcomes are based on accreditation standards and policies according to the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Programs (CAAHEP) for Medical Assistants. In addition, the MA advisory board has voted on and approved these program learning outcomes.

3.2. Describe the program's learning assessment strategy.

A. Describe how students will demonstrate mastery of the program learning outcomes. Description should be specific to the program's learning assessment plan vs. the institutional assessment plan.

Evaluation is provided by the CAAHEP and states what needs to be performed and at what degree. Students are evaluated and monitored while on their Externship. Supervisors evaluate students on a daily basis, overseeing each skill required. The Clinic Supervisor utilizes an Externship evaluation on each student while they are performing the skill. For each skill, students are assessed on a scale of *Competent, Needs Work, Student Was Able To Observe, or Not Available At This Site*. Each student will perform satisfactorily while on the Externship and complete the skill check list with competent assessment.

During the course of the program, students are assessed using competency checklists for each skill required of Medical Assistants. These checklists include multiple steps that the students are required to show their ability to achieve. If the student does not complete the skill at the level needed, they are required to perform the skill again until they pass the competency checklist. This insures that all students are capable and master the skills required to become a Medical Assistant.

B. Is the program preparation for a professional licensure and/or certification examination?

- Yes (Detail in Appendix 4: Section 3)
 No

3.3. Describe the program of study by completing Appendix 3.

3.4. Describe the program's work-based learning component.

A. Does the program have a work-based learning component? If so, select all that apply.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship | <input type="checkbox"/> Capstone |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internship or Externship | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

B. If none, describe why.

3.5. Describe the program's delivery methods.

A. Select the program's primary delivery method(s)¹. Select all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On Campus | <input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Online | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

¹ **In Person:** 100 percent of courses are available in-person. **Online:** 100 percent of courses are available via distance learning. Delivery is only via the Internet. **Blended:** Delivery includes a required combination of both in-person and online courses. If a student has the option to take courses online, but is not required to do so, the program is not necessarily considered blended.

Blended

B. Describe how flexible delivery methods are being leveraged to increase student access.

Lake Area Technical College plans to start the Medical Assisting Diploma Degree as a traditional program offering face-to-face instruction, on-campus labs, and off-campus administrative and clinical externship opportunities. By Spring, 2025, LATC plans to offer MA as a blended program. As the program continues to grow, Lake Area Tech will be prepared to offer apprenticeship opportunities if requested, as well.

Currently, LATC has 13 programs that provide the flexibility of an E-degree or Blended delivery method. Six of those are healthcare programs offering Blended degrees similar to what we anticipate for MA. These six Blended programs are completed through a combination of online courses with on-campus labs for crucial hands-on training and will serve as models for the MA program. It is LATC's goal to keep required on-campus time to a minimum for MA students, making the Blended program as accessible as possible to distance learners. The on-campus curriculum will be developed in the LATC student learning management system, MyPortal, allowing for a seamless transition to offering a blended degree.

Lake Area Technical College is a program sponsor for several apprenticeships and has the expertise and experience to work with the healthcare industry to develop a quality apprenticeship program for Medical Assisting. Apprentices work under the direction of a highly-skilled mentor. Related training instruction can be delivered remotely through Teams Meeting or MyPortal.

Both of these models, blended and apprenticeships, will help meet demand throughout South Dakota for location bound students who cannot easily relocate to Watertown. The more flexible educational delivery models are important to ensure that Medical Assistants working in the healthcare field have access to this advanced technological training.

CRITERION 4: ALIGNMENT

The program is vertically aligned to an education and training pathway.

- 4.1. The program is vertically aligned to an education and training pathway, reflecting efficient articulation of:
 - 4.1.1. Non-degree credential/industry certification
 - 4.1.2. Certificate to diploma
 - 4.1.3. Diploma to associate of applied science
 - 4.1.4. Associate of applied science to baccalaureate

4.1. Describe the alignment of the proposed program along an education and training pathway.

A. Complete Appendix 4.

B. Describe the projected alignment between the proposed program and existing academic programs within the technical college system.

