



Arkansas Department of Health

Arkansas State Board of Nursing

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GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING CONTENT RELATED TO INSULIN AND INHALATION FOR ARKANSAS CERTIFIED MEDICATION ASSISTANTS

Act 1423 of 2005 gave the Arkansas State Board of Nursing authority to grant certification to qualified unlicensed individuals to administer certain medications in facilities determine by the board. The Board allows Certified Medication Assistants (CMAs) to work only in Arkansas (AR) nursing homes in which nursing supervision is available and nurse patient ratios are legislatively required. This authorization included individuals who have met certain qualifications in AR or who met substantially similar qualifications and held similar credentials under the law in another state. In 2007, a nursing student who has completed a certain portion of a nursing education program may be eligible to take the certification exam, successfully pass the exam, and work as CMA. Additionally, Act 265 of 2025 expanded the CMA scope of work to allow the administration of inhalation (oxygen) and subcutaneous injection of insulin. Arkansas CMA education programs began incorporating the expanded scope of work training in curriculum plans September 1, 2025, with the additional testing over oxygen and subcutaneous injection of insulin beginning October 1, 2025.

Medication Assistant-Certified (MA-C) Individuals Prior to August 1, 2025

Effective August 1, 2025, any individuals who were previously titled as Medication Assistant-Certified (MA-C) will have a title change to Certified Medication Assistant (CMA). In addition, those certified individuals will be required to obtain the minimum guideline training listed below to lawfully be able to administer oxygen inhalations and subcutaneous injections of insulin. Individuals seeking endorsement of certification from another state will be required to complete the additional training if proof of training is not provided.

All guidelines for Certified Medication Assistants are under the Arkansas State Board of Nursing *Rules* (Title 17. Chapter XXII. Part 127. Certified Medication Assistant) or under Arkansas Code Annotated § 17-87-701 through § 17-87-708.

Additional Minimum Inhalation Training Required for Certified Medication Assistants

1. Oxygen use for respiratory and circulatory systems
 - a. Oxygen is considered a drug and must be ordered.
 - b. Structure and function of oxygen in the body (gas exchange)
 - c. Body malfunctions to impaired gas exchange: recognize symptoms and observations
 - d. Types of oxygen delivery and equipment
 - i. Oxygen tank or wall outlet
 - ii. Tubing
 - iii. Masks (including continuous positive airway pressure: CPAP)
 - iv. Cannula
 - v. Humidifying device
 - e. Infection control and safety precautions

2. Implications for care
 - a. Obtaining oxygen saturation levels (SpO2) using a pulse oximetry device
 - b. Titration of oxygen per parameters ordered
 - c. Reporting and documentation

Additional Minimum Insulin Training Required for Certified Medication Assistants

1. Endocrine system
 - a. Function of pancreas, types of enzymes produced (lipase, protease, amylase), and two main hormones (insulin and glucagon)
 - b. Body malfunctions - Due to lack of or insufficient production of insulin
 - c. Types of Diabetes Mellitus
 - i. Pathophysiology, Type 1, Type 2, and growth onset diabetes
 - ii. Symptoms, observations, and reporting
 1. Hypoglycemia and Hyperglycemia
 2. Vision changes (eye disease)
 3. Urinary changes (kidney disease)
 4. Cardiovascular changes (heart disease and stroke)
 5. Neuropathy (nerve damage)
 6. Susceptibility to skin infections, oral problems, and poor wound healing
2. Insulin
 - a. Structure and function of insulin including the different types, peak, onset, and duration
 - i. Rapid-acting
 - ii. Regular (short-acting)
 - iii. Intermediate acting
 - iv. Long-acting
3. Implication for diabetes care
 - a. Blood glucose testing
 - i. Random, fasting, and post-prandial
 - ii. Use of glucose monitoring devices: portable and individual sensor device
 - iii. Reporting and documentation
 - b. Diet – Change from prescribed diet will upset balance of insulin and glucose.
 - c. Activity – Must balance with food and insulin. Increase in activity enhances insulin's effect.
 - d. Care of diabetic resident when ill: Body requirements change while fighting infection
4. Treatment of diabetes: Insulin can be given only by subcutaneous injection
 - a. Administration techniques, safety checks, storage of insulin
 - b. Insulin Sliding Scale
 - c. Insulin pen
 - d. Reporting and documentation

References

- Arkansas State Board of Nursing, AR Code Ann. § 17-87-701 through § 17-87-708.
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing. Medication Assistant-Certified (MA-C) Model Curriculum. https://www.ncsbn.org/public-files/07_Final_MAC.pdf