Alberta Clinical and Surgical Assistant Program
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

General Program Information ....................................................................................................................................... 2

When do ACSAP programs start?...................................................................................................................................... 2
How long are ACSAP programs?...................................................................................................................................... 2
How many applicants are accepted into ACSAP programs? .......................................................................................... 2
Which departments have Clinical or Clinical/Surgical positions? ................................................................................... 2
What is the rate of compensation for a Clinical or Clinical/Surgical Assistant?............................................................... 2
Do ACSAP program participants become employees of AHS?.......................................................................................... 2
Are ACSAP program participants eligible for independent medical practice? .................................................................. 3
Is ACSAP considered as credit towards a residency program? ......................................................................................... 3
How do I go from Clinical or Clinical/Surgical Assistant to residency? ........................................................................ 3
Can a program participant leave an ACSAP program for residency? .............................