The core curriculum delivered for the students enrolled in the Diploma Degree in Medical Assisting program (CIP Code 51.08) allows students the opportunity to transition to other health programs, if desired and other admission criteria are met. Nine general education requirements transition into several health programs. The Diploma Degree in Medical Assisting program aligns with and is included within the division of various health care programs and certificates at Lake Area Technical College. Those programs include: Licensed Practical Nursing Diploma, Emergency Medical Specialist, Surgical Technology, and Occupational Therapy Assistant.

Currently, MA has a retention rate of 72.73%. Over the last 5 years, 3 students have graduated from the Medical Assisting program and then transitioned into another healthcare program at LATC. Within the last 3 years, 1 student has graduated from the program and has continued on to another healthcare program at LATC.

C. As applicable: Insert any additional comments here.

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
Appendix 2.A: Labor Market Information

Lake Area Technical College
 Diploma in Medical Assisting

SOUTH DAKOTA								
SOC* CODE	SOC* TITLE	AVERAGE ANNUAL OPENINGS	2020 EMPLOYMENT	2030 EMPLOYMENT	NUMERIC CHANGE: 2020-2030	PERCENT CHANGE: 2020-2030	MEDIAN: ANNUAL WAGE (2023)	AVERAGE: ANNUAL WAGE (2023)
31-9092	Medical Assistant - Lightcast	not listed	1039 (2023)	1267 (2033)	228	21.90%	\$36,458 (2022)	not listed
	Medical Assistants - O*NET	140	930	1,100	170	18.30%	\$35,230	\$35,518
	Medical Assistants - DLR data	135	930	1,102	172	18.50%	\$37,608	\$38,014
	Medical Assistants -US Census Bureau						\$38,479	

NATIONAL								
SOC* CODE	SOC* TITLE	AVERAGE ANNUAL OPENINGS	2022 EMPLOYMENT	2032 EMPLOYMENT	NUMERIC CHANGE: 2022-2032	PERCENT CHANGE: 2022-2032	MEDIAN: ANNUAL WAGE (2022)	AVERAGE: ANNUAL WAGE (2022)
	Medical Assistants - O*NET	114,600	764,400	870,200	105,800	14%	\$38,270	\$40,212
	Medical Assistants - BLS data	114,600	764,400	870,200	105,800	14%	\$38,270	\$40,700

SOURCE: O*NET <https://www.onetonline.org/link/localtrends/31-9092.00?st=SD>
DATE: 1/17/24

SOURCE: South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, Labor Market Information Center (LMIC) https://dlr.sd.gov/lmic/menu_occupational_wages.aspx
DATE: 1/17/24 https://dlr.sd.gov/lmic/menu_projections_occupation_statewide.aspx

SOURCE: Lightcast Q4 2023 Data Set | lightcast.io
DATE: 1/17/24

SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Medical Assistants, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-assistants.htm>
DATE: 1/17/24

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau https://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/pseo_experimental.html
DATE: 1/17/24

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Appendix 2.B: Student Demand Projections

Lake Area Technical College

Diploma in Medical Assisting

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Student Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	18	18	18
Headcount: Full-Time	18	18	18
Headcount: Part-Time	0	0	0
Headcount: Total	18	18	18
Total Program or Site Capacity	18	18	18

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
Appendix 3: Program of Study

