

UW Health: Medical assistant apprentices take on new roles to help COVID-19 response

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MADISON, Wis. – With all the changes occurring in healthcare during COVID-19, UW Health medical assistant (MA) apprentices are stepping up to help our COVID-19 response.

During the COVID-19 crisis, the current MA apprentices are still doing classwork for the 11-month long program, but due to clinic consolidations they have also been deployed to help with employee testing, nursing assistant areas, and childcare training.

In the apprenticeship program, 38 entry-level employees are paid while receiving education and training so they can move into a high-demand career as a medical assistant. A medical assistant supports the work of physicians and other health professionals in a clinical setting.

The MA apprentices are helping at the COVID-19 employee testing center by taking the swabs of suspected cases and are getting nursing assistant training so they can help if needed during a surge. They are also stepping in to assist licensed teachers at the UW Health daycare center to look after children of healthcare workers who can't miss work.

This is the state's only medical assistant apprenticeship program. The first class from the MA apprenticeship program graduated in November, and the next class is set to graduate in August.