

MEDICAL ASSISTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

APRIL 19, 2021 – 6:00 P.M. VIA ZOOM

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

II. ATTENDEES

Dana Clayton, Ferguson Enterprises
Mary Alice McCubbins, ARNP, Child and Adolescent Clinic
Angela Orth, Child and Adolescent Clinic
Alissa Felts, LCC student
Madison Hamer, PeaceHealth
Bill Ofstun, Longview School District
Elizabeth Engel, LCC
Vicky Soladey, LCC
Lynell Amundson, LCC

III. PROGRAM UPDATES

Vicky Soladey shared with the group that LCC continues to screen students using COVID-19 protocols when they come to campus. She added that students and staff also use disinfecting protocols for equipment, desks, etc. The one change this quarter is that students have been able to touch each other for skills practice while following and using recommended personal protective equipment.

Elizabeth Engel told members that LCC plans to offer more hybrid courses fall quarter though faculty are being given the option for online or hybrid delivery.

Vicky told the group there are 12 students in the current co-hort. Fourteen started in the program then one stopped out and another left for academic purposes. Vicky said the remaining students are doing remarkably well considering the challenges they have had to deal with due to the pandemic.

Elizabeth shared with the group that she coordinates and oversees student practicums: the required 198 hours in a clinic setting. She is currently arranging sites for summer quarter. She recently reached out to health care facilities in Columbia County regarding the need for medical assistants and is exploring options for arranging practicums there. Currently LCC has partnerships with Vancouver Clinic, PeaceHealth, Child and Adolescent Clinic, Cowlitz Family Health Center and has recently heard from Kaiser regarding their interest in hosting a student.

Elizabeth told the group that LCC is receiving fall quarter applications now. Eight individuals have applied and seven have accepted placement. She added that LCC typically looks for up to 24 applications every September, but professional/technical programs are experiencing very low enrollment across the country. She does expect to see increased applications as we move into the summer. Angela Orth asked about the low enrollments and members discussed several possible causes including the low pay medical assistants receive, lack of benefits, and the current pandemic situation in which individuals are receiving increased unemployment payments with little incentive to

seek work. Members also discussed the lack of advertising for medical assistants and little knowledge of the role medical assistants have in health care.

Elizabeth shared that LCC is looking for greater articulation with high schools and Bill Ofstun said he would like to see LCC faculty visit the high schools and talk to students about the opportunity provided by entering the medical assisting field.

IV. INDUSTRY PARTNERS INFORMATION, UPDATES AND FEEDBACK

Angela told the group that Child and Adolescent Clinic has hit a hiring wall. When they post an open position they get few if any applications. The group discussed how the pandemic, current concerns about person-to-person contact, and increased unemployment payments have contributed to the difficulty to bring new employees on board in many employment sectors.

Bill told members he is seeing an increased demand for career and technical education, especially in fields that provide a path for students to continue in their education and pursue a professional certificate or degree.

V. ACCREDITATION UPDATE

Elizabeth shared with members that the accreditation visit was conducted virtually in July 2020. LCC was the first program to participate virtually. LCC did receive a few citations: documentation of how courses are taught and expected outcomes and not having a community member on the advisory board who has not worked in the health care field. LCC was given until February 2022 to address these citations but Elizabeth said most will be addressed and most likely submitted this summer.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Elizabeth shared with the group that she is retiring. Her last day will be June 18th, 2021. Vicky will step in as the new director. Angela congratulated Elizabeth and members wished her well.

Elizabeth told the group that a new chair needed to be elected to serve on the advisory board and called for volunteers. Angela Orth agreed to serve. Alissa Felts moved to approve Angela as chair; Bill Ofstun seconded.

VII. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING: The next advisory meeting is tentatively set for Monday, Oct. 18th, 2021, at 6 p.m.