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Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants

AA Scope of Practice / Job Description

Scope of Practice

Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants (CAAs) practice in the Anesthesia Care Team (ACT) with Physician Anesthesiologist oversight. The scope of clinical practice for CAAs is identical to that of nurse anesthetists working in the ACT.

The scope of practice of CAAs is determined by the following:

- The Physician Anesthesiologist
- The hospital credentialing body
- The state's board of medicine
- Any applicable state statute or regulation.

Job Description

The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), the American Academy of Anesthesiologist Assistants (AAAA), and the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) cooperate to establish, maintain and promote appropriate standards of quality for the education and practice for Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants.

The Certified Anesthesiologist Assistant is qualified by advanced academic and clinical education to provide anesthetic care with oversight by a qualified physician anesthesiologist. The CAA works collaboratively with the physician anesthesiologist to prescribe and administer therapeutic interventions in the perioperative and intensive care settings.

By virtue of the medical sciences education and clinical practice experience, the CAA is proficient in the use of contemporary state-of-the-art patient monitoring techniques in anesthesia care environments. The CAA performs complementary and supplementary anesthetic care and monitoring tasks that allow the physician anesthesiologist to use his or her own medical education more efficiently and effectively.

The Certified Anesthesiologist Assistant is skilled in gathering patient data, performing the evaluation of patients' physical and mental status, and administering the anesthetic care for patients with physician anesthesiologist oversight. The tasks performed by CAAs may reflect regional variations in anesthesia practice and state regulatory factors.

In agreement with the ASA Statement on the Anesthesia Care Team (ACT) and in accordance with the AAAA Statement on the ACT, the Certified Anesthesiologist Assistant's functions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Obtain an appropriate and accurate pre-anesthetic health history; perform an appropriate physical examination and record pertinent data in an organized and legible manner,

- b. Perform diagnostic laboratory and related studies as appropriate, such as drawing arterial and venous blood samples,
- c. Perform the insertion of invasive monitoring modalities such as TEE probes, arterial lines, pulmonary artery catheterization, and central venous lines as delegated by the Physician Anesthesiologist,
- d. Administer anesthetic agents and any controlled substances including, but not limited to, administration of induction agents, maintaining and altering anesthesia levels, administering adjunctive treatment and providing continuity of anesthetic care into and during the post-operative recovery period,
- e. Establish airway interventions and perform ventilatory support,
- f. Apply, perform, and interpret advanced monitoring techniques,
- g. Use advanced life support techniques, such as high frequency ventilation and intra-arterial cardiovascular assist devices,
- h. Make post-anesthesia patient rounds by recording patient progress notes, compiling and recording case summaries, and by transcribing standing and specific orders,
- i. Evaluate and treat life-threatening situations, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation, on the basis of established protocols (BLS, ACLS, and PALS),
- j. Perform duties in intensive care units, pain clinics, and other settings, as delegated by the physician anesthesiologist,
- k. Train and supervise personnel in the calibration, troubleshooting, and use of patient monitors,
- l. Perform administrative duties in an anesthesiology practice or anesthesiology department such as patient record management, procedure coding and billing, and management of personnel,
- m. Participate in the clinical instruction of others, and
- n. Perform and monitor regional anesthesia to include, but not limited to, spinal, epidural, IV regional, and other special techniques such as local infiltration and nerve blocks.