**Medical Office Administration
Survey of FY2007 Graduates**

Spring 2008

Introduction

In the spring of 2008, surveys were sent to students who had graduated from Harper College's Medical Office Administration (MOA) program in 2007. The surveys were designed to gather information about the graduates' current employment and their feedback on different aspects of the MOA program at Harper. Twenty-five graduates were surveyed and after two mailings and a prompting telephone call, twelve completed surveys were returned for a response rate of 48 percent.

The report is organized into an Introduction, a Results and Discussion Section that presents the results from the survey, and a Summary Section. Verbatim comments from the survey, as well as a copy of the survey instrument, are presented in Appendix A.

Results and Discussion

Respondents' answers to the survey questions are presented in tabular form below.

Table 1: Current Employment Status

Are you working as a Medical Assistant? (N=12)	N	%
Yes	6	50.0%
No	6	50.0%
If no, do you plan to in the future (N=5)		
Yes	4	80.0%
No	1	20.0%

Half of the respondents answering this question reported being employed as a Medical Assistant. Most of those not employed as a Medical Assistant planned to work in the field in the future.

Table 2: Tenure in Current Job (N=6)

Length of employment at time of survey	Value
Average	16 months
Standard Deviation	8.65 months
Range	8 – 30 months

On average, respondents reported working at their current job for 16 months.

Table 3: Salary (N=6)

What is your hourly salary?	Value
Average	$14.96/hour
Standard Deviation	$1.51
Range	$13.00 - $17.00

On average, respondents reported earning $14.96 per hour at their current jobs.

Table 4: Certifications (N=12)

Certification status (mark all that apply):	N	%
CMA	8	67%
RMA	0	0%

Most respondents reported holding their CMA certification. None of the respondents reported having attained their RMA registry.

Table 5: Knowledge

The program:	Strongly agree n (%)	Generally Agree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Generally Disagree n (%)	Strongly disagree n (%)
Helped me acquire the medical assisting knowledge appropriate to my level of training (N=10)	9 (90%)	1 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Helped me acquire the general medical knowledge base appropriate to my level of training (N=11)	10 (91%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Prepared me to collect patient data effectively (N=11)	11 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Prepared me to perform appropriate diagnostic and medical procedures (N=11)	8 (73%)	2 (18%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)
Trained me to use sound judgment while functioning in the healthcare setting (N=11)	10 (90%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

When asked to rate the knowledge base they acquired as a result of the program, respondents were quite positive; all agreed with four out of five statements. A single respondent gave a negative response to the statement regarding performing diagnostic and medical procedures.

Table 6: Skills

The program:	Strongly agree n (%)	Generally Agree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Generally Disagree n (%)	Strongly disagree n (%)
Prepared me to perform all clinical skills appropriate to entry level medical assisting (N=11)	9 (82%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)
Prepared me to perform all administrative skills appropriate to entry level medical assisting (N=11)	8 (73%)	3 (27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Nearly all respondents gave positive responses regarding the procedural proficiency they developed as a result of the program. A single respondent (the same respondent noted above) gave a negative response to the statement regarding performing clinical skills.

Table 7: Behaviors

The program:	Strongly agree n (%)	Generally Agree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Generally Disagree n (%)	Strongly disagree n (%)
Prepared me to communicate effectively in the healthcare setting (N=11)	9 (82%)	2 (18%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Prepared me to conduct myself in an ethical and professional manner (N=11)	11 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Taught me to manage my time efficiently while functioning in the healthcare setting (N=11)	8 (73%)	3 (27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Agree n (%)				
Strongly encouraged me to apply for and pass my CMA (N=12)	9 (75%)				
Strongly encouraged me to apply for and pass my RMA (N=12)	0 (0%)				

[a] Respondents were to darken the bubble if the program had "strongly encouraged" them to apply for and pass their CMA or RMA. None of the respondents darkened the bubble for RMA.

When asked about the behavioral skills imparted by the program, all respondents reported that the program prepared them to communicate effectively, behave professionally, and manage time efficiently. The majority of respondents (75%) reported that the program strongly encouraged them to apply for and pass their CMA.

Table 8: General Information

Question Text:	Yes n (%)	No n (%)
I have attained CMA certification (N=11)	9 (82%)	2 (18%)
I have attained RMA registry (N=10)	0 (0%)	10 (100%)
I am a member of the American Association of Medical Assistants (N=11)	5 (46%)	6 (54%)
I am a member of the American Medical Technology Association (N=11)	0 (0%)	11 (100%)
I actively participate in continuing education activities (N=11)	7 (64%)	4 (36%)

Most respondents reported that they had attained their CMA certification, but none had yet attained their RMA registry. Slightly less than half of the respondents indicated that they were members of the American Association of Medical Assistants, but none had yet joined the American Medical Technology Association. Most reported that they actively participate in continuing education activities.

Table 9: Facilities at Harper (N=12)

How would you rate the facilities (classroom, lab space, etc.) at Harper College?	N	%
Excellent	10	83%
Good	1	8%
Average	1	8%
Poor	0	0%

A large majority of respondents (83%) rated Harper's facilities as "excellent".

