

MISCELLANEOUS

AAMA Vision Statement

A CMA (AAMA)® for every patient

AAMA Mission Statement

The mission of the American Association of Medical Assistants® is to provide the medical assistant professional with education, certification, credential acknowledgment, networking opportunities, scope-of-practice protection, and advocacy for quality patient-centered health care.

Definition of the Medical Assisting Profession

Medical assistants are multiskilled members of the healthcare team who perform administrative and clinical procedures under the supervision of licensed healthcare providers.

Definition of the CMA(AAMA)

The CMA (AAMA)® is awarded to candidates who pass the CMA (AAMA) Certification Exam. The CMA (AAMA) exam is the only medical assisting examination that uses the National Board of Medical Examiners to construct and administer the exam. The CMA (AAMA) credential must be recertified every 60 months by the continuing education or exam method to use the credential.

AAMA Code of Ethics

The AAMA Code of Ethics for medical assistants sets forth principles of ethical and moral conduct as they relate to the medical profession and the particular practice of medical assisting.

Members of the AAMA dedicated to the conscientious pursuit of their profession, and thus desiring to merit the high regard of the entire medical profession and the respect of the public which they serve, do pledge themselves to strive always to:

- A. Render service with full respect for the dignity of humanity.**
- B. Respect confidential information obtained through employment unless legally authorized or required by responsible performance of duty to divulge such information.**
- C. Uphold the honor and high principles of the profession and accept its disciplines.**
- D. Seek to continually improve the knowledge and skills of medical assistants for the benefit of patients and professional colleagues.**
- E. Participate in additional service activities aimed toward improving the health and well-being of the community.**

AAMA Creed

The Medical Assisting Creed of the AAMA sets forth medical assisting statements of belief:

- **I believe in the principles and purposes of the profession of medical assistant.**
- **I endeavor to be more effective.**
- **I aspire to render greater service.**
- **I protect the confidence entrusted to me.**
- **I am dedicated to the care and well-being of all people.**
- **I am loyal to my employer.**
- **I am true to the ethics of my profession.**
- **I am strengthened by compassion, courage, and faith.**

ANNUAL YEAR-END BOD REPORT FORMAT

All officers and committee chairs should keep a record of their term activities and present a written/verbal report at each NSMA BOD meeting. A final written annual report is to be submitted to the Speaker at the close of term and made available at the annual NSMA General Assembly. The annual report should be neat, clear, concise and ready for distribution.

Follow the guidelines below when submitting your report.

- 1) Report should be line numbered, single spaced, 12-point font. Do not submit report on letterhead.
- 2) On the front page, center Nebraska Society of Medical Assistants, next line the BOD position name, next line the type of report and next line the time period for which the report is being submitted.
- 3) Remember that you are speaking for the office or committee, therefore use the third person. Instead of "I" the statement should be "This officer/chair".
- 4) The body of the report should state the duties assigned to that position and briefly explain how the duties were carried out. Include the actions taken, accomplishments and result of work completed including both the positive and negative. At the conclusion of the report, the author may submit constructive criticism, offer recommendations to the successor and propose suggestions that may assist future leaders.
- 5) Conclude text with the name of the person(s) submitting the report and list committee member name(s). Sign off report with name and position only (no closure).

The individual committee chair is responsible for submitting the final report that has been agreed upon by all members of that committee. Members of the committee who approve should sign the report. Courtesy copies should be sent to all team members by the Chair. If not all the committee members approve, opposing members may prepare a separate report and express their views. These reports are called the reports of the majority and the minority. Both reports should be presented to the General Assembly.

The annual report is to be typed and formatted when submitted to the Speaker and will be printed in the General Assembly packet as submitted. Focus on form, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, and grammar. This report is a direct reflection of the professionalism of the author. A copy of the report should be retained for five years and filed in each officer/committee BOD Notebook.

NSMA MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD

This Advisory Board is selected to provide NSMA BOD member's access to physician and physician extender support. Candidates should be interested in promoting the welfare and betterment of the medical assisting profession and NSMA. Term of appointment is for one year.

