

Medical Credentials Explained

A healthcare professional is an expert who provides a range of diagnostic, preventive, and treatment services. There are many different types of healthcare professionals, each specializing in specific aspects of health care. Each type may have different credentials after their name, reflecting their area of expertise. Additionally, different healthcare professionals often specialize in treating specific parts of the body or addressing particular health concerns.

MENTAL HEALTH

Professionals in the mental health field have expertise in helping and treating people facing mental health challenges. This diverse group includes professionals from many disciplines. They all play important roles in supporting people's mental well-being through a wide range of services.



PHYSICAL HEALTH

Certain professionals in the healthcare field specialize in taking care of physical health problems. While some concentrate on specific parts of the body, others help with a broader range of health issues. They all play a crucial role in keeping people physically well.



EYE HEALTH

An eye care provider is a professional who primarily focuses on maintaining and improving eye health.



DENTAL HEALTH

A dental care provider is a professional who specializes in maintaining and improving oral health.



Medical Credentials Explained

Addiction Counselor

CAC	Certified Addiction Counselor
CAC-AD	Certified Addiction Counselor - Alcohol and Drug
CASAC	Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor
LADC	Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor
NCAC I, II, or III	National Certified Addiction Counselor

An addiction counselor is a professional who helps individuals overcome substance abuse and behavioral addictions by providing support, counseling, and guidance to promote recovery and a healthier lifestyle.

Athletic Trainer

ATC	Certified Athletic Trainer
MSAT, MAT	Master of Athletic Training

An athletic trainer is a healthcare professional specializing in preventing, diagnosing, and treating injuries related to physical activity, working with athletes to optimize performance and facilitate safe and effective rehabilitation.

Chiropractor

DC	Doctor of Chiropractic
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A chiropractor is a healthcare professional who specializes in diagnosing and treating problems in joints and nearby soft tissue, primarily through the use of pressure to manipulate joints in the body to realign the spine.

Dentist

BDS	Bachelor of Dental Surgery
DDS	Doctor of Dental Surgery
DMD	Doctor of Dental Medicine
LDH, RDH	Dental Hygienist

A dentist is a healthcare professional who specializes in the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of conditions related to the teeth, gums, and oral cavity. A dental hygienist specializes in preventive dental care, performing cleanings, examinations, and educating patients on proper oral hygiene practices.

Dietician

RD	Registered Dietitian
RDN	Registered Dietician Nutritionist

A dietitian is a healthcare professional who specializes in providing expert advice on nutrition, helping individuals make informed and healthy food choices to manage health conditions and promote overall well-being.

Note: Dieticians are healthcare providers with specialized training and have credentials such as the two listed above. Some people who call themselves "nutritionists" may not have these credentials. It's important to verify this information before receiving services.

Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)*

An emergency medical technician (EMT) is a trained healthcare professional who responds to medical emergencies, providing basic life support, patient assessment, and transportation to individuals in need of urgent medical care.

Medical Assistants

CCMA	Certified Clinical Medical Assistant
CMAA	Certified Medical Administrative Assistant
CMA	Certified Medical Assistant
CMA-A	Certified Medical Assistant – Admin
CMA-C	Certified Medical Assistant – Clinical
CMA-AC	Certified Medical Assistant – Admin and Clinical
MA	Medical Assistant
RMA	Registered Medical Assistant

A medical assistant is a healthcare professional who performs a variety of administrative and clinical tasks to support the efficient operation of medical offices, helping both healthcare providers and patients in delivering quality care.

Music Therapist

MMT	Master of Music Therapy
MT-BC	Board Certified Music Therapist

A music therapist is a professional who uses music and its elements to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs, promoting well-being and enhancing the therapeutic experience.

Nurse



ASN	Associate of Science in Nursing
BSN	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
CAA	Certified Anesthesiologist Assistant
CNA	Certified Nurse Aide
CNT	Certified Nurse Technician
DNP	Doctor of Nursing Practice
LPN, PN, VN	Practical Nurse
MSN	Master of Science in Nursing
NP	Nurse Practitioner
RN	Registered Nurse

A nurse is a healthcare professional who provides hands-on patient care, administers medications, and supports the well-being of individuals under the guidance of physicians, contributing to both preventive and therapeutic aspects of healthcare.

