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How to pass medical assistant certification test

Score: 0% Rank: Correct Answer: Operating a clinic, medical practice, or hospital without Medical Assistants is like trying to build a car without nuts and bolts... no matter how impressive the outside, eventually the machine will fall to pieces. Medical Assistants are crucial to keeping medical practices on-track. Without them, patients would be unable to schedule appointments, practices would go broke as billing dried up, and patients' lives would be at risk due to inaccurate medical records. Thousands of physicians and millions of patients around the world rely on Medical Assistants, and for this reason, the Medical Assisting field is rapidly growing , particularly as healthcare needs expand, practices grow, and offices seek help to keep up with it all. (Click here to learn how to become a Medical Assistant). Medical Assistants are one of the few healthcare positions that are not usually required to hold special certifications or licenses to practice. However, choosing to earn one of the optional Medical Assisting certifications can open you up to more jobs and higher pay opportunities. There are multiple MA certification available, as detailed in our recent breakdown of top Medical Assisting certifications, and each have their own unique advantages and requirements. For this article, we examine the CCMA (Certified Clinical Medical Assistant) Certification by detailing everything you need to know to know about the CCMA exam. Continue reading to learn how to best prepare for, take, and pass the CCMA exam, on your first try. What is the CCMA Certification Exam? The Certified Clinical Medical Assistant certification (CCMA) is offered through the National Healthcareer Association, and is similar to the NCMA in its requirements. And also like the NCMA, the CCMA is also geared towards Medical Assistants who wish to be more involved with clinical procedures than with overall office administration. The CCMA is a good choice for Medical Assistants with relevant work experience but who may not have completed a full Medical Assisting training program. One benefit of the CCMA over the NCMA is that the CCMA requires only one year of relevant work experience, so if you are a current Medical Assistant looking to grow your opportunities with certification, the CCMA may be a strong option. As always, be sure to check with your employer or future employer to make certain the CCMA is recognized by their organization. How Long is the CCMA Certification Exam? Test takers are given three hours to complete the CCMA certification exam—with no regularly scheduled breaks—and the full exam consists of 180 questions. That includes 150 scored questions and 30 pre-test questions that do not impact the overall score. However, if special testing accommodations are required under the American Disabilities Act (such as break periods, an audio test, oral interpreter, or extended testing time), the NHA will consider these cases if submitted in writing ahead of the test date. What's the Value of CCMA Certification? Many employers prefer their Medical Assistant candidates be certified, even though certification isn't required by most states. Holding an MA certification tells your future employers that you are already familiar with the responsibilities of a Medical Assistant, are reasonably prepared to handle a variety of medical office scenarios, and that you'll only require a limited amount of training before you're ready to work unsupervised. Passing the CCMA exam and earning your certification means that the NHA vouches for you and your skills. Think of it like a letter of reference from a highly respected employer, one who confirms that you: Know the job's terminology Understand the job requirements Can perform all expected duties As the name implies, the CCMA (Certified Clinical Medical Assistant) exam is designed for Medical Assistants who work with or plan to work with patients directly as a primary part of their job responsibilities. Holding a CCMA certification demonstrates to your employer or future employer that you are equipped to do so. What is on the CCMA Certification Exam? Students taking the CCMA will be tested on the following topics: Foundational knowledge and basic science Anatomy and Physiology Clinical Patient Care Patient Care and Patient Education Office Administration Communication and Customer Service Medical Law and Ethics For a more comprehensive study of the CCMA exam topics, the NHA recommends the following readings: Alexander Patricia Adams, Kim's The Administrative Medical Assistant: An Applied Learning Approach (Saunders 8th 2013). Carol J. Buck, Step-by-Step Medical Coding (Saunders 2015 ed.). Michelle Green, Understanding Health Insurance: A Guide to Billing and Reimbursement (Cengage, 12th ed. 2015). Anne Castro, Principles of Healthcare Reimbursement (AHIMA Press, 4th ed. 2013). CCMA Exam Requirements What Are the Prerequisites for the CCMA Exam? Like the NCMA, the CCMA doesn't require graduation from a Medical Assisting program in order to certify. All applicants must have graduated high school or hold an equivalent certification (such as a GED). In addition, applicants