

# MEDEX

New help for the doctor

## MEDEX

Department of Community Medicine  
Charles R. Drew Postgraduate  
Medical School  
1620 E. 119th Street  
Los Angeles, California 90059  
M. Alfred Haynes, MD, Project Director  
Raymond M. Kivel, MD, Medical Director  
Tel: (213) 564-5911

The MEDEX-Los Angeles program is funded by the Bureau of Health Manpower Education, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health, Education and Welfare.



## What is Medex?

MEDEX is a program to train people to work as Assistants to the Primary Care Physician. Sponsored by the Charles R. Drew Postgraduate Medical School, in affiliation with the UCLA School of Medicine, MEDEX-Los Angeles is the first Physician's Assistant training program in the State of California to be approved by the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association and the California State Board of Medical Examiners.

MEDEX-Los Angeles is one of nine national MEDEX programs. Although each MEDEX program develops its own characteristics, basic MEDEX philosophies serve to bind the individual programs together in an informal but collaborative organization. Other MEDEX programs, in various stages of development, are located in the states of Washington, Utah, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Hawaii, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, and in Washington, DC.

**The Physician's Assistant (PA)** is a new category of health manpower whose primary mission is to provide direct patient service, in association with a physician, by augmenting medical care in urban and rural communities that are most critically affected by the distributive shortage of physicians. MEDEX has demonstrated that physicians are willing to delegate to others medical tasks which have previously been performed only by them. Further, patients are receptive to new ways of providing medical care if their physicians accept them.

## What Does PA Do?

Once certified, the Physician's Assistant performs many of the tasks which the physician normally performs, at the same level of competence and with the same ethical standards. Some of the tasks that a PA might perform would include:

- Taking histories and doing physical examinations; recording and presenting signs and

symptoms to a physician; and implementing prescribed treatment.

- Performing office laboratory procedures, such as taking EKGs, drawing of blood samples, blood counts, hemoglobin determinations, and urinalysis.
- Treating wounds, applying and removing casts, and other routine therapeutic procedures.
- Counseling patients regarding diet, disease, therapy and normal growth and development.
- Emergency procedures in life-threatening situations.



## How Long is the Training Program?

The program is 15 months in length and includes three phases.

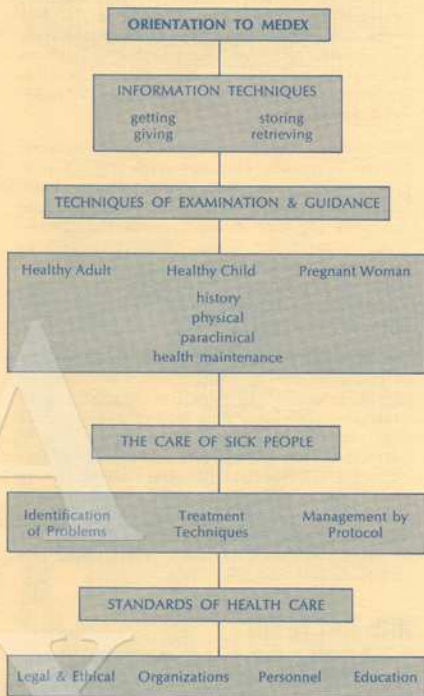
Classroom and practical instruction prepares the student for clinical work by having him attain the necessary basic medical knowledge and clinical skills.

Students rotate through a variety of services, including ambulatory medicine, pediatrics, surgery, obstetrics and emergency services at Martin Luther King, Jr. General Hospital, UCLA Medical Center, Harbor General Hospital, and San Bernardino County General Hospital. A PA's role, both during training and after graduation, is task and skill oriented. During this phase, therefore, training emphasizes the practical. A student learns his skill by repeated performance under the direction of a supervising physician.

During the final months of training, a student refines his skills in a physician's practice, under the personal supervision of his preceptor.



## Medex Curriculum



## Who Qualifies?

The MEDEX-Los Angeles program welcomes applications from men and women of all ethnic backgrounds. To enter the program you need a minimum of 30 semester units of college and some experience working in the health field, e.g. medical corpsman, nursing, laboratory technician, etc.

One of the regulations established by the California State Board of Medical Examiners is that a graduate of a training program for Physicians' Assistants must have the equivalent of an Associate of Arts or Science degree, which includes the following basic health science core courses at a junior college level or its equivalent:

*Mathematics, including algebra*

*English*

*Anatomy and Physiology*

*Microbiology*

*Sociology or cultural anthropology*

*Psychology*

## After Graduation...What Then?

One of the commitments of the MEDEX program is to ensure employment of our graduates. In this way, we not only provide for career security of this new health professional, but also improve the health care in the community we serve. This is a matter as important to us as what happens during training. We feel responsible for the PA himself, for the practice situation that he joins, and to the community which he is to serve.

Preceptors are chosen primarily from doctor-poor areas; they are involved in the program from the beginning by participating in student selection and, with the program's guidance, they provide valuable day-to-day training to the student. During the preceptorship, the student is given the opportunity to get to know the physi-

cian and his practice. The doctor, his staff and patients also get to know him. If all goes well, the relationship becomes a permanent one—the student gains employment, and his/her transition from student to an accepted member of the health team is accomplished smoothly.

## Pre-PA Program

To assist those people who do not have the necessary college credits, the MEDEX-Los Angeles program has created a special Pre-PA class which runs concurrently with the MEDEX class. During this 12-month period, the student is helped to enroll and attend college in order to attain the necessary minimum college credits to establish eligibility for the MEDEX class.

## How Do You Apply?

If you wish to be considered by our program and by other MEDEX programs, write to:

MEDEX COMMUNICATION CENTER  
444 N.E. Ravenna Boulevard  
Seattle, Washington 98115

The Medex Communication Center serves as a clearing-house for applications for all of the MEDEX programs.

