



LOWER COLUMBIA COLLEGE 1600 Maple Street, Longview, WA 98632

Medical Assisting Advisory Board MINUTES

Monday, Oct. 14th, 2019 Health & Sciences Building, Room 244

I. Meeting called to order at 6:05 p.m.

II. ATTENDEES

Ginny Albright, LCC Medical Assistant graduate
Madison Hamer, PeaceHealth Medical Group
Charlotta Laulainen, Child and Adolescent Clinic
Angela Orth, Child and Adolescent Clinic
Lacey Haygood, LCC student
Elizabeth Engel, LCC
Vicky Soladey, LCC
Nettie Millus, LCC

III. AGENDA ITEMS

a) Enrollment update

Current cohort status

Liz Engel shared with the group that LCC's goal is to start every Fall Quarter with a cohort of 24 students; this Fall there are only 13 students in the cohort. Discussion about enrollment down in programs across campus. Faculty worked hard with other departments on campus to get the word out about the Medical Assisting program in efforts to increase enrollment. Though the current cohort is smaller, Liz said students are really engaged and working well as a team. Madison Hamer shared with the group that PeaceHealth in Alaska hires right out of high school and has started paying for people to go to school for medical assisting.

Summer preceptorships

Liz said Summer preceptorships went really well. PeaceHealth hosts many students. Madison Hamer said the students were phenomenal. Fourteen students successfully completed preceptorship; started with 23 but attrition was high for reasons across the board. LCC faculty always look at programs and processes and what might be done to improve attrition.



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b) Labor market data

Labor insight report

Labor Insight is a data research tool that looks at job postings across the nation. Data pulled for Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, Clark and Lewis counties showed 338 job postings for Medical Assistant in the past 12 months, indicates there is high demand in these counties for this career and a projected 26.8% growth over the next 10 years.

Trends across the state

LCC reached out to other educators around the state and said all are experiencing low enrollment. In addition to the enrollment issues higher education is experiencing budget deficits. Walla Walla closed its Medical Assisting program because of these issues.

Discussion of demand for medical assistants but enrollment is low; suspect medical assistant apprenticeships may be another influence on downward enrollment. LCC faculty looking at program options, such as a shorter program, but not sure what that would look like; what changes can be made so people can get in and out sooner without lowering standards; perhaps there is some streamlining that can be done.

Discussion about private schools/trade schools, and whether they may have effect on LCC's enrollment; students get into and out of these schools so quickly. Angela Orth told the group she only hires from LCC's program and one other school because of the quality of the students. Trade school programs last nine months with new cohorts starting every quarter and new batches of MAs every three months, she added, and the market is flooded with students who aren't qualified.

Ginny Albright shared that she passed her exam on the first attempt. A friend who attended private school took three attempts before she passed the exam. Liz told the group LCC students have a 96% passing rate.

c) Program information

Marketing and recruiting

Vicky Soladey shared information with the group regarding marketing initiatives. Public Relations is working on a pamphlet for Medical Assisting, there are plans to visit high schools to market and recruit, and looking for pathways that allow dual credit so students graduate high school from health care related Career and Technical Education and can get credit for high school classes and complete two-year degree in a shorter timeline.

Medical Assistant wage levels may be a part of the issue for low enrollment. Median salary for the four county area is just over \$33,000.

Apprenticeships



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Brief discussion about ongoing work to establish Medical Assistant Apprenticeship program with Great Rivers Behavioral Health and work that Workforce Southwest is doing to develop apprenticeship in Southwest Washington using existing Puget Sound area model.

Vicky shared with the group that she attended a conference earlier this year and a large part of the conversation was about getting younger people thinking about getting into the medical assisting field. She said several organizations are working on apprenticeship programs where individuals are in school one or two days a week and working the other days.

Charlotta Laulainen said getting hands on over a longer period of time, attending school one or two evenings a week, for some people that is the best option.

d) Advisory Board information

Ethics training

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges requires ethics training for new and returning members at least every other year. A link to the training can be found on the LCC Advisory Board page.

New Advisory Board web page

[Link to LCC's Advisory Board web page.](#)

e) Member updates

Liz asked for recommendations for a community member and a nurse practitioner or physician to serve on the board. These roles are required by the Medical Assisting accrediting association. LCC's program is scheduled for a site visit in April 2020. Faculty are working on self-study now and documenting what is being taught, where it's being taught and how the program is assessed. The report will be submitted end of Fall Quarter. Accreditation takes place every seven years.

IV. UPCOMING PROGRAM OR COMMUNITY EVENTS

a. KELSO HIGH SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

Kelso High Schools Career and Technical Education program is hosting an open house to showcase their new facilities 5 to 6:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 1st. Students will be demonstrating skills they are learning that align with industry standards.

b. CAREER EXPO

Kelso Longview Chamber and the Cowlitz STEM Network invite employers to participate in an event for 8th, 9th and 10th grade students from all school districts in Cowlitz County. There are 80 free spots for businesses to come and share



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information with students from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 14th, at the Cowlitz County Conference Center.

- c. **NEXT MEETING (DATE/TIME/PLACE):** April 27th tentative date for Spring meeting.

V. Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.