



Student Learning Objectives

Certified anesthesiologist assistants are well-respected members of the anesthesia care team, and they work closely with anesthesiologists on all aspects of perioperative care, including pre-operative, surgery, and post-operative recovery. To perform the necessary duties throughout the cycle of patient care, certified anesthesiologist assistants must be highly-skilled practitioners.

In order to ensure that CWRU MSA Program graduates are able to provide high-level patient care, we have developed coursework and clinical practicum that integrate key skills throughout the program of study. These skills are vital to the success of certified anesthesiologist assistants, and they include:

I. Patient care

CAAs must be able to provide patient care that is compassionate, appropriate and effective for the treatment of health problems and the overall promotion of health. CAAs are expected to:

- Develop and carry out patient management plans in consultation with the anesthesiologist.
- Communicate effectively, and demonstrate caring and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families.
- Gather essential, accurate information about their patients.
- Make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information, preferences, current scientific evidence and clinical judgment.
- Counsel and educate patients and their families.
- Competently perform pertinent medical and invasive procedures considered essential for the practice of anesthesiology.
- Collaborate with healthcare professionals, including those from other disciplines, to provide patient-focused care.

Patient care is demonstrated through the student's ability to provide individualized perianesthetic management and to:

- Provide care throughout the perianesthetic continuum.
- Use a variety of current anesthesia techniques, agents, adjunctive drugs, and equipment while providing anesthesia.
- Administer general anesthesia to patients of all ages and physical conditions for a variety of surgical and medical procedures.
- Provide anesthesia services to all patients, including trauma and emergency cases.
- Administer and manage a variety of regional anesthetics.
- Function as a resource person for airway and ventilatory management of patients.
- Possess current advanced cardiac life support recognition.
- Possess current pediatric advanced life support recognition.
- Deliver culturally competent perianesthetic care throughout the anesthesia experience.

II. Medical knowledge

CAAs must demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences. Practitioners must apply such knowledge using an investigatory and analytical approach to clinical situations. CAAs are expected to:

- Understand etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic processes and epidemiology for medical conditions.
- Identify appropriate interventions for treatment of conditions.
- Select and interpret appropriate diagnostic or lab studies.
- Differentiate abnormalities in anatomic, physiological, laboratory findings and other diagnostic data.
- Use history, physical findings and diagnostic studies appropriately to formulate a differential diagnosis.
- Aid in the development of an anesthesia care plan as a member of the anesthesia care team.

III. Practice-based learning and improvement

CAAs must continually investigate and evaluate their patient care practices. They should appraise, analyze and assimilate scientific evidence into their practice in an effort to improve patient care. CAAs are expected to:

- Obtain and apply information about their own population of patients and the larger population from which their patients are drawn.
- Analyze experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the healthcare delivery team.
- Locate, appraise and assimilate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients' health.
- Apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical studies and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness.
- Use technology to manage and access information.
- Facilitate the learning of CAA students and other healthcare professionals.
- Recognize that medical science is constantly evolving.
- Appropriately address gender, cultural, cognitive, emotional and other biases or gaps in medical knowledge or any physical limitations.
- Engage and promote continuing medical education and lifelong learning.

Practice-based learning and improvement is demonstrated through the student's ability to think critically and to:

- Apply theory to practice in decision-making and problem-solving.
- Provide anesthesia care based on sound principles and research evidence.
- Perform a pre-anesthetic assessment and formulate an anesthesia care plan for patients to whom they are assigned to administer anesthesia.
- Identify and take appropriate action when confronted with anesthetic equipment malfunctions.
- Interpret and utilize data obtained from noninvasive and invasive monitoring modalities.
- Calculate, initiate and manage fluid and blood component therapy.
- Recognize and appropriately respond to anesthetic complications that occur during the peri-anesthetic period.
- Pass the National Commission for the Certification of Anesthesiologist Assistants certification exam.

IV. Systems-based practice

CAAs must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger context and system of healthcare. CAAs must also exhibit the ability to effectively call on system resources to provide care

that is of optimal quality and value. CAAs are expected to:

- Practice cost effective healthcare and resource allocation that does not compromise quality.
- Advocate for quality patient care, and assist patients in dealing with system complexities.
- Use technology to support patient care decisions and patient education.
- Effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems.
- Accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care, and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care.
- Apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide more effective, efficient patient care.
- Support initiatives that ensure access to medical care for all patients.

Systems-based practice is demonstrated by a student's ability to maintain patient safety and to:

- Be vigilant in the delivery of patient care.
- Protect patients from iatrogenic complications.
- Participate in the positioning of patients to prevent injury.
- Conduct a comprehensive and appropriate equipment check.
- Utilize standard precautions and appropriate infection control measures.

V. Interpersonal and communication skills

Interpersonal and communication skills encompass verbal, nonverbal and written exchanges of information. CAAs must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective exchanges with anesthesiologists, other physicians, professional associates, and the healthcare system. CAAs are expected to:

- Appropriately adapt communication style to the context of the individual patient interaction.
- Work effectively with physicians and other healthcare professionals as a member or leader of a healthcare team or other professional group.
- Demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety.
- Accurately and adequately document and record information regarding the care process for medical, legal, quality and financial purposes.

Interpersonal and communication skills are demonstrated by a student's ability to:

- Effectively communicate with all individuals influencing patient care.
- Interact competently with a diverse population.
- Utilize appropriate verbal, nonverbal, and written communications in the delivery of care.
- Communicate effectively through case records, written reports and professional papers.

VI. Professionalism

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Most importantly, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above individual interests. CAAs must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to diverse patient populations and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. CAAs must:

- Communicate in an effective and responsible manner with the anesthesiologist and care team.
- Carry out professional responsibilities.
- Adhere to ethical principles.
- Be accountable to patients, society and the profession.
- Improve and maintain competency and a pursuit of lifelong learning and scientific knowledge.

Additionally, CAAs are expected to have values that include:

- Placing the patient's interest above their own interest.
- Respect, empathy and compassion for the patient.
- Patient confidentiality.
- Practice without impairment from drug and alcohol abuse, cognitive deficiency or mental illness.
- Sensitivity and responsiveness to the patient's culture, age, gender and disabilities.
- Honesty with patients and medical professionals.

Professionalism is demonstrated by the student's ability to:

- Behave ethically when interacting with patients, affiliated healthcare associations and members of the medical community.
- Participate in continuing education to acquire new knowledge and improve their practice.
- Participate in activities that improve anesthesia care.
- Interact on a professional level with integrity.
- Teach others.