



L&C to Offer New Medical Assisting Program This Spring

October 4 2013 4:47 PM

Lewis and Clark Community College will offer a new Medical Assisting program for the first time in the spring of 2014.

The new Associate of Applied Science degree and Certificate of Proficiency will meet the growing demand for medical assistants. Employment of medical assistants is expected to grow by 31 percent from 2010-2020, much faster than the average for all other occupations.

Named as one of the 25 fastest growing occupations in Illinois, it is estimated that there will be more than 4,500 job openings for medical assistants in Illinois between 2008 and 2018. Currently, there are 17,130 medical assistants in Illinois, with an average mean wage of \$31,140.

Medical assistants are multi-skilled health professionals specifically educated to work as a member of a health care team, performing a broad range of clinical and administrative tasks under the supervision of physicians, podiatrists, chiropractors and other health practitioners.

“The Medical Assisting program at L&C will provide well-rounded curriculum, which will prepare students for entry level career opportunities,” Program Coordinator Shelle Ridings said. “Students will have the opportunity to practice skills learned in their program in a healthcare facility during their final semester. Plus, the Medical Assisting program at L&C is very cost effective; therefore, students can gain education in a health related occupation for a reasonable price.”

The new AAS and certificate programs will incorporate six existing courses, currently offered by the Biology, Math and Office Technology departments, in addition to the general education offerings.

Students enrolled in the program will learn about the administrative duties of scheduling and receiving patients, preparing and maintaining medical records, performing basic secretarial skills, handling telephone calls, writing correspondence, serving as the liaison between the physician and other individuals and managing practice finances.

The clinical phase of the program will be taught through intense training and hands-on application. Students learn to perform clinical duties, including asepsis and infection control, taking patient histories and vital signs, first aid and CPR, preparing patients for procedures, assisting the health care professional with examinations and treatments, collecting and processing specimens, performing selected diagnostic tests, administering injections and preparing and administering medications as directed by the physician.

Primary employers for medical assistants include: ambulatory health care settings, extended health care facilities, public health agencies, schools, medical schools, research institutes and medical insurance firms.

For more information about the program or to learn how to enroll, call Ridings at (618) 468-4616.