

Program Advisory Committee (PAC) & Accrediting Commission of Career Schools & Colleges (ACCSC) Journey Towards Accrediting a Medical Assistant Program

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Introduction

- Millennium Training Institute is an adult career training school located in Massachusetts that provides students with long-term career opportunities.
- Programs are specifically designed for students to learn career-oriented skills necessary for today's healthcare industry demands.
- Programs include: Clinical Medical Assistant, Medical Administration, Billing & Coding, Computer Repair and Networking.
- Students receive assistance with career planning, certification, resume development, interview preparation, job search and placement.



Related Literature

- Accreditation is important because it promotes institutional accountability by systematically and comprehensively evaluating institutions based upon criteria established via the Standards of Accreditation. (Bandiera et al, 2020)
- The Accrediting Commission Career Schools & Colleges (ACCSC) is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) as a reliable authority on the educational quality of the schools it accredits. It continually demonstrated that it is a valid and reliable authority on the assessment of education quality. (ACCSC 2018, May 9).
- Advantage of a student completing an accredited medical assistant program is that once they graduate the student is eligible for a national certification exam. (Antwi et al, 2021)

Internship Project Objectives

- Establish and oversee the creation of an accreditation advisory committee
- Lead advisory committee through the accreditation process to determine strengths and weaknesses of the current Medical Assistant Program.
- Guide the advisory committee through the development of recommendations for improvements based on accreditation standards

Acknowledgements

- Song Jin Executive Vice President
- Laurie Kowalski Vice President Compliance & Operations
- Tony B. Bennett Education Coordinator- Site Supervisor

Materials & Methods

- Create an advisory committee
 - Criteria for selecting members- community members who are committed to and passionate about supporting positive changes to the medical assistant program. Individuals who graduated from the medical assistants program, current and retired instructors and specialist who are currently working in the field whether in the administrative or clinical areas.
 - 9 members – chairperson, academic advisor, financial advisor, student representatives, curriculum advisors, clinical advisors and community advisors.
- Determine how to collect relative data
 - Face to face interviews with instructors
 - Utilize survey to receive feedback from students
 - Conducted review of all course documents/ topic outlines and syllabi
 - Interview internal/external professionals in the field

Results & Recommendations

Recommendations listed below were developed based on data collected from the following:

- 45 student surveys
- 6 instructor interviews
- 6 course documents and syllabi reviewed
- Feedback from 10 professionals currently working in the field
- Recommendations:
 - Expand availability of reliable and updated equipment for clinical practices, classroom teaching and evaluating for students and instructors
 - Create adequate space for the practicing & evaluation of clinical skills
 - Update and maintain appropriate certifications for instructors-such as current American Association of Medical Assistant Certification (AAMMA) or Registered Medical Assistant (AMT) and Basic Life Support for healthcare Providers (BLS) certification through the American Heart Association
 - Recognize the need for students to have resources available in a variety of platforms-such a physical books, ebooks, and online resources and materials.
 - Recognize that all students should become certified in Basic Life Support (BLS) for the healthcare provider by the end of their clinical /externship experience.

Clinical Medical Assistant Program
Millennium Training Institute
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Pac members in attendance (list position & employer)

- (Use numbers to indicate attendance by the appropriate number of members—dependent upon level of program)

School attendees (list all school personnel in attendance and their positions)

Present all attendees with the meeting agenda (handout), and list in Minutes:

- Summary of previous meeting & old business or copy of previous minutes, new business, program curriculum, learning objectives, length, content, Grad/placement rates (licensure/cert?), equipment/supplies/ Facilities tour

Meeting Discussion Period Begins:

- Welcome/greeting & review of commission standards for PACs – duties/responsibilities (handout can be copied from ACCSC standards): Include presentation in minutes (brief summary), Include commentary by members in minutes.

Agenda Items:

- Program curriculum (per program for PACs reviewing two or more related programs): Pass out program curriculum/curricula for PAC review (multiple program related programs); Review learning objectives, program length, overall program content per program for PACs reviewing related programs. Include presentation information & PAC commentary on objectives, length, and content per program in Minutes.
- Instruction/faculty: Instructional aids/methods of program delivery per program. Include presentation information & PAC commentary on instruction, if presented (this is not a requisite area, but an important one).
- Most recent ACCSC Annual Report reported grad/placement rates (per program for PACs reviewing related multiple programs) (printout from Annual Report): Licensure pass rates or certifications as reported, if required for employment (printout from Annual Report). Include presentation information & PAC commentary on Grad/Placement and licensure rates (if applicable) in Minutes (i.e., if School was required to submit program information in Annual Report).
- Facilities/tour/Equipment & Supplies: Appropriateness of spaces, appropriateness of learning stations, safety & sanitation policies. Include presentation information & PAC commentary on facility, learning spaces, and cleanliness/safety of physical plant and training areas in Minutes (include relevant review per program for PACs reviewing multiple/related programs). (Note: The facilities tour may occur at any time during the PAC meeting). Appropriateness of equipment/supplies (per program for PACs reviewing multiple related programs).

Example of Certified Medical Assistant PAC Template created for data/feedback collection.

Conclusion

- This process has helped this organization by meeting and maintaining certain acceptable levels of educational standards and quality.
- Students will benefit from this because once they complete their medical assistant program they are eligible to take a medical assistant certification exam.
- I have learned that accreditation assures the quality of an institution and assists with instructional improvements of the programs being offered.

Reference

- Antwi, J., Arkoh, A. A., Choge, J. K., Dibo, T. W., Mahmud, A., Vankhuu, E., Wanyama, E. K., & McKinley, D. W. (2021). Global accreditation practices for accelerated medically trained clinicians: A view of five countries. *Human Resources for Health*, 19(1), 110. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12960-021-00646-4>
- Bandiera, G., Frank, J., Scheele, F., Karpinski, J., & Philibert, I. (2020). Effective accreditation in postgraduate medical education: From process to outcomes and back. *BMC Medical Education*, 20(Suppl 1), 307. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-020-02123-3>
- Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges. (2018, May 9). *Recognition by the U.S. Department of Education*. <https://www.accsc.org/Accreditation/Overview.aspx>. Retrieved November 22, 2021, from <https://www.accsc.org/Accreditation/Overview.aspx>