

Insight Brief

Why are clinical support staff such as medical assistants so valuable to medical practices?

- (1) Many of the clinical support staff functions are patient-facing and represent important moments during visits and during follow-up communications between visits that impact successful patient engagement.
- (2) Most of the clinical support staff functions are either directly billable, in direct support of billable services, or in direct support of value-based care and population health performance measures that result in payments to the practice.
- (3) Clinical support staff roles can (in a pinch or by design) back up other support staff roles — such as front desk, call center and billing office positions — but the reverse is not necessarily true.
- (4) Clinical support staff roles are generally categorized as non-exempt, hourly positions and — through a staffing model that includes a combination of full-time, part-time and per diem assignments — present the possibility of flexing staff schedules as demand dictates.