



## Physician Assistant

*Class Code: 8161*

*Date Established: 06-01-06*

### **OVERVIEW:**

The Physician Assistant is a licensed, highly skilled health care practitioner who provides a wide range of primary health care services within a Student Health Center, including assessment, diagnostic, and preventive and health maintenance services. The scope of practice for each incumbent is established in writing by the supervising physician and is limited to those functions that the physician determines an incumbent is competent to perform. Competency is determined based on the supervising physician's assessment of the incumbent's capabilities and education, training and experience.

Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners perform comparable duties, but are distinguished by how incumbents obtain their preparatory education and training and the agencies governing licensing and certification. Physician Assistants are licensed by the Medical Board of California and must have completed an approved Physician Assistant program, while the California Board of Registered Nursing oversees the training programs and licensing of Nurse Practitioners.

### **TYPICAL ACTIVITIES:**

Under the supervision of a physician, Physician Assistants work within their established scope of practice to provide a wide range of primary health care services, such as conducting physical examinations, diagnosing, treating and managing illnesses and injuries, ordering tests and interpreting the results, and counseling patients on preventive care. The following examples of typical work activities are meant to illustrate the general range of work functions performed by Physician Assistants; they are not meant to be all-inclusive or restrictive. Work assignments may involve related activities.

- ◆ Perform complete physical examinations, including obtaining detailed medical histories, using applicable clinical techniques and diagnostic tools.
- ◆ Diagnose common acute and chronic illnesses and injuries and develop treatment plans based upon an evaluation of a patient's medical history, physical examination, and test results.
- ◆ Order, interpret, and evaluate common laboratory and other standard diagnostic tests and procedures. May perform CLIA-waived testing.
- ◆ Establish and document the health care treatment plans and prognoses for patients treated, including referrals to specialists in such areas as, but not limited to, dermatology, ENT, OB/GYN, or physical or occupational therapy or social services. Maintain records, progress notes, and provisions for continuity of care for each case that are sufficiently complete for any physician and peer review group to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.
- ◆ Transmit medication to patients, provided the supervising physician has delegated the authority to do so and the incumbent possesses a valid transmitting number. In some cases, incumbents also may be required to possess and maintain a valid DEA number and certificate to transmit specific controlled substances.
- ◆ Instruct and counsel patients regarding medical problems, use of medications, and compliance with prescribed therapeutic regimens, family planning, emotional problems, preventive health care, and health maintenance.

- ◆ May perform procedures and minor surgeries such as injections, immunizations, skin biopsies, suturing and wound care, minor orthopedic procedures, and incisions and draining. Perform therapeutic procedures in response to life threatening situations according to established protocols.
- ◆ Collaborate and consult with physicians and other health care professionals on more complicated health problems and referrals.
- ◆ Maintain compliance with established university policies, procedures, and protocols for quality assurance and infection control.
- ◆ Keep current with developments in physician assistant and medical field pertinent to the scope of practice.
- ◆ May be assigned to provide lead work direction to specified health center support staff. Lead work direction involves organizing and planning work, training and orienting employees, scheduling support staff, assigning and reviewing work, and providing input to employee selection and performance evaluations.

## **TYPICAL QUALIFICATIONS:**

### ***Knowledge:***

Incumbents must possess the knowledge to work as a licensed Physician Assistant including, but not limited to, a thorough knowledge of medical theories, practices and protocols relative to the scope of practice; a thorough knowledge of subject areas such as growth and development, pathophysiology, psychosocial assessment, pharmacology, nutrition, disease management, and the principles of health maintenance; a thorough knowledge of the applicable state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to practice as a Physician Assistant; and, if assigned lead work direction, general knowledge of effective supervisory principles and practices.

### ***Abilities:***

Incumbents must possess the abilities and clinical competence required to work as a licensed Physician Assistant including, but not limited to, the ability to work independently in assigned areas of practice established by the supervising physician; demonstrate clinical competence in eliciting patient histories, conducting examinations, diagnosing and treating acute and chronic illnesses and injuries, assessing patient needs, and making appropriate referrals; use clinical techniques and diagnostic tools; interpret laboratory and other test results; keep current with developments in the medical field pertinent to the incumbent's scope of practice; establish and maintain effective working relationships with other health center staff; be sensitive to and communicate effectively with diverse patients; and, if assigned, provide lead work direction to specified health center support staff.

### ***Education and Experience:***

Physician Assistants must possess an academic degree or certificate from an approved college or university-based physician assistant medical training program. Incumbents must possess sufficient experience to independently perform the scope of practice identified for the position.

### ***Licensing and Certification Requirements:***

Incumbents must possess and maintain a valid license to practice as a Physician Assistant in the State of California. Licensing by the Medical Board of California requires passing the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination. If delegated the authority to transmit medications, incumbents must possess and maintain a valid California transmitting number. In addition, incumbents who have been delegated the authority to transmit specific controlled substances also must possess and maintain a valid DEA number and certificate.