It is the responsibility of NSMA to educate the medical advisors on the purpose and philosophies of AAMA so they may in turn encourage AAMA membership and participation in CEU programs when appropriate. Advisory Board members should encourage other physicians to support and promote the hiring of CMAs (AAMA).

Advisory Board members may be asked to act as a liaison between NSMA and other professional medical organizations, i.e., State and County Medical Societies. NSMA understands the time constraints placed on busy physicians and medical professionals and welcomes any support the Advisory Board members can offer.

Advisors are invited to attend BOD meetings and the NSMA annual conference with a complimentary registration. If unable to attend the entire annual conference, each advisor is entitled to two complimentary tickets to the installation/awards ceremony meal function.

All advisors are eligible to receive a one-year complimentary subscription to the *CMA Today* professional journal.

MEETINGS & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Anyone who has tried to accomplish something in a group knows that sometimes it seems impossible to get a group to agree on anything. Some members dominate the meeting while others are hesitant to speak. Some members may feel their contributions are not valued or appreciated. Some may want to jump in and take immediate action while others insist more

information is needed before a formalized plan can be established. These inconsistencies can sometimes cause a meeting to come to a standstill.

Most agree that simply making a change for change's sake doesn't make sense. However, even if you are on the right track you'll eventually get run over if you aren't making forward progress. To grow and develop, NSMA must retire some programs so that it can start new ones. A well-managed Board will allow for future initiatives and facilitate Society's growth.

Decisions regarding developing and implementing long-term plans demand the expertise and energy of many members. Solutions to complex issues are best solved by working in a group. Rather than concentrating on the needs of an individual, members must focus on the positive assets of the entire NSMA BOD to create improvement.

NSMA is made up of individuals who have had different life experiences but who share a common interest in NSMA. Even with common ground, one inevitable fact of life is that individuals are influenced by a range of factors and will not always agree. An important role of NSMA leadership is to manage disagreements and channel energies in a positive direction.

Sometimes conflict is inevitable. To arrive at a resolution, leaders should identify and understand that there are different types of conflict. Personal conflict is directed at and between individuals. Issue conflict is related to the group's work and goals. Procedural conflict emerges from work methods and strategies. Competitive conflict occurs when individuals or groups compete for the same resources. There are different techniques for managing the different types of conflict. BOD members must make decisions that prevent conflict from eroding meeting time and derailing the objectives of the group. The hope is that all decisions ultimately result in the good of the membership.

There are also different conflict response behaviors. Avoidance is one typical response to conflict. "If we ignore it, it will go away". Members who endorse this view think that time alone will take care of conflict. The truth is that conflict has little chance of resolving without positive effort. Conflicts don't evaporate. Pretending that it doesn't exist creates tension and holds the group back. Surrendering is another way a group may attempt to resolve conflict. Some individuals who cannot tolerate dissension often just give up. However, this may not be the best decision for NSMA.

Conflict rarely has an absolute right or wrong conclusion. The ability of a mediator (the NSMA President) to listen and sort through the issues in an impersonal non-threatening way, will help the Board move toward an eventual resolution and/or compromise.

Verbal attacks are another way some individuals deal with conflict. Some just want to fight it out verbally to coerce others into conforming. The group's "meeting rules" (parliamentary procedures) should be enforced and the presiding officer should refuse to accept this type of negative behavior. Strong opinions are acceptable but using force to defeat opposition is not.

There can be constructive and destructive discussions. Make sure that the message, not the personality, is evaluated. Members should make constructive comments gracefully,

diplomatically, and respectfully. Disagreeing should open dialogue, not assault another's opinion.

Occasionally a group's desire for consensus and harmony can be overpowering and nullify critical thinking. This is why dissension in a group can be a positive force, thought-provoking, and help prevent "groupthink".

The NSMA BOD must promote intellectual freedom, honest deliberations and welcome dissenting opinions. Many members feel uncomfortable going against a group and may fear being disliked. It takes time to build a comfortable environment that allows disagreement. Since the Board meets in person a limited number of times and BOD members change regularly, attempts should be made by the leadership to communicate frequently both formally and informally. These additional interactions (phone, email, socially) help bridge the uneasiness of open and honest participation in the group setting.