Lake Area Technical College
 Diploma in Medical Assisting

MONTHS:	11
SEMESTERS:	3
TOTAL CREDITS:	38

PREFIX AND NUMBER	TITLE	CREDITS	DESCRIPTION	EXISTING COURSE
I. GENERAL EDUCATION CORE				
ANAT 142	Anatomy	3	A study of cells, tissues and organs making up the integumentary, muscular, skeletal, nervous, endocrine, digestive, respiratory, lymphatic and urinary systems of the body. Emphasis is on structure and function of the systems and the relationship of the body structures (anatomy) to their function (physiology). *College transferable.	Y
CSC 102	Window Applications for Technicians	3	Overview of software applications including Windows, email, word processing, spreadsheet, database, and presentation software.	Y
CMST 101 or COMM 101 or ENGL 101	Fundamentals of Speech, Communications and Career Strategies, Composition	3	CMST 101 – FUNDAMENTALS OF SPEECH* Students will gain an understanding of the effective use of the English language, which is essential to success in school and in the world. Students will learn to read and listen critically and to write and speak thoughtfully, clearly, coherently, and persuasively. *College Transferable. OR COMM 101 – CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATIONS Emphasis on the essentials of written and oral communication; also covers effective communication during the job search process. OR ENGL 101 – COMPOSITION* This course concentrates on all phases of the writing/ communication process. Prewriting, drafting, revising and editing are used to help students develop clear, concise and unified writing styles that will serve them well in their chosen career areas.*College transferable.	Y
SUBTOTAL OF GENERAL EDUCATION CREDITS:		9	TOTAL NEW COURSES:	0

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
Appendix 3: Program of Study

Lake Area Technical College
Diploma in Medical Assisting

II. PROGRAM CORE				
MA 105	Introduction to Medical Assisting	3	Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to identify the roles and responsibilities of a medical assistant. The student will also be able process professional communications to include verbal and nonverbal as well as apply the communication skills in various settings. The student will also be able to perform various duties with office computers and equipment.	Y
MA 115	Medical Terminology	3	This course presents a study of basic medical terminology which will be helpful as the students' progress in their course of study. Prefixes, suffixes, word roots, combining forms, special endings, plural forms, abbreviations, and symbols are included in the content. A programmed learning word building systems approach is used to learn word parts for constructing or analyzing new terms. This provides students the opportunity to decipher unfamiliar terms and check their spelling. Emphasis is placed on spelling, definition, usage, and pronunciation. Abbreviations are introduced as related terms and presented with each unit.	Y
MA 172	Medical Laboratory Procedures	3.5	This course consists of the study of the need for safety at all times and the use of the microscope and glassware. Once these basic techniques are learned, the student will perform tests in the areas of hematology, chemistry, microbiology, immunology, blood banking, and urinalysis.	Y
MA 175	Clinical Office Procedures I	3	This course includes instruction in patient preparation, obtaining and recording information, assisting the physician with examinations, and caring for the examination room before and after patient care. The course is also designed to familiarize students with types of microorganisms found around us, their usefulness as well as their disease producing abilities, including methods to control microscopic agents and methods of health promotion and disease prevention.	Y
MA 125	Medical Law and Ethics	3	This course explains how to navigate the numerous legal and ethical issues that health care professionals face every day. Topics are based upon real-world scenarios and dilemmas from a variety of health care practitioners.	Y
MA 165	Pharmacology and Administration of Medication	1.5	In this course, students will learn the various classifications of medications, pharmacology fundamentals, basic dosage calculations, and methods of medication administration.	N
MA 168	Pathology	2	In this course, students will learn the common diseases and disorders affecting each body system and major organs within the body systems.	N
MA 173	Insurance, Medical Coding HER, and Practice Management	2	This course emphasizes the medical billing cycle. Studying this cycle shows how administrative and medical assistants must first collect accurate patient information and then be familiar with the rules and guidelines and follow up on payments. This ensures that the offices receive maximum, appropriate reimbursement for services provided. Students will also be introduced to the Electronic Health Record (EHR) and practice management software integrating clinical, administrative, insurance, and billing.	N
MA 205	Clinical Office Procedures II	3	This course includes preparing for and assisting specialty examinations and diagnostic procedures. Students will also learn about diet and nutrition.	Y
MA 214	Emergency Preparedness	0.5	In this course students develop skills and knowledge through class instruction, hands-on-activities, and class exercises. The student will learn basic principles of first aid, how to respond to natural disasters in the clinic and common medical emergencies within the clinic setting.	N

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Appendix 3: Program of Study

