

# THE NEW ZEALAND MEDICAL JOURNAL

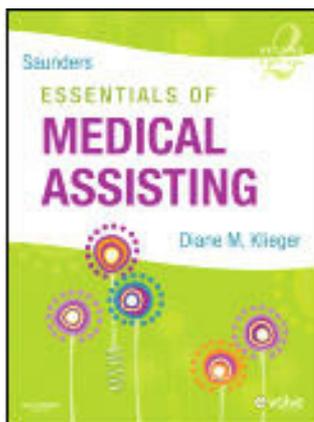
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## Saunders Essentials of Medical Assisting (2nd edition)

Diane M Klieger. Published by [Saunders Elsevier](#), Sept 2009. ISBN 9781416056744. Contains 1252 pages. Price AU\$86.40 (Elsevier Australia online shop)

This American-based book is meant to provide the knowledge and skills needed to become a medical assistant in the United States. A position equivalent to the nurse practitioner and secretary role in the New Zealand system.



It has chapters about physiology and anatomy, although the level of knowledge remains basic. In addition there are chapters on how to organise and design a medical office/waiting room; performing office tasks (for example a detailed instruction list on how to send a confidential fax is included); and ethics/how to behave and communicate correctly (e.g. don't chew gum and cover up your tattoos).

It also explains in great detail how to perform minor medical chores like phlebotomy, recording an ECG, or assisting in minor surgical procedures.

The tone of the book is patronising and reads in parts more like an instruction manual. It is thorough in detail of even the obvious leaving no space for one's own initiative or alternative opinions. A lot of emphasis centres on the legal consequences of your actions, with the notorious lawsuit always threatening around the corner. It feels like the book itself needed to be so thorough in detail to prevent a lawsuit for missing information. The book includes a two-page English-Spanish translation of the most common medical questions. The chapters about office managing, still relying on a lot on paper and pencil, already feel outdated.

The book delivers what it intends to do: providing the essentials of medical assisting (in the US!). If you want to be a medical assistant outside the US a lot of the regulations and insurance details will be of no value. And if a more profound knowledge of medicine or organising a practice is needed, this is not the book to buy.

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