Table 10: Overall Quality of Preparation (N=11)

Please rate and comment on the OVERALL quality of your preparation as a medical assistant.	N	%
Excellent	8	73%
Very good	2	18%
Good	0	0%
Fair	1	9%
Poor	0	0%

When asked to rate the overall quality of their preparation as medical assistants, the majority of respondents (73%) gave the most positive response. A single respondent (9%) reported that the quality of preparation was "fair".

Respondents were asked for their comments regarding the quality of their preparation. They indicated that they feel better prepared than their peers and that they would recommend Harper to others. Their verbatim comments are included in the Appendix.

Respondents were also asked to comment on several aspects of the program. First, when asked to identify strengths of the program, they noted the faculty, the clinical experiences, and the thoroughness of the preparation. Respondents were then asked to make suggestions to improve the program; they made a range of suggestions including better screening of externship sites, more practice with phlebotomy, and a lab where students and graduates can practice their skills. When asked what skills were expected of them that were not addressed in the program, respondents suggested clinical judgment, anticipating physician's needs, and conveying sensitive information (test results) to patients. Finally, respondents were asked for suggestions that would help to better prepare future graduates. They suggested providing more phlebotomy practice, better exam preparation, and more information about salaries and job placement. Respondents' verbatim comments are presented in the Appendix.

Summary

In spring 2008, a survey was mailed to 25 students of Harper College's Medical Assisting program who had graduated in 2007. The survey was designed to gather information on their current employment and the certifications/registries that they held and to get their feedback on various aspects of the program. Completed surveys were received from 12 graduates (a 48% response rate).

Half of the respondents (6 of 12) reported being employed as a medical assistant. On average, respondents had been at their jobs 16 months and were earning $14.96 per hour. Most respondents (8 or 9 out of 12[1]) held their CMA certification and nearly half were also members of the American Association of Medical Assistants. Most respondents (64%) reported that they participated actively in continuing education activities.

When asked to rate the knowledge base, procedural proficiency, and behavioral skills they learned in the program, respondents were quite positive. The majority of respondents (73 to 83%) rated both their overall level of preparation and the facilities at Harper as "excellent".

In their open comments, respondents continued to be positive about the program. They indicated being pleased with the faculty, their clinical experiences, and the thoroughness of their preparation. To further improve the program, respondents suggested more practice with phlebotomy and more care being given when choosing externship sites.

In summary, it appears that the recent graduates of Harper's Medical Office Administration program have been reasonably successful in finding jobs in the field and achieving their certifications; most are pursuing continuing education opportunities. They felt that their experiences at Harper have prepared them well for their jobs and were satisfied with the facilities and the quality of their preparation.

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[1] There was a discrepancy between two separate survey questions; see Tables 4 and 8.

Appendix A

**Responses to Open-Ended Questions
Survey Instrument**

Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Knowledge (Cognitive Learning Domain) Comments:
Survey ID   QI comments

1   Very good clinical skills course, taught me everything I needed for my new job.

6   I believe phlebotomy needs to be included as I am finding employers want more experience in this area.

Skills (Psychomotor Learning Domain) Comments:
Survey ID   QII comments

1   More training on Electronic Medical Records.

6   I think it is a huge miscarriage to allow students to extern at sites that don't allow the students to perform phlebotomy.

Behaviors (Affective Learning Domain) Comments:
Survey ID   QIII comments

11   As a result of the training I received at Harper College, I scored higher than 95%, on average (3 categories), of all students who sat for the certification exam.

General Information: if you answered NO to any of the above questions, please explain why:
Survey ID   QIV if answered NO, why

2   Not sure what they are.

9   Did not do yet.

11   The CMA (AAMA) is the preferred certification.

12   I wanted to make sure this is the career that I want for a long time before investing any money.

16   Became pregnant and was not able to attain, but will do so in the future.

Rate and comment on the overall quality of your preparation as a medical assistant.
Survey ID   QVI comments

1   I was better prepared than my co-workers that went to other programs.

11   I just want to say thank you XXXX, and all the teachers who gave of themselves beyond the normal classroom for myself and fellow classmates success.

12   I enjoyed my educational experience at Harper and would recommend the program to other students.

13   Preparation for CMA exam was excellent, great clinical experience.

21   Do not work in the MOA field, only took program because I needed to complete a 2 year Assoc Degree in Applied Science to apply towards a degree at another college.

Identify two or three strengths of the program.
Survey ID   QVI strengths

1   Very thorough, I was well prepared for my job. Very flexible, program was easy to do on my time.

2   Solid training in instructors, lab and hands on experience.

5   The clinical was the best part.

6   The instructors were great. Preparation to communicate effectively.

9   Clinical was excellent. Administrative portion was good.

11   The strength of the program is not identified by one or two pieces but as a whole. The classes overlap and build on previous knowledge. My favorites were, Medical Terminology, Biology, MOA 245 and Law and Ethics.