Negotiation is the process by which different parties offer their views, describe their position and ultimately put the dispute on the table for a vote. This process involves give-and-take and can result in a win-win outcome if there is compromise and a willingness to look for creative solutions.

How a leader handles conflict sets the stage for everything the group tries to do together. If conflicts are handled by cooperation and negotiation, it enhances the groups' ability to work on issues and move forward. If dealt with appropriately, conflict can generate new alternatives and offer new perspectives.

NSMA Adjunct & Courtesy Mailing Lists

The Adjunct Mailing Lists supplement the NSMA membership list that is supplied by AAMA and include:

- A. The Membership Chair maintains a roster to include the names and demographics for Honorary Members, CMA (AAMA) nonmembers for two years following certification, ABHES and CAAHEP medical assisting school program directors in Nebraska, and the current Nebraska Medical Society Executive Secretary.
- B. The Immediate Past President maintains a demographic list of all Past Presidents and members of the Past President's Society.
- C. The Membership Chair maintains a mailing list of other allied healthcare organizations.
- D. The Public Relations Chair maintains a list of Nebraska newspapers and mass media titles with addresses and specific contact names when available.

NSMA BOD Approved Courtesy Mailings

NSMA BOD Meeting Minutes (sent by the Secretary)

- Future NSMA Conference Chairs (up to 3 years in advance)
- NSMA Delegates/Alternates to the AAMA conference

Annual Conference Registration (sent by the Annual Conference Chair)

- Neighboring State Presidents
- NSMA Past State Presidents

LEADERS IN TOUCH WITH THE MEMBERSHIP

NSMA BOD members need to stay in touch with the general membership recognizing their needs and concerns. The more deeply involved a member becomes on the NSMA BOD, the more likely they are to feel that the average member is disengaged from or even uninterested in the issues that have become the Board's focus. This may create feelings of separation from the general membership.

As a voting member of the BOD, you have a front-row seat as to the specifics on why a proposal is adopted or fails, why money is spent on one thing but not another, and how the Board priorities are set. If a member challenges a BOD decision it is as though the Board's competency is challenged when it may be a matter of insufficient information. This questioning may cause Board members to feel defensive.

One way to make sure the Board is staying in touch with the members is to ask "How will this affect the average member" at every decision-making juncture. It may be beneficial to pilot-test a major change with representatives from the general membership before a final BOD major change is decided.

All leaders should continue to attend any local CMA(AAMA) gatherings once they join the NSMA BOD. It is important to stay connected with your "home" geographic group. Utilize a mentoring strategy and bring members from your local area to the NSMA Board meetings as your guest.

Any assembly of members (i.e., a conference, business meeting, or special event) provides an important opportunity to mingle, talk and listen. All BOD members should have informal conversations with members but to gather feedback. Possibly agree on assigning several questions that every BOD member will ask during an event and share anonymous responses as a group at the next BOD meeting.

During sessions with the general membership, introduce officers/chairs at the podium. Have each BOD member introduce themselves with a short anecdote about their most memorable NSMA moment, why they ran for an office or accepted a chair position on the BOD. Confess what mistakes they have made along the way, your most embarrassing moment. Collaborate with the

Website and Social Media Committees and make it fun.

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT MADE EASY FOR ALL

To maximize the NSMA membership recruitment efforts, it is important to anticipate and overcome objections effectively. Membership recruiters must refrain from becoming defensive or arguing as this response will not overcome opposition. Overcoming objections will usually be a situational challenge since each circumstance will be a little different than the last one. Sometimes it is necessary to look beyond the basic objection and examine the rationale behind it. Remember this important quote “We are given two ears and one mouth; use them in that same proportion”.

When possible, one-on-one recruiting is preferable since it will allow listening carefully and responding with appropriate answers. This also allows you to communicate your enthusiasm about NSMA to prospective members.

