

Kudos to you!

Providers and patients give thanks for all you do

By Cathy Cassata

In honor of MARWeek, providers and patients offer these personal stories about the CMAs (AAMA) in their lives.



Provider perspectives

Medical assistants make physicians' lives better by being the buffer and liaison between patients and us. In doing so, they act as advocates for patients. They are the frontline [professionals] in taking messages, finding out what is needed in terms of refills, and passing on our messages to the patients about lab results and other information. ... My CMAs (AAMA) are so knowledgeable and experienced that they can discern and get to the crux of the issue with the patient, so we don't have to do a lot of back-and-forth phone calls. Being a medical assistant can be a difficult job, and I thank mine daily for what they do.

Lauren Kim, MD

Rheumatologist in Portland, Oregon

Because of her hands-on experience and knowledge, [my CMA (AAMA)] knows when to consult with me when something is out of her scope of practice. Her ability to build rapport with our patients is invaluable. She rooms them and asks the right questions to understand why they are here. I'm thankful for her ability to relate to the patients and other staff members so well, and for taking on any task that I ask her to.

Shonna Bates, WHNP-BC

Nurse practitioner in Columbus, Ohio

My CMA's (AAMA) front- and back-office experience is integral for running my small business. I could not adequately treat patients without her assistance. She has a relationship with each patient, which helps me as a diagnostician. Many times patients will fill her in on more substantive matters that they are too nervous to share with me. In several instances, my CMA's (AAMA) input changed my diagnosis because she heard something the patient did not tell me. She makes my practice a better place and me a better doctor.

Celeste Borchers Valenzuela, DPM

Podiatrist in San Antonio

We rely heavily on our medical assistants to multitask and assist in providing the patient with education and a continued plan of care. They are always compassionate and put the patients at ease during their visits, which isn't always easy in a busy practice. I am so grateful for their hard work, long hours, and dedication to providing high-quality patient care. I truly appreciate the close working relationship I have with my CMA (AAMA), as well as the tremendous service all our medical assistants provide to patients and our practice as a whole.

Kathryn Baker, DO

Rheumatologist in Portland, Oregon

Practicing medicine is definitely a team approach, and the medical assistant's role can't be overlooked. There's no doubt that my CMAs (AAMA) contribute to the efficiency of the clinic. As the first members of the team to meet the patients, they can make all the difference in a situation that could be potentially nerve-racking. Best of all, our patients admit to having a sense of comfort when they see our CMAs (AAMA).

Aakash H. Gajjar, MD, FACS, FASCRS

Colon and rectal surgeon in Galveston, Texas

I would not get through my day without my CMA (AAMA). She makes sure I keep on task and that I am checking my labs, refills, and messages. She checks messages, sends on the pertinent information to me, and then relays my response to the patient or completes any tasks necessary. She has a stack of papers for me to review daily and sends back any faxes necessary. She wears many hats throughout the day and is able to treat patients with respect and compassion despite how busy she is. A thousand thank-yous would not suffice [to convey] how grateful I am to have her by my side.

Laura Boyd, MD

Primary care physician in Chicago



From front office to back—ensuring HIPAA compliance, taking medical histories and vital signs, providing patient education, managing insurance processes, and so much more—the CMA (AAMA) plays a critical and versatile part of the health care delivery team. The AAMA salutes these dedicated and compassionate professionals!

Patient gratitude

I'm a disabled veteran, and I have an anxiety disorder, congestive heart failure, diabetes, and psoriasis. I visit several doctors' offices for all of my conditions, and the CMA (AAMA) at my dermatologist's office stands out as being exceptional. I go there two to three times a week to receive phototherapy. She is always pleasant and willing to adjust my treatment time to accommodate all my medical issues and other doctor appointments. ... When I have to see the dermatologist, she makes sure that I get in right after my treatment. When it comes to the phototherapy, she is so knowledgeable and makes sure everything goes smoothly—that the temperature is set correctly and that I have my goggles on properly. She makes the entire visit comfortable and easy.

Carl Wesley
Feeding Hills, Massachusetts

Over the course of two years, my daughter saw 14 doctors. When she was 14 years old, she blacked out and we discovered she had a 3.8 hemoglobin [level]. So began the saga of trying to figure out what was wrong with her. We were told over and over that she just had an iron deficiency, so she took large amounts of iron and changed her diet, but nothing got better. I knew a CMA (AAMA) whose daughter was on a swim team with my daughter. She knew I was frustrated, and she started helping me

advocate for my daughter. Within hours, she was able to get my daughter's doctors to send me medical records that I had been trying to get for months, and she even organized them nicely in a binder for me. She worked for an adult gastroenterologist, but was able to get him to consult with my daughter's pediatric doctors. Because of this, the doctors decided to order a blood transfusion. During the transfusion, the CMA (AAMA) came, calmed my daughter down, and talked with the medical staff. Her advocacy also got doctors to learn that my daughter had a cyst on her ovary and an arteriovenous malformation on her intestine, which were removed. I can't thank this CMA (AAMA) enough for being my voice and reasoning with my daughter's doctors. Without her, we would've never gotten to this stage.

Elizabeth McCarty
League City, Texas

I have rheumatoid arthritis and have been going to my rheumatologist's office for 15 years. I've built long-term relationships with the medical assistants, which is priceless, especially when I'm fearful and in pain. I trust them because they always bring me comfort by acting as a bridge between my doctor and me. My medication regimen is complicated, and I've tried a bunch of different medications over the years, so we always have to make adjustments. I travel a

lot, so oftentimes I call in crisis mode. It's usually the CMA (AAMA) who [listens] to my lengthy voicemails. She'll then sort out what's important and what's not, and relay the critical information to the doctor. In the office, the medical assistants always care for me with compassion and professionalism, and I know they have my well-being as their number one priority.

Shawne Mohoric
Portland, Oregon