12   The knowledge of the professors and the equipment.

13   Instructors, externship experiences.

15   Good teachers, personal life experience and externships.

16   The faculty was good, books were helpful and times for lab and computers were good.

25   Very thorough program.

Make two or three suggestions to further strengthen the program.
Survey ID   QVI suggestions

1   Better screening of externship sites. More training on specialty procedures i.e. OB/GYN, cardiology, GT etc.

2   More role playing and more experience with EMR and computer work.

6   Include lots more phlebotomy. Include more time/instruction on obtaining employment.

9   Better preparation for the exam.

11   Have a lab where students can refresh their skills (current students and graduate students). Place students on their first externship assignment in a facility where they use a max amount of clinical skills.

12   More about electronic charting, since it will be a requirement soon.

13   EMR training.

15   More pharmacology classes.

16   A lot of the equipment was expired i.e. gauze etc.

What qualities/skills were expected of you upon employment that were not included in the program?
Survey ID   QVI not included in program

1   Clinical judgment skills, learning to anticipate physician and patient needs during the visit.

2   Dealing with attitudes of doctors and nurses.

6   More phlebotomy (more than other fellow students).

11   I am not employed. I am pursuing a 4 year degree in Healthcare Leadership at National Louis University. I am pursuing part-time work in June 08 until I graduate in 10/08.

12   Making phone calls to patients with test results.

13   EMR skills.

15   Holter monitor, we didn't have one in class.

Provide comments and suggestions that would help to better prepare future graduates.
Survey ID QVI better prepare graduates

1   Get your CMA, it's worth it!

6   Only use externship sites that allow students to engage in phlebotomy.

9   Better preparation for the exam.

11   The teachers in this program have a big heart and share what they can so you can succeed.

13   Provide more realistic picture of salaries, job demands and work hours.

Survey of Medical Assistant Graduates

Harper College

HARPER COLLEGE MEDICAL ASSISTING PROGRAM GRADUATE SURVEY

The primary goal of a Medical Assisting Education program is to prepare its graduates to function as competent Medical Assistants. This survey is designed to help your program faculty determine the strengths of your program as well as those areas that need improvement. All data will be kept confidential and will be used for program evaluation purposes only.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Are you working as a Medical Assistant?   If no, do you plan to in the future?
☐ a. Yes   ☐ a. Yes
☐ b. No   ☐ b. No

Supervisor's name:_____

Place of employment:_____

Address of employer:_____

City, State, Zip Code:_____

For office use
Dollars Cents

Length of employment at time of survey:_____years_____months
  Years   Months

What is your hourly salary?(optional) $____.___hourly salary

Certification status (mark all that apply):   CMA   RMA
                                                ○   ○

INSTRUCTIONS: Consider each item separately and rate each item independently of all others. Mark the rating that indicates the extent to which you agree with each statement. Please do not skip any rating.

I. KNOWLEDGE   (Cognitive Learning Domain)

THE PROGRAM:

Rating scale (left to right): Strongly agree | Generally agree | Neutral (acceptable) | Generally disagree | Strongly disagree

a. Helped me acquire the medical assisting knowledge appropriate to my level of training.......... ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
b. Helped me acquire the general medical knowledge base appropriate to my level of training.... ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
c. Prepared me to collect patient data effectively................. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
d. Prepared me to perform appropriate diagnostic and medical procedures........................... ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
e. Trained me to use sound judgment while functioning in the healthcare setting....................... ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Comments:

II. SKILLS   (Psychomotor Learning Domain)

THE PROGRAM:

a. Prepared me to perform all clinical skills appropriate to entry level medical assisting............. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
b. Prepared me to perform all administrative skills appropriate to entry level medical assisting.... ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Comments:

Continue on other side of page.

III. BEHAVIORS (Affective Learning Domain)

THE PROGRAM:

	Strongly agree	Generally agree	Neutral (acceptable)	Generally disagree	Strongly disagree
a. Prepared me to communicate effectively in the healthcare setting.	○	○	○	○	○
b. Prepared me to conduct myself in an ethical and professional manner.	○	○	○	○	○
c. Taught me to manage my time efficiently while functioning in the healthcare setting.	○	○	○	○	○

d. Strongly encouraged me to apply for and pass my:

CMA	RMA
○	○

Comments:

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION (mark ONE response for each question)

	Yes	No
a. I have attained CMA certification.	○	○
b. I have attained RMA registry.	○	○
c. I am a member of the American Association of Medical Assistants.	○	○
d. I am a member of the American Medical Technology Association.	○	○
e. I actively participate in continuing education activities.	○	○

If you answered NO to any of the above questions, please explain why:

V. How would you rate the facilities (classroom, lab space, etc.) at Harper College?

Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
○	○	○	○

VI. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Please rate and comment on the OVERALL quality of your preparation as a medical assistant:

Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
○	○	○	○	○

Comments:

Please identify two or three strengths of the program.

Please make two or three suggestions to further strengthen the program.

What qualities/skills were expected of you upon employment that were not included in the program?

Please provide comments and suggestions that would help to better prepare future graduates.

For office use

Thank you for taking time to complete this survey.

PN 08-622