must meet one of the following requirements. Graduation from an approved Medical Assistant program. This program must be approved by the US Department of Education, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or by the NHA board of directors. OR completion of an approved apprenticeship program. OR graduation from a formal medical training service in the US military. OR candidates with one year of experience as a supervised Medical Assistant. How Do I Register for the CCMA Exam? The first step in registering for the CCMA certification exam is to visit the National Healthcareer Association website by clicking here. You'll first be asked to confirm prerequisites and eligibility. The website details what experience and/or education is required for each route. Once you've chosen (and confirmed) your route of eligibility, you'll be able to formally apply. CCMA Exam Fee How Much Does the CCMA Exam Cost? Registration for the CCMA exam costs \$155 To pay the NCMA exam fee you will need to create an account on the NHA website. There, you'll also be asked to upload documentation confirming your eligibility. It typically takes up to one or two weeks to receive a response to your certification application. Once approved, you'll receive an email from the NHA with next steps to schedule your exam at a local PSI testing center. How Do I Study for the CCMA Exam? Whether you are applying for the CCMA as a recent graduate or as an uncertified Medical Assistant with relevant work experience, the material on the exam should be familiar to you. Passing the exam on the first try depends on refreshing your knowledge, making sure you know the official answers, and brushing up on topics you aren't as confident about. The following CCMA test-prep tips should help you prepare for the exam: 1. Know the Exam Topics: Dig through the list of CCMA exam topics above (but remember—the list isn't exhaustive). Use it as a reference to go back through your notes or work experience and familiarize yourself with the categories that will be on the test. You can also purchase and download a copy of the official NHA CCMA exam guide here for \$52. 2. Identify Your Weak Points: As you look through the exam contents, make a mark next to the topics you feel less confident about. Review everything, of course, but plan to spend extra time on the areas where you might feel a little shaky. 3. Schedule Study Times: Just like scheduling classes during a college semester, be sure to schedule time each week to work on your CCMA exam preparation. Remove all distractions and make sure your family and friends respect your time and space when studying. 4. Spread It Out: Decide ahead of time the topics you'd like to review during your study periods. This not only allows you to allocate more time to your weaker subjects, but it helps prevent procrastination and cramming at the last minute. 5. Take CCMA Practice Tests: The NHA allows test takers to practice with a full length practice exam (available on their website here for \$39). The practice exams closely mirror the content on the actual exams, and simulated timers and algorithms help give you the best idea of what to expect once you step into the exam room. 6. Learn Multiple Choice Strategies: Multiple choice exams are as much about eliminating the wrong answers as identifying the correct ones. There's a strategy to taking these tests, and the better you know the format, the better you'll do. Check out this multiple choice strategy guide as a jumping off point. 7. Take Care of Yourself: Get plenty of rest, drink lots of water, and avoid stress as much as possible. Remember, no amount of worry will add a single point to your exam score. Take care of yourself to make sure you're in the best mental shape possible before the big test. 8. Talk to People Who Have Taken the CCMA Exam: What tips do they have? What stood out to them most? What do they regret most? Sit down with someone who's taken the exam to get a personal breakdown of what to expect. 9. Use the Bathroom: Use the bathroom before beginning the exam. You'd be surprised how many people forget to do this. How Hard is the CCMA Certification Exam? The CCMA certification exam is 180 questions (150 scored, 30 pre-test) which are given over the course of a continuous three hours (you don't have to use the entire three hours, of course). The pretest questions are asked to determine the validity of using the question as a scored item on a future exam. The candidate is not aware which questions are scored questions and which questions are pretest questions. However, the pretest questions do not affect the candidate's score; only the scored questions count toward the candidate's grade. According to the NHA website, the pass rate for the CCMA is 63%, or just over half. This doesn't mean the exam is incredibly difficult, but it does mean that no one should expect to breeze through without studying. Put in the time to adequately prepare and you can land in that 63% on your first try. How Many Times Can You Take the CCMA Exam? If you fail your first attempt at the CCMA exam, you'll be allowed two more attempts to successfully pass (a total of three attempts), with a waiting period of a minimum of 30 days between each