If using direct mailings or social media postings for recruiting members, there may not be an opportunity to answer questions or respond to objections. It may be preferable to utilize a personal contact or phone call. Another option is to anticipate objections and address these issues directly in the membership literature that is mailed out or posted.

OVERCOMING MEMBERSHIP OBJECTIONS

Membership recruiters should practice the following simple technique called “feel-felt-found”. A prospective member frequently states that membership is too expensive, or they don’t have time to participate. The recruiter’s response is I know how you “feel”, I “felt” the same before I joined but I “found” that membership was a great investment of both my time and money. This combines the benefits of joining with an empathetic testimonial of an NSMA member who has already joined.

It may be necessary to customize the way membership benefits are presented. Recruiters should be armed with actual numbers when it is necessary to justify the cost of membership. Consider member versus nonmember CEU fees, conference registration, and a subscription cost to the *CMA Today* journal. Advertise all tangible benefits available to BOD members which may include the NSMA annual conference registration fee paid, eligibility to apply for the NSMA Conference Grant Award, or serve as a delegate to the AAMA annual conference. Encourage participation in the NSMA Membership Recruitment Contest. Know your membership benefits before you start your recruiting campaign!

It is okay to agree that membership costs a lot of money. Money is almost always an issue so the best thing to do is acknowledge it. It’s a big investment but the kind of investment that will be returned many times over. Don’t overlook the bigger picture that AAMA dues reflect the amount of money it takes for the bi-level organization to deliver continuing education programs and services that help increase awareness for the profession of medical assisting and professional

credentialing that all CMAs (AAMA) benefit from. It's important to understand the "value" of membership, not just the "cost".

Lack of time is a common objection that membership recruiters encounter. It's important to have two lists of benefits for potential members. One includes the benefits a member gets from actively participating in activities like CEU sessions, conferences, and leadership roles. However, just as important is the list that members get even if they never leave their homes. This includes things like membership access to the AAMA website, a subscription to the *CMA Today* journal, insurance programs, and connection to peers. Fortunately, there are reasons to join that don't include spending time attending business meetings.

When the objection to joining includes a disagreement with policies or procedures, acknowledge that there are two sides to just about every issue. However, NSMA welcomes members with different viewpoints and encourages listening to both sides of an issue. To change policy, the prospect needs to join and have their voice heard. Only dues-paying members have the opportunity to shape the mission and goals of NSMA.

Some prospects may not want to join because they already have multiple organizations that they are committed to. Accept and agree that different organizations offer different benefits and avoid setting up a competitive stance. Let the prospect know that involvement in multiple organizations is common among the NSMA membership.

If a prospective member indicates that they don't see any reason to join they may understand the activities of NSMA but not the full benefits. It would be helpful to try and identify the prospect's needs and adapt your recruitment approach accordingly.

Some potential members may not join because they feel they get the same benefits from the professional organization as those who pay dues. A recruiter could point out how even more effective and influential NSMA would be if it was representative of a larger number of CMAs (AAMA) throughout the entire State. A recommendation could be made to join for one year and then evaluate to see if NSMA appears more united and stronger.

In hard economic times a recruiter needs to be empathetic. Some employers who had been paying membership dues may no longer offer this as a benefit to their employees. It may be possible to suggest that an employer who does not pay membership dues consider the cost similar to continuing education and job training. Explain how the value of NSMA membership exists in different forms and money for dues may be available in another part of a company's budget. Remind the prospect that NSMA membership is a personal investment in one's career and that membership and the benefits go wherever they go. This may be an opportunity to point out that NSMA provides an excellent networking opportunity that includes information regarding available job positions and competitive salaries.

"I was a member once but don't want to rejoin." It's best to research and have this information available before hearing it from a prospective member but if caught off guard, avoid asking "why" they don't want to rejoin as this will no doubt set a negative tone. Ask how long it has been and focus on the changes and advancements NSMA has undergone. Concentrate on the

positive aspects of being a member now.

