



Let's Understand the Difference between MA, CNA, and CPCT/A

Do you wish to start a healthcare career? Are you considering becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant, Medical Assistant, or Patient Care Technician? There is a misconception that all three are the same thing, but they are NOT. They are actually very different, be it the training or the job tasks associated with each, for which healthcare recruiter agencies hire.

Here, we will break down the differences between the three to help you make the right choice.

Requirements

Medical Assistant (CCMA)

When you get a Medical Assistant Certification, you get a nationally accredited certification. The certification is not exclusively tied to a license or state-run certification. However, some states may have specific practice scope, and there may be particular licensing or training requirements to become eligible for performing specific skills like x-rays. Check if your state is among them.

Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

CNA requirements vary from one state to another. So, even if you have a CNA certification, if you move to a different state to take a job, you may be required to certify again.

Patient Care Technician/Assistant (CPCT/A)

If you earn a Patient Care Technician/Assistant Certification, you earn a certification that is accredited nationally. The CPCT/A certification is neither tied to a particular license nor a state-run certification. But some states do have specific licensing or training requirements for eligibility to work in facilities that are Medicare-approved.

Go through your state's requirements before looking for [healthcare recruiter agencies](#) to apply for Patient Care Technician openings.

Duties Associated with the Titles

Medical Assistant

The duties of a Medical Assistant can be both administrative and clinical or either. They are among the ambulatory team's most versatile members. A few common duties associated with the title are:

- Answering calls and questions
- Basic billing and coding
- Checking patients in and out
- Assisting with exams and minor surgeries
- Administering medications or injections
- Performing EKG and phlebotomy
- Taking patients' vitals
- Patient education or health coaching

Each day on duty is different for an MA, with minimal repetition. If you become a Medical Assistant, you will be working with different types of patients in a variety of settings.

Certified Nursing Assistant

CNAs mostly perform patient-related clinical duties. The common CNA duties are:

- Providing bedside assistance
- Monitoring, recording, and reporting changes in the health of the patients
- Ensuring a clean environment for the patients
- Collecting laboratory specimens
- Assisting the patients with eating, bathing, dressing, that is, daily activities

Patient Care Technician/Assistant

Patient Care Technician tasks are similar to Certified Nursing Assistant duties, but they may have some higher-level responsibilities, like performing phlebotomy or EKGs.

Final Words

Once you have the desired certifications, start finding healthcare recruiters to send your applications for openings for the particular roles.

One such place for you to find help is the National Coalition of Healthcare Recruiters or NCHCR as it is more commonly known. They can be found at www.nchcr.com where you will find a professional recruiter to help you find your dream job.

Author's Bio: The author works in the healthcare industry and is an avid blogger. The article is about Understanding differences between MA, CNA, and CPCT/A.

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