

# Introduction to Care Team Roles and Understanding the MA Scope of Practice

For the Medical Assistants of  
West County Health Centers, Inc.

# What does 'Scope of Practice' mean?

- **Scope of Practice** is a term used for various professions that defines the procedures, actions, and processes that are permitted for the individual.
- The **Scope of Practice** is limited to that which the individual has received education and experience, and in which he/she has demonstrated competency

- It is YOUR responsibility to know the Medical Assistant's 'Scope of Practice', not the provider, not the nurse, nor the agency, but you
- The agency can create protocols for Medical Assistants but it is still our responsibility to know and operate within our 'Scope of Practice'

According to California state law,  
there are specific tasks that  
Medical Assistants can and  
cannot perform

# Medical Assistants CAN

- Collect and record pt data (HT, WT, VS, etc.) as well as basic info about presenting and previous conditions
- Prepare pts for exams or procedures by positioning, draping, shaving and disinfecting treatment sites as instructed

# Medical Assistants Can

- Select and adjust crutches and instruct pts in their use
- Apply and remove bandages and dressings
- Apply certain orthopedic appliances such as knee immobilizers, slings, etc.
- Remove casts and splints
- Assist pts in ambulation and transfers

# Medical Assistants Can

- Remove sutures or staples from superficial incisions
- Perform ear lavage to remove impacted cerumen
- Collect specimens (by non-invasive techniques) urine, sputum, throat and nasal swabs for testing
- Perform EKG's

# Medical Assistants can

- Perform (but not interpret) simple medical office laboratory and screening tests.
- Provide patient information and instructions as authorized by the provider.



- Medical Assistants may convey clinical information on behalf of the provider and follow clinical protocols when speaking with patients
- Medical Assistants cannot exercise independent medical judgments

# Medical Assistants can

- Prior to administration of medication, a Medical Assistant must have a written order from a licensed provider for the correct medication and dosage
- MAs can administer medication via the following routes: orally, topically, IM, SQ, ID, or by inhalation

# Medical Assistants CANNOT:

- Independently give out medication samples
- Independently prescribe or refill medications
- Call in a new medication or one with changes
- Inject medications into a vein

# Medical Assistants CANNOT

- Start, flush or D/C IV's or add any medications to IV fluids or the IV line.
- Administer any anesthetic agent or medication reconstituted with an anesthetic
- Administer allergy shots
- Perform arterial punctures

# Medical Assistants CANNOT

- Insert urinary catheters
- Perform tests that involve the penetration of human tissues except for skin tests, capillary punctures, and drawing blood
- Repack wounds

# Medical Assistants CANNOT

- Independently diagnose or treat patients
- Provide medical treatment, analyze or read test results
- Advise patients about their condition or treatment regimen
- Make assessments or perform any kind of medical care decision making

# Medical Assistants cannot

- Make assessments or perform any kind of medical care decision making

# Remember:

- Do not perform tasks that you have not been trained to do
- Never hesitate to seek clarification from a provider
- If you are unsure about something - **ASK!**



- By performing a task which is outside of the your 'Scope of Practice', you are practicing medicine without a license
- There are serious consequences for practicing medicine without a license

If you don't know something

**ASK!!!!**