

Ophthalmic Assistant Program

The Ophthalmic Assistant

Begin your career in the field of vision healthcare as an Ophthalmic Assistant specializing in the anatomy, function and diseases of the eye. Ophthalmic assistants work directly with patients, greeting them and documenting their medical histories, administering diagnostic tests, measuring and recording vision, and testing eye muscle function. They provide contact lens education, give eye medications, and maintain optical instruments. They also do office tasks--booking appointments, answering phones, and keeping records.

This Ophthalmic Assistant program will train students to work with Ophthalmologists, administering routine eye exams and providing patient education. As an Ophthalmic Assistant you may also handle pre and post-operative exams for cataract surgery and visual field exams for glaucoma or neurological patients.

Ophthalmic – Employment & Education

This 50 hour Ophthalmic Assistant Program prepares the student for entry level positions in one of the fastest growing healthcare fields. With the increase in laser surgery and the overall technological advances in eye care, the need for Ophthalmic Assistants is expected to grow much faster than the average for all occupations through 2016.

* Once employed in the field of Ophthalmology and meeting certain work requirements, students will be eligible to sit for the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) - Ophthalmic Medical Assisting exam under the sponsorship of their employer (ophthalmologist). Successful completion of this exam serves as a prerequisite for the written certifying examination for Ophthalmic Medical Assistants offered by the Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO) which leads to National Certification.

Ophthalmic Assistant - Detailed Course Information:

Note: Although this program does not include a clinical rotation as part of its overall objectives, this program meets the requirements of the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), and the AAO's Ophthalmic Medical Assisting Exam. Successful completion of this course, along with 1,000 hours of work experience, serves as a prerequisite for the Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (COA) examination administered by the Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO).

The program provides a review of the following areas:

- Medical Terminology
- Anatomy and physiology of the eye
- Pharmacology
- Microbiology
- Scheduling appointments
- Obtaining consents and insurance information
- Maintaining records
- Preliminary examinations
- Understanding ophthalmic equipment
- Facts about glasses and contact lenses
- Visual fields, ocular injuries and common eye/retinal disorders
- Asepsis technique and minor office surgery
- Glaucoma
- Topical; prescriptions written for the eye
- Visual acuity; near and distance
- Laser in ophthalmology
- Computerized corneal tonometry and refractive surgery
- Ophthalmology ethics
- Maintaining surgical and other supplies,
- Taking patients' medical histories
- Teaching patients about procedures
- Review of maintaining, sterilizing, and setting up instruments for surgery
- Assisting doctors with surgery and patient monitoring
- Applying medications and eye dressings