Lake Area Technical College
 Diploma in Medical Assisting

MA 240	Administrative and Clinical Externship	4	Students are placed in medical facilities of Watertown and the surrounding area for continued education and work experience. The student is required to be in attendance during the normal working hours of the medical facility on Monday through Friday. Students are to be working under the direct supervision of the training facility, do not receive compensation, and are continually evaluated by the training facility and the supervisor.	Y
CPR 112	Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Workers	0.5	This course is designed to train participants to save lives of victims in cardiac arrest through high-quality cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and know how to perform CPR in and out of hospital settings. Students will train to recognize cardiac arrest, give high-quality chest compressions, deliver appropriate ventilations, and provide early use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). The course also teaches how to relieve choking and includes adult, child, and infant rescue techniques.	Y
SUBTOTAL OF PROGRAM CREDITS:		29	TOTAL NEW COURSES:	4

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Appendix 4: Alignment Projection

Lake Area Technical College
Diploma in Medical Assisting

TOTAL CREDITS IN PROPOSED PROGRAM:

38

I. STACKABLE OPPORTUNITIES							
PROGRAM NAME							
Licensed Practical Nursing		Short-term Certificate	X	Existing	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Stackable Program	How many PROPOSED PROGRAM credits are in this stackable program opportunity?
		Long-term Certificate		Forthcoming			
	X	Diploma					
		AAS				44.5	9
Emergency Medical Specialist		Short-term Certificate	X	Existing	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Stackable Program	How many PROPOSED PROGRAM credits are in this stackable program opportunity?
		Long-term Certificate		Forthcoming			
		Diploma					
	X	AAS				69	28
Surgical Technology		Short-term Certificate	X	Existing	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Stackable Program	How many PROPOSED PROGRAM credits are in this stackable program opportunity?
		Long-term Certificate		Forthcoming			
		Diploma					
	X	AAS				68	12
Occupational Therapy Assitant		Short-term Certificate	X	Existing	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Stackable Program	How many PROPOSED PROGRAM credits are in this stackable program opportunity?
		Long-term Certificate		Forthcoming			
		Diploma					
	X	AAS				76	9.5

II. ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS (BACCALAUREATE)							
PROGRAM NAME	COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY						
				Existing Forthcoming	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Bachelor's Degree	How many PROPOSED PROGRAM credits are projected to be accepted in the articulation agreement?
				Existing Forthcoming	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Bachelor's Degree	How many PROPOSED PROGRAM credits are projected to be accepted in the articulation agreement?
				Existing Forthcoming	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Bachelor's Degree	How many PROPOSED PROGRAM credits are projected to be accepted in the articulation agreement?

III. LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES		
<i>The PROPOSED PROGRAM will qualify students to pursue the following licensure and/or certification opportunities:</i>		
LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION	OVERSIGHT ORGANIZATION	Will the licensure/certification require reporting per SDCL 13-1-61?
Certified Medical Assistant (CMA)	American Association of Medical Assistants	Yes
Registered Medical Assistant (RMA)	American Medical Technologists	Yes

January 18, 2024

RE: Medical Assistants within Prairie Lakes Brown Clinic

To the members of the State Board of Technical Education,

I am writing to you today to discuss the utilization of Medical Assistants within the Prairie Lakes Brown Clinic Primary Care service line. Within the PLBC Primary Care service line, we utilize our Medical Assistants as members of the nursing staff to provide direct patient care and support to our providers. We assist them and encourage them to work within the highest scope of their practice and utilize the skills they bring to the clinical field.

Over recent years, there has been a shortage of nurses available to provide patient care. Our Medical Assistants help us bridge the gap and allow us to continue providing patient-centered care within the Primary Care setting. Medical Assistants have the unique opportunity to not only replace the role of a nurse in certain healthcare settings, but their education also has the added benefit of allowing them to work within coding and other areas that a typical nursing degree would not focus on. This makes Medical Assistants valuable to the healthcare field. Looking to the future, I do not see this changing. In fact, I see the value of a Medical Assistant increasing, particularly within the Primary Care service line.

