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Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants

AA Scope of Practice / Job Description

Scope of Practice

The scope of Anesthesiologist Assistants (AAs) clinical practice is generally the same as that of nurse anesthetists on the Anesthesia Care Team. The local scope of practice of AAs is usually defined by the following:

- The medically directing Anesthesiologist
- The hospital credentialing body
- The state's board of medicine
- Any applicable state statute or regulation.

Job Description

The specific job descriptions and duties of AAs may differ according to local practice. State law or board of medicine regulations or guidelines may further define the job descriptions of AAs. The constant ingredient no matter what the practice location is that AAs always practice under the medical direction of a qualified Anesthesiologist.

As part of defining the educational goal of AA training programs, the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) accreditation standards include a template AA job description (see below). Wherever the term 'assisting' occurs, it is understood that such assistance may be actual performance of the stated task by the AA as part of duties directed by the supervising Anesthesiologist.

Under the medical direction and supervision of an Anesthesiologist the AA functions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Making the initial approach to a patient of any age in any setting to obtain a preliminary pre-anesthetic health history, perform an appropriate pre-anesthetic physical examination and record pertinent data in an organized and legible manner for review by an Anesthesiologist. These activities help to define the patient's current physical status as it relates to the planned anesthetic.*
- *Performing or assisting in the conduct of diagnostic laboratory and related studies as appropriate, such as drawing arterial and venous blood samples.*
- *Establishing noninvasive and invasive routine monitoring modalities as delegated by the responsible Anesthesiologist.*
- *Assisting in the application and interpretation of advanced monitoring techniques such as pulmonary artery catheterization, electroencephalographic spectral analysis, Echocardiography and evoked potentials.*
- *Assisting in inducing, maintaining and altering Anesthesia levels, administering adjunctive treatment and providing continuity of anesthetic care into and during the postoperative recovery period.*
- *Assisting in the use of advanced life support techniques such as high frequency ventilation and intra-arterial cardiovascular assist devices.*
- *Assisting in making post- Anesthesia patient rounds by recording patient progress notes, compiling and recording case summaries and by transcribing standing and specific orders.*
- *Performing evaluation and treatment procedures essential to responding to life-threatening situations, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation, on the basis of established protocols (basic life support, advance cardiac life support, and pediatric advanced life support).*
- *Assisting in the performance of duties in intensive care units, pain clinics and other settings, as appropriate.*
- *Training and supervising personnel in the calibration, trouble shooting and use of patient monitors.*
- *Performing delegated administrative duties in an Anesthesiology practice or Anesthesiology department in such areas as the management of personnel, supplies and devices.*
- *Assisting in the clinical instruction of others.*