

Huot, Speare Memorial offer medical assisting certification

Speare Memorial Hospital in Plymouth and the Huot Career and Technical Center in Laconia have launched a new Medical Assisting pathway that will provide the opportunity for students to earn a marketable certification and join the healthcare industry right out of high school.

“Being able to offer this program to high school students is very exciting,” said Allied Health teacher Carolyn Muniz. “There is a high demand and great job outlook in this field, with a much faster than average job growth.”

Along with the classroom curriculum, students in the Huot’s Allied Health medical assisting program complete 160 hours of clinical experience at various medical offices at Speare Memorial Hospital. These combined experiences will allow them to sit for the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) exam offered in June through the National Health Career Association.

“This has been a goal for the center for several years,” explains Huot Director David Warrender. “We see this certification as a great opportunity for students. It is something they can use long-term or as a stepping stone to other medical careers.”

Over the past several years, the center has seen an increased interest in students looking to explore a variety of health careers and saw this as an opportunity to build off the success of their existing nurse assistant pathway.

“We have been offering a really top-notch nurse assisting pathway for years and we are excited to be able to add things like medical assisting to our menu of offerings,” said Warrender.

“The first cohort of students to enroll in this medical assisting pathway, have exceeded all expectations and are becoming acclimated quite quickly to working in the medical field,” Muniz said. “I am thrilled to see where this opportunity takes these students in the future.”

A great deal of research and preparation went into the planning for both the school and their partners at Speare.

“It was a group effort involving Speare’s human resources, student & volunteer services, and Asquam (IT) services to get the program up and running,” said Kathy Bedell, manager of practice operational performance at Speare.

“A year ago we recognized that it was a struggle to recruit certified medical assistants at Speare,” said Bedell. “It was fortuitous that the Huot Tech Center was struggling to find certified medical assistant internships at the same time. This collaboration has produced a relationship which supports the needs of both organizations and most importantly, the students.”

As this year’s students work diligently toward becoming medical assistants, through both classroom and clinic hours, they are excited about their future career opportunities gained from this program.

“This class gives me the real patient experiences I need to work in the field,” said student Caleb Patell. Students are currently in the second month of completing the required 160 hours of clinical time. The scope of the program required a real commitment from students such as Patell, who is already balancing school work and two part-time jobs. That said, all students spoke positively of the opportunity to get hands-on experience in a working medical office. Even those whose long-term goals are outside of working in a medical assisting field felt the experience was very beneficial.

“My medical skills and confidence have doubled,” said Robert Tonkin, who aspires to eventually work as a paramedic. Staff at both the tech center and hospital applaud the dedication of the students and hope to see the program expand in the future. Speare is hopeful that the program will grow in the years to come and that some of these students will eventually become hospital employees.

“The students have been extremely professional and excited to be part of

this process as they strengthen their knowledge and prepare for their future in healthcare,” said Bedell. “These are the types of professionals we seek to employ at Speare.”

The four students began their

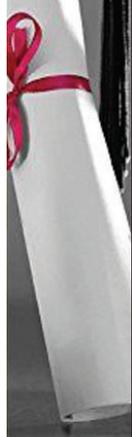
internships in January at Speare Primary Care and MedCheck Urgent Care in Plymouth. The completion of the program is expected to occur

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Four students at the Huot Technical Center in Laconia are the first enrollees in a new medical-assisting program at Speare Memorial Hospital in Plymouth. From left are Zoran Boskovic of Laconia, Robert Tonkin of Belmont, Caleb Patell of Laconia and Delaney Ross of Laconia. (Courtesy photo)

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