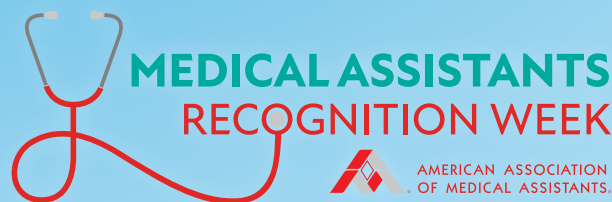


MEDICAL ASSISTANTS SHINE BRIGHT!



Providers and Patients Highlight the Brilliance of These Valuable Health Care Professionals



By Cathy Cassata

When providers and patients think of medical assistants, the words *versatility*, *adaptability*, and *compassion* all come to mind. The varied skills of medical assistants set them apart from other health care professionals, giving them the tools to effectively assist physicians and care for patients. They are often the first people patients see and the last they interact with in a practice. For all they do to keep health care facilities running smoothly and in celebration of Medical Assistants Recognition Week, providers and patients give thanks and warm words for a

job well done.

Providers Beam with Pride

Although our entire department works together as a team, each provider and their medical assistant are an individual team and in constant communication with each other. The needs of each incoming patient are discussed between the medical assistant and the provider—what vitals to take, what shots to give, what procedures to perform, and the results of those procedures. I appre-

ciate my medical assistants' aptitude to read my mind and anticipate [the] needs [of] each patient. I am grateful that they keep me on schedule and allow us to perform an accurate and complete job as a health care team. Most of all, their warmth, cheerfulness, and ability to put a patient and family at ease in a potentially stressful medical encounter are invaluable.

Scott Strahlman, MD

Pediatrician in Columbia, Maryland

Medical assistants are the heart and soul of our practice. They perform what needs to be done to take care of the patient. If the patient needs to check in, [medical assistants] make sure they [can]. If the patient needs to be roomed and have their vitals and medications reviewed, [medical assistants] manage it. If the patient needs someone to listen or a shoulder to cry on, they are there for them. Medical assistants step up in every way, every day. Thank you for always doing what is best for the patient and the practice and for taking care of all the big and little tasks needed to keep the [practice] running smoothly.

Stacie Gopsill

Manager of Practice Operations in Indianapolis, Indiana

Responsible, proactive, and engaged come to mind when I think of the medical assistant I work with. She facilitates the whole process for [physicians] and patients, from rooming patients and educating them on treatments to assisting me with procedures when necessary. She has a talent for recognizing what is important for patient care and is always in tune with the physical and emotional needs of patients. Her caring attitude toward patients shines through. Her skills and genuine concern for patients make working with her productive, meaningful, and truly enjoyable.

Roi Weiser, MD

Surgical Oncologist in Houston, Texas

I work remotely for a walk-in clinic, and the medical assistants are on-site, making everything happen. They enter orders, help with registration and insurance issues, and run the visits from beginning to end. I perform on-demand examinations remotely while the medical assistant is in the clinic. We utilize video technology so I can look in the ears and throat and listen to the lungs and heart. The medical assistant is the one performing all of this, making the virtual visit possible. Because I work alone, I often put out an SOS on a team chat, and every time, all the medical assistants are ready and willing to

help. They have a tough job, yet they never fail to show up for me and the patient.

**Jennifer Morema, MSN, APRN-FPA,
FNP-C**

Urgent Care in Huntley, Illinois

Patients' Glowing Reviews

For 12 years, my four children have gone to the same pediatrician. My son Jordan saw 27 different [physicians] as we navigated trying to figure out his illness. He was finally diagnosed with common variable immunodeficiency, hypogammaglobulinemia, and bronchiectasis. During this rough journey, all the medical assistants treated my kids with respect and kindness and made them feel like more than just patients. Plus, they were my shoulder to cry on. Every time I called, they knew who I was, understood all of Jordan's health conditions, and worked their magic to get us in right away. When my son Blake broke out in a rash, I couldn't take him to the emergency room because we feared bringing germs back home to Jordan. I sent the medical assistant a text, and within 20 minutes, she got us in to see the [physician]. Each medical assistant will forever have a special place in our hearts. They are there when we simply need a smile or a hug or to hear the words, "You got this, and we are here for you."

Jessica Switzer

Annapolis, Maryland

When I moved 250 miles away from my network of [physicians] at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, I still wanted to seek care there. I have a lot of medical issues that require visits with different specialists, so I drive to my daughter's place in Salt Lake City and stay with her for a few days to knock out all my appointments. At first, this wasn't easy. I had a hard time getting the appointments scheduled close enough together. But then, the medical assistant at my cardiologist's [practice] made it happen. She sat down with me and took the time to find three consecutive days when I could visit with my cardiologist, rheumatologist, and pain

management specialist. She scheduled all the necessary tests within that timeframe too. Plus, the last time I was there, she spent 45 minutes explaining a cardiology test I needed. I left feeling comfortable and less afraid because of her compassion and empathy. That is exactly the reason I'm willing to drive 500 miles roundtrip for medical care.

Beckie Merlo

Cedar City, Utah

Pediatrician visits aren't always easy, especially when your child isn't feeling well. I'm grateful for the decade of care my daughter has received from her [physician] and medical assistant. Every time we visit, the medical assistant sets the tone for the visit. She takes extra time to engage in a real conversation, putting us both at ease. Whenever I have a complaint or concern, I feel comfortable going to her for help because I'm confident she'll take care of it. I know she has her own life to keep track of, but somehow, she is on top of everything with my daughter—always making her feel like a priority. For instance, when my daughter had pneumonia, the [practice] was overwhelmed with patients, but the medical assistant made sure to get her on the schedule. Best of all, I know she communicates clearly and works well with the [physician] because he is always thoroughly informed about my daughter.

B. Thomas

Columbia, Maryland

My son was born with several heart defects and underwent four surgeries during his life. When he was 15 years old, he had a valve replacement. I will always remember the medical assistant who worked with the heart surgeon. We ended up getting an unexpected \$5,000 bill six months after his surgery. After calling our insurance and the hospital billing department and getting nowhere, I finally reached out to the medical assistant. She figured out that the problem was a billing coding error and got it fixed right away.

Anne Peters

Arlington Heights, Illinois