exam. After the third failed attempt, candidates will be required to wait one (1) year before attempting to take the exam again. For each retake attempt, the candidate must re-register and pay the full examination price. How Do I Renew my CCMA Certification? Recertification with the National Healthcareer Association (NHA) is required every two years and requires that certified Medical Assistants complete ten (10) hours of continuing education credits. These can be earned through qualifying courses, seminars, presentations, and conferences. Two (2) hours of attendance at a qualified continuing education program are equal to one (1) continuing education credit. Continuing Education Credits can be recorded for recertification on the NHA website. CCMA Sample Quiz To judge for yourself the difficulty of the exam, here are a few sample questions from the NHA practice exam. (Please find the answers at the bottom of this article). What does the term edema mean? a. Rash b. Swelling c. Within d. Vomiting What is the appropriate way to take a radial pulse? a. Place your index finger and middle finger on the wrist, under the thumb b. Place your index finger and middle finger on the wrist, under the pinky finger c. Place your thumb on the side of the neck, next to the trachea d. Place your index finger on the inner side of the upper arm, about halfway between the shoulder and the elbow A patient is anxious and begins hyperventilating. His hands and lips start to feel numb and tingly, and he feels lightheaded. What is the physiological cause of his symptoms? a. Excess carbon dioxide in the blood b. Excess oxygen in the blood c. Lack of oxygen in the blood d. Lack of carbon dioxide in the blood Which of the following is NOT one of the five stages of grief as described by the Kübler-Ross model? a. Denial b. Anger c. Bargaining d. Delusions Which of the following is tracked on a standard growth chart for patients ages 2 to 20? a. Age, weight, BMI b. Age, head circumference, height c. Age, height, and weight d. Age, head circumference, weight, height A patient is upset and angry after an appointment. She is distraught and unable to pay attention when you tell her what dates are available for her follow-up appointment. This results in some confusion, and the patient accuses you of not listening. What form of defense mechanism is this patient likely demonstrating? a. Reaction formation b. Projection c. Displacement d. Denial You are asked to give a three-year-old child a dose of acetaminophen (Tylenol). The child weighs 15 kg. The medication order says to give the child a dose of 15 mg/kg. The oral solution concentration is 160 mg/5 mL. What dose of the oral solution should you give the child? a. 7 mL b. 2 mL c. 5 mL d. 9 mL You have finished all of your assigned tasks and are thinking of leaving a few minutes early for your lunch break when the doctor approaches you and tells you that there are patients waiting to be seen, but the exam rooms have not yet been cleaned after the last patients. You know that this is the responsibility of another medical assistant in the office, but she is on the phone dealing with an important personal problem. What should you do? a. Reassure the doctor that you will take care of the problem, and then quickly clean the rooms yourself b. Ask someone else in the office to clean the patient exam rooms c. Wait until the other medical assistant is off the phone, and then tell her that the rooms need to be cleaned quickly d. Explain to the doctor that cleaning the patient exam rooms isn't your assignment today, and tell the doctor where to find the appropriate medical assistant How should you position yourself in an exam room with a patient who seems angry and potentially aggressive? a. Position yourself with a desk between you and the patient b. Position yourself seated next to the patient c. Position yourself as far as possible away from the patient d. Position yourself between the patient and the door You witness a patient suddenly collapse in the office. You run to the patient and realize she is unconscious, does not have a pulse, and is not breathing. While someone else calls 911, you and your coworkers begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). At what point should you use an automated external defibrillator (AED)? a. As soon as possible b. If the patient still has no pulse after five minutes of CPR c. As soon as emergency medical help arrives d. After one round or two minutes of CPR have been performed Final Thoughts on the National Certified Medical Assistant Exam Certification may not always be required to start a career as a Medical Assistant, but it can mean the difference between good work opportunities and great work opportunities. CCMA certification proves to your employers, your co-workers, and yourself that you are trained and ready to take on the responsibilities of a medical office. Of course, learning doesn't stop after the exam ends, so remember to keep an open mind, look for opportunities to learn, opportunities to teach others, and for new and better ways to serve your patients. Good luck! ANSWERS TO CCMA PRACTICE QUIZ 1) B 2) A 3) D 4) D 5) C 6) B 7) A 8) A 9) D 10) A

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