Other Counselors and Therapists



LMFT	Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
LPC	Licensed Professional Counselor

A counselor or therapist is a trained professional who provides support and guidance to individuals, helping them navigate and overcome emotional, mental, or behavioral challenges for improved well-being.

Occupational Therapist



AAS OTA, COTA	Occupational Therapy Assistant
MOT	Master of Occupational Therapy
OTD	Doctor of Occupational Therapy

An occupational therapist is a healthcare professional who helps individuals overcome physical, cognitive, or emotional challenges by developing and improving skills needed for daily activities, enhancing independence and quality of life.

Optometrist



OD	Doctor of Optometry
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An optometrist is a healthcare professional who specializes in examining and caring for the eyes.

Paramedic

NRP* Nationally Registered Paramedic

A paramedic is a highly trained emergency medical professional who provides advanced pre-hospital care, including administering medications, performing medical procedures, and offering critical interventions to individuals in emergencies.

Pharmacist

B. Pharm Bachelor of Pharmacy
CPhT Certified Pharmacy Technician
MPharm Master of Pharmacy
PharmD Doctor of Pharmacy
R.Ph. Registered Pharmacist

A pharmacist is a healthcare professional who specializes in the preparation, dispensing, and management of medications.

Psychologist

Ph.D. Doctor of Philosophy
Psy.D. Doctor of Psychology

A psychologist is a mental health professional who studies and evaluates human behavior and mental processes. They provide therapy and counseling to help individuals navigate emotional and psychological challenges. Psychologists do not have the ability to prescribe medications.

Psychiatrist**

D.O. Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine
M.D. Doctor of Medicine

A psychiatrist is a medical doctor specializing in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illnesses. They utilize a combination of therapy and medication to address patients' mental health needs. Psychiatrists have the ability to prescribe medications.

Physical Therapist

DPT	Doctor of Physical Therapy
MPT	Master of Physical Therapy
PTA	Physical Therapy Assistant

A physical therapist is a healthcare professional specializing in the assessment and treatment of physical impairments and movement-related conditions, aiming to restore and improve overall mobility and function.

Physician**

D.O.	Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine
M.D.	Doctor of Medicine

A physician, often called a doctor or primary care provider (PCP), is a healthcare professional who diagnoses and treats illnesses, injuries, and various health conditions.

Physician Assistant (PA)

D.M.SC.	Doctor of Medical Science
M.M.SC.	Master of Medical Science
MPAS	Master of Physician Assistant Studies

A physician assistant is a healthcare professional who works under the supervision of a licensed physician. They provide medical care, perform diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, and help with patient management.

Podiatrist

DPM	Doctor of Podiatry
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A podiatrist is a healthcare specialist who focuses on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of foot and ankle conditions.

Respiratory Practitioner

ASRT	Associate of Science in Respiratory Therapy
BSRT	Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Therapy
MSRT	Master of Science in Respiratory Therapy

A Doctor of Respiratory Therapy (DRT) is a healthcare professional with advanced expertise in respiratory care, specializing in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of breathing disorders.

Social Workers



ASCW	Academy of Certified Social Workers
BSW	Bachelor of Social Work
CSW	Clinical Social Worker
DCSW	Diplomate of Clinical Social Work
LCSW	Licensed Clinical Social Worker
MSW	Master of Social Work

A social worker is a professional who helps individuals and families cope with challenges, providing support, advocacy, and resources to improve their well-being and access to social services.

Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP)



A speech and language pathologist (SLP) is a healthcare professional who assesses, diagnoses, and treats communication and swallowing disorders, working to improve speech, language, and overall communication abilities.

*Both EMTs and paramedics play important roles in emergency medical services. Paramedics have a higher level of training and a broader scope of practice, allowing them to handle more complex medical situations.

**Both primary care physicians (PCPs) and psychiatrists can hold the same M.D. or D.O. credentials, but their specialties differ. PCPs provide comprehensive healthcare for various conditions and psychiatrists focus on mental health and emotional well-being.