At Prairie Lakes Brown Clinic, we have several Medical Assistants that work within our care teams and provide not only support to the provider, but also high quality, impactful care for the community. Not only do I, personally, value them, but they also value the work they do. I asked a couple of them to provide brief statements:

“The need for MA’s is that they are so diverse, they can help in aspects of the clinical setting from the lab department to the front desk, to helping with the providers, to giving shots, and even doing the behind the scenes. I can see the need for Medical Assistants growing as the years go on, as we can take classes to continue our education to help further the need for them. We can take classes to help with IV (if your state allows), to help within the radiology department, to help within the coding department. There are so many opportunities out there that allow us to be more helpful in all different settings.” – Angie G., MA

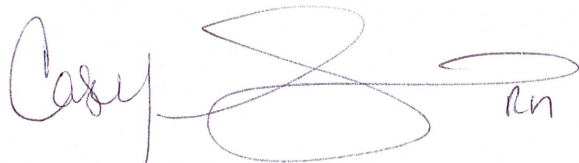


“Being able to help within all the care teams has given me the opportunity to grow within my first 6 months in healthcare. As MA’s, we can do several clinical skills within our scope of practice and utilizing that in healthcare that helps everyone grow in their career.” – Britney K., MA

“Being a part of the PLBC team as a Medical Assistant has been so rewarding. MA’s here at the clinic fill the need where the LPN and RN are not available. MA’s, our scope of practice is not much different than that of an LPN in a clinic setting. We work in care teams that make us feel appreciated for the work that we do. I love working with my provider and helping my coworkers anywhere that I am able. The need for MAs in the future is a need because we are so valued here at the clinic.” – Jasmine A., MA

In conclusion, Medical Assistants are important members of the Primary Care service line. Looking to the future, I do not see this changing anytime soon. I hope that this letter will show you how we hold our Medical Assistants with such high regard within Prairie Lakes Brown Clinic, and how we will always have a place for them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Casey Swearingen RN". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the letters "RN" written in a smaller, simpler font at the end of the signature.

Casey Swearingen, RN

Nurse Supervisor

Prairie Lakes Brown Clinic



1-22-24

South Dakota Board of Technical Education
800 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501

RE: Medical Assisting workforce need

Dear Board of Technical Education:

Avera Health utilizes Medical Assistants as a critical member of our healthcare team to care for patients across our footprint. Medical Assistants are most often employed in our clinic division. Medical Assistants continue to be a workforce need of Avera's and we are currently recruiting for 27 open positions. Several Avera locations are offering a \$10,000 sponsorship of LATC's Medical Assisting students in return for a 3-year work commitment. We are supportive of LATC's Medical Assisting program and have found their graduates well prepared for employment at Avera.

Sincerely,



Pam Hilber, PhD, Dir of Talent Development
Avera Health
605-322-8955



To State Board of Technical Education:

My name is Holly York. I am a Certified Family Nurse Practitioner as well as business co-owner of QuickCare an independent family practice and urgent care clinic. This letter is regards to the continuing need of Certified Medical Assistants in the state of SD as well as continuing support for the CMA programs in SD.

I have been in healthcare for 25 years working in various roles. Throughout my vast experience I have worked with Certified Medical Assistants in multiple capacities. Certified Medical Assistants are in constant need in SD; especially in the eastern part of the state. Health care is in a crisis due to lack of nurses available to work. This is due to various reasons but, as a whole, we need to continue to support the programs that offer training to provide us with nurses, especially Certified Medical Assistants.

Certified Medical Assistants provide various skills. They can work both on the clinical side of patient care as well as in the office aspect. My company, Quick Care, has been open nearly 6 years. During this time, CMA's, LPN's and RN's have been hired and each employee works together to provide quality patient care. I appreciate the CMA role in the aspect that CMA's can provide patient care as well as work in the office setting. I have had CMA's who have been office managers, scheduler's and worked in patient billing. This is a great quality, especially in the time of labor shortage in billing and coding fields.

I live in Watertown South Dakota and I sit on the advisory board for Certified Medical Assisting Program. I have seen how the staff works directly with the CMA students throughout the program and provides quality CMA's to enter the workforce. The LATI staff works with local community members in recruiting new students and placing them in jobs after graduation.

Thank you for your time in regard to my concern. If we discontinue the CMA programs in the state of SD, this will further debilitate our ability to provide quality patient care to those who are in the most need of these services. CMA's have a broad spectrum of training and play a critical role in providing patient care to our people of South Dakota.

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