

# POW!

Medical Assistants Tackle Daily Tasks  
with Focus and Compassion



By Cathy Cassata

From the moment patients walk into their physician's practice, medical assistants have patients' best interests in mind while performing a wide array of tasks. Their hard work and dedication help make patients' visits run smoothly and the provider's day run efficiently. Truly, they are the superheroes of the practice! In celebration of Medical Assistants Recognition Week, patients and providers share these personal stories about the medical assistants in their lives to express gratitude for medical assistants' incredible work.

### Patients Give Thanks

I have a close yet professional bond with the medical assistant at my doctor's office. Anytime that I have concerns or need refills or forms filled out for medication or referrals, I am able to get in touch with her without waiting days or weeks for a response. Plus, she never makes me feel like a burden. Back in October, I had a severe case of COVID-19 and was hospitalized for a week. After I returned home and had to visit my doctor for routine laboratory work and a checkup, the medical assistant

showed me the utmost compassion and empathy. She always takes time to talk to me and genuinely empathize with me instead of making me feel like just another patient. I have told her numerous times how grateful I am. ... She truly represents all wonderful CMAs (AAMA)<sup>®</sup> who care about patients.

**Rachel Hogan**  
Asheboro, North Carolina

# 2021 MEDICAL ASSISTANTS RECOGNITION WEEK

I had a mole on my back that was painful and worrisome. The medical assistant at my doctor's office got me in right away. ... The medical assistant was compassionate throughout the whole process. At the time, I had been seeing a different family doctor for about 10 years, but after this incident, I switched to this office and have stayed there for seven years. Their medical assistants make it apparent that they care about me as an individual every step of the way. They personalize every interaction and always answer my questions with a caring tone rather than a robotic response. As someone who works behind the counter at a postal office, I understand how challenging it can be to serve the public, and I appreciate how well medical assistants work with patients.

**Craig Schwabe**  
*Traverse City, Michigan*

The medical assistant at my doctor's office ... makes me feel like I'm the only patient at the time of my visit. She asks questions with sincerity about my day and how I'm feeling. If there's something I need or questions I have, she makes it a point to relay everything to the doctor and to problem-solve until my needs are met. She is my advocate, always making sure everything involved in my care is addressed, even if that means going back to the doctor multiple times.

**Tammy Rushbrook**  
*Asheboro, North Carolina*

I've been going to my primary care physician's clinic for a long time. The medical assistants there know [that] I experience physician anxiety every time I visit, and they are so kind about it. I get particularly anxious about getting my blood pressure taken because I am treated for high blood pressure. To calm me down, the medical assistants always make it a point to engage in small talk with me, and after we chat for a bit, they give me a few minutes to take deep breaths. ... They also follow up quickly with my requests. During my last visit, after the doctor left the examination room, I told the medical assistant that I forgot to

ask for a handicapped parking application. She jumped right on it and brought back the paperwork before checking me out.

**Grace Delia**  
*Clinton Township, Michigan*

## Providers Sing Praises

Medical assistants have excellent, broad training that can be utilized in multiple areas to support the ambulatory health care team. Working alongside me, my medical assistants apply their clinical training and versatility to ensure efficiency and quality care for patients. Their greatest skill is direct interaction with patients. The medical assistants I work with have a knack for getting to know patients and understanding the best way to interact with them so we can maximize their health care. This skill is incredibly valuable, and I'm thankful for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to serving our patients and our community. There is no doubt that medical assistants are valuable members of the health care team.

**Joseph Rawlin, DO**  
*Family practice physician in  
Traverse City, Michigan*

The medical practice is definitely a team sport [environment], and it is unlikely that a medical provider could render health care in a high-quality, efficient, productive, cost-effective fashion without the support of well-trained, motivated medical assistants. ... Their connection with patients enhances the therapeutic relationship, which is crucial to the delivery of effective and personalized health care. ... Their motivation to make a difference in the lives of patients and to help me perform the best job I can is essential. Medical assistants are valued colleagues, and my work would not be nearly as enjoyable or as effective without their partnership.

**Howard Eisenson, MD**  
*Family practice physician in  
Durham, North Carolina*

Medical assistants make my job easier—not to mention faster. Their strong commu-

nication skills in addition to their clinical knowledge make this possible. For instance, if my medical assistant hears a patient complaining of abdominal pain, by asking the right questions, she is likely to uncover that the patient is also [experiencing] urinary frequency. ... Without her as part of my clinical team, there is no way I could see the same volume of patients I do. Providing health care is a stressful and sometimes thankless job, but I hope all medical assistants know that we appreciate them working beside us.

**Greta O'Buch, PA-C**  
*Physician assistant in  
Asheboro, North Carolina*

I have six medical assistants working with me, and each of them is a critical component to making sure patients receive high-quality care. In this day and age, there are so many moving parts to caring for dermatology patients, and doctors can't do it all. Scheduling tests, making sure results are back, and processing prescriptions would be impossible to keep track of without my medical assistants. ... I rely on my well-trained medical assistants to make sure everything falls into place. Every day I work, I'm grateful they are there assisting me because I so highly depend on them to make the day go smoothly.

**Brent Schillinger, MD**  
*Dermatologist in  
Delray Beach, Florida*

Medical assistants make the world go round in my opinion. For one thing, they are crucially important to helping patients get their cancer screenings. Our medical assistants help prompt both me and the patient when it's time for a patient's mammogram, colon cancer screening, or Pap smear. They are also 100% responsible for getting our entire community their influenza shots each year. Over the past two years, our medical assistants administered over 22,000 flu shots!

**Holly Biola, MD**  
*Family practice physician in  
Durham, North Carolina*