

Muskegon Community College's Medical Assistant Program was awarded initial accreditation by The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) on Sept. 15.

The accreditation culminates more than a year's work by MCC to meet the standards set by the Medical Assisting Education Review Board (MAERB). The Medical Assistant Program was visited in May 2017 by two site visitors, who reviewed all aspects of the program to determine if it met the criteria set by MAERB and CAAHEP.

CAAHEP is the largest programmatic accreditor of the health sciences professions. In collaboration with its Committees on Accreditation, CAAHEP reviews and accredits over 2,100 individual education programs in 30 health science occupations. CAAHEP accredited programs are assessed on an ongoing basis to assure that they meet the Standards and Guidelines of each profession.

"Congratulations are in order for Denise Passage, who built the program based on a stated need by employers for well-trained CMAs, and our current Program Coordinator Dawn Platt, both of whom who worked tirelessly to make this milestone possible," said Chris Patterson, the director of Health Programs Development at MCC.

"The Medical Assistant Program helps fill the need for medical assistants in Muskegon and our surrounding areas," she continued. "Dawn works with Mercy Health, Spectrum Health, Cherry Health and independent practitioners to insure excellent clinical experiences for students enrolled in the Program. With this accreditation, graduates will be eligible to take their Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) exam, which will pave the way for their employment in this entry-level healthcare occupation."

The MCC Medical Assistant Program enrolled its first cohort of students in January 2016 and has since added a second admission period for students who wish to begin their training in September each year.

"Students in the January cohorts may be eligible to participate in the program as apprenticeship students," explained Patterson. "The apprenticeship program is one of the first of its kind in healthcare and has served as a model for colleges in other states."