

Ophthalmology Scope of Practice Guidelines

The physician assistant practices primarily as a direct patient healthcare provider under the direction of a supervising physician. Provides medical care and treatment for patients with common acute and chronic illnesses related to ophthalmology, including symptoms of ocular disease, disorders of the lid and lacrimal apparatus, conjunctivitis, ocular trauma, foreign body removal. The physician assistant shall obtain health histories and perform physical examinations, diagnosis medical conditions, order appropriate diagnostic tests and treatment regimens, plans and implements interventions and evaluates patient responses. Provides counseling and education to the patient, and departmental staff regarding common patient problems. Provides first assistant duties to the ophthalmic surgeon during various surgeries. Will work with others in a team environment. The physician assistant will practice within the guidelines of the South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners.

Clinical duties for the physician assistant include but are not limited to:

- Perform a medical history and appropriate physical examination
- *Order*, interpret, and perform appropriate testing with appropriate physician consultation when indicated
- Perform history and physical examination related to complaint or injury and record findings in the medical record
- Conduct preventative screening procedures based on age and history
- Establish a diagnosis and differential diagnosis and the general work-up of the patient's complaint, ordering appropriate testing and laboratory studies with appropriate physician consultation
- Formulate and implement treatment plans consistent with the standard of care
- Provide counseling/education/clinical skills approved by the South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners
- Assumes responsibility for clinical decisions, time management, and interaction s with patients, families, and other members of the healthcare team
- Performs first assistant duties as directed by the ophthalmic surgeon within the operating/outpatient surgery policies
- Prescribe and dispense medications independently, appropriate to the patient diagnosis and what is permissible by state law
- Triage patient telephone calls and determine need for medical attention
- Maintain strict patient privacy and protect patient confidentiality

- Acts a resource for other healthcare staff within knowledge and clinical skills

Direct evaluation by the supervising physician or immediate referral to physician shall be indicated in patients that present with conditions requiring immediate attention:

- Ocular emergencies
- Post-operative infections/complications
- Life threatening cardiovascular or pulmonary events

Systems within the scope of practice for ophthalmology for peri-operative evaluation that the physician assistant may initiate, continue or modify, and initiate care for referral includes the following:

Skin and appendages:

- Identify common dermatoses and referral

Allergic and Immunologic Disorders:

- Allergic Diseases, Immunologic disorders

HEENT

- Examination of the oral cavity and pharynx
- Examination of the ears, nose
- Identify acute and chronic eye conditions
- Perform eye examinations
- Routine pre and post-surgical care
- Identification of systemic disorders that are related to ophthalmology

Pulmonary

- Disorders of the airway
- Ordering pulmonary function testing and appropriate radiographs
- Anyone presenting in acute respiratory distress will be evaluated by a physician or referral to emergency services

Cardiovascular

- Identify common murmurs and appropriate referral for further evaluation
- Hypertension and referral for appropriate management
- Ordering EKG's
- Anyone presenting with chest pain will be evaluated by physician or referral to emergency services

Endocrine

- Perioperative identification of diabetes and appropriate referral management
- Identification of any thyroid related issues and appropriate referral management

Clinical tasks that Physician Assistant is able to perform include the following:

- Performing preoperative workup/examination and making appropriate referrals
- Post-operative examination
- Ocular examination
- Treat conditions related to ocular trauma
- Foreign body removal
- Identifying and treating the dry eye
- Allergy testing as directed and referral as needed
- Coordinate clinical studies
- Injections as directed by supervising physician
- CPR
- Assist in operating room
- Additional skills requiring documentation of competency, proficiency, training before being performed may include Botox, Facial Fillers, and Laser Procedures

Under no circumstances may the PA perform any clinical task that his or her supervising physician is not credentialed to perform.

Clinical skills list should be reviewed yearly, any additional skills may be added with required documentation and approval by the South Carolina Medical Board of Examiners.

Administrative Tasks

- Participate in professional development activities and adheres to continued medical education credits required for licensure
- Acts as a resource for healthcare staff within physician assistants knowledge and clinical skills
- Provide other services as directed by the supervising physician