



Date: February 21, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

From: Jeff Jessee, Dean of the College of Health and Vice Provost of Health Programs

Cc: Lisa Nash, Committee Chair & Term Instructor of Medical Assisting
Cheryl Lippert, Term Assistant Professor of Medical Laboratory Science

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings

Program/s in this review: Medical Office Coding OEC & Medical Assisting AAS

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): The Certified Medical Assistant examination preparation course of study is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) upon the recommendation of the Medical Assisting Education Review Board (MAERB).

Campuses where the program is delivered: Anchorage

Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role:

The Medical Assisting program at UAA offers an OEC in Medical Office Coding and an AAS in Medical Assisting. Medical office coders work with medical records for statistical and reimbursement purposes. Medical assistants are multi-skilled allied health professionals specifically trained to work in ambulatory settings, such as physicians' offices, clinics and outpatient care centers. They perform administrative and clinical procedures. Upon successful completion of the Medical Office Coding OEC, students are able to sit for Certified Professional Coder examination from the American Academy of Professional Coders. Graduates of the Medical Assisting AAS are able to sit for the national Certified Medical Assisting examination offered by the American Association of Medical Assistants. The demand for medical assistants in Alaska is robust. Employment is expected to grow by 23.4%, and the average number of annual openings is very high (+235). There is also strong demand for medical office coders. These programs provide essential healthcare support services. They are central to the College of Health mission to advance the health and wellbeing of people and communities.

Program Demand (including service to other programs), Efficiency, and Productivity:

During the review period, an average of 10.1 students per year obtained a Medical Office Coding OEC, and an average of 19.3 obtained a Medical Assisting AAS (for a total of 29.4 students per year). The number of majors has been stable. On average, there were 29.4 majors in the Medical Office Coding OEC each year, and another 24.6 in the Medical Assisting AAS (for a total of 54 students per year). The programs are structured and offered efficiently. Three of the four courses for the Medical Office Coding OEC are required for the Medical Assisting AAS. The Medical Office Coding OEC is offered in partnership with the University of Alaska Fairbanks and Kodiak College. Medical Assisting courses are often taken by non-

majors (72% of the student credit hour production came from non-majors). This generated significant tuition revenue. On average, the full tuition revenue exceeded the instructional costs for the programs by 10%.

Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success:

The Medical Office Coding OEC and Medical Assisting AAS do not have specialized accreditations, but the Certified Medical Assistant examination preparation course of study is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) upon the recommendation of the Medical Assisting Education Review Board (MAERB). The Certified Medical Assisting examination is only available to students who have completed an accredited course of study. Academic assessments show that students and employers are both very satisfied with the programs. Students perform very well on the national certification exams. As part of the program's continuous improvement process, curriculum documents and program student learning outcomes should be updated.

Program Duplication / Distinctiveness:

All three universities within the University of Alaska system offer medical assisting programs. The programs are separately accredited, and the three universities serve different student populations. Given that 235 job openings are expected each year, it is clear that all three programs are needed at this time. Nonetheless, a greater degree of collaboration across programs could reduce costs and facilitate student success.

Commendations and Recommendations:

The Medical Assisting programs are essential because they provide the postsecondary training that is required to provide healthcare support services as medical office coders and medical assistants. Program quality is high, and students are successful. The programs should clearly be continued. As the programs continue, the curriculum needs to be updated. The College of Health supports the program's desire to partner with other MAUs and community campuses in making these updates and revisions in a manner that is consistent with each program's specialized accreditation. While the need for medical assistants is strong enough to support three different programs, partnerships across programs could create efficiencies and greater opportunities for students.

Decision:

Continuation.