If a potential member is just not ready to decide, don't force the issue. Offer to call back and narrow down a day or time to follow up. Offer to send additional information if this would help with any unanswered questions. Extend an invitation to attend an upcoming function or meeting. Explore if there are any incentives to join by a specific date that may assist in a quicker decision for the potential member.

If it becomes clear that the prospect is not going to join, try to agree to allow someone from NSMA to contact them later. Extend an invitation to the next NSMA business meeting or educational session. Leave contact information to provide them with an opportunity to follow up if there are questions.

Remember, membership recruitment is the responsibility of all NSMA members, and we need to be mindful of the need to find our replacement.

TERMS/ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

AAMA	American Association of Medical Assistants 1-800-ACT-AAMA, www.aama-ntl.org
AAMAE	The American Association of Medical Assistants Endowment: Separate nonprofit organization established by AAMA as a public foundation devoted to charitable and educational purposes
AAPC	American Academy of Professional Coders, www.aapc.com
ABHES	Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools
ARRT	American Registry of Radiologic Technologists, www.rrt.org
AHIMA	American Health Information Management Association, www.ahima.org
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
BOD	Board of Directors – conducts NSMA business between annual meetings
BOT	AAMA Board of Trustees (National elected officers)
Bylaws	Document that contains governing rules about the purpose of NSMA, classes of membership, dues, list of offices and standing committees along with qualifications, General Assembly responsibilities
CAAHEP	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs
CB	AAMA Certifying Board – responsible for preparing and administering the certification examination
CBT	Computer based testing
CEB	AAMA Continuing Education Board – responsible for developing a program of continuing education including self-guided study and the CEU process
CEU	Continuing Education Unit (one hour = one CEU)
CMA (AAMA)	Certified Medical Assistant/American Association of Medical Assistants
Component Chapter	Local Chapter within a State Society (not in Nebraska)
Delegate/Alternate	An elected representative with voting privileges at the AAMA General Assembly. Alternates are elected for delegate back-up.

DHHS	Department of Health & Human Services, www.dhhs.gov
EAB	Educator Advisory Board (NSMA)
Ex-officio	A member by virtue of a position
General Assembly	The governing body of AAMA
ICE	Institute for Credentialing Excellence
IPP	Immediate Past President
MAB	Medical Advisory Board (NSMA)
MAERB	AAMA Medical Assisting Education Review Board – responsible for the accreditation process of post-secondary medical assistant programs
MARW	Medical Assistant Recognition Week
Mentee	A member who seeks guidance and information from a mentor
Mentor	An experienced and knowledgeable member who acts as a guide or teacher
MGMA	Medical Group Management Association
Motion	A proposal that the membership take a stand or action on an issue
MSC	Motion, Seconded, Carried (as recorded in business minutes)
MSC	AAMA Management Steering Committee
MSD	Motion, Seconded, Defeated
NCCA	National Commission for Certifying Agencies
NCSBN	National Council of State Boards of Nursing
NMA	Nebraska Medical Association, www.nebmed@nebmed.org
NOCA	National Organization of Competency Assurance
NSMA	Nebraska Society of Medical Assistants, www.nsmaonline.org
NSRT	Nebraska Society of Radiologic Technologists, www.nsrt.net
OSHA	Occupation Safety & Health Administration, www.osha.gov

PAHCOM	Professional Association of Health Care Office Managers
Procedure Manual	NSMA guidebook used by the BOD to guide society's business operations
BOD Notebook	Manual developed and maintained by each NSMA BOD position explaining detailed duties and responsibilities
Quorum	The number of members that must be present for business to be conducted, usually two-thirds. A quorum is different than a majority. The majority is 51%.
RMA	Registered Medical Assistant (certified by the American Medical Technologists).
RONR	Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, current edition
SAB	Student Advisory Board (NSMA)
Standing Rules	Outline specific operational policies of NSMA that can be changed by a BOD majority vote at any meeting.
Tri-Level/Bi-Level	Membership in the National Association (AAMA), State Society (NSMA) and/or Local (Component) Chapter (Nebraska is bi-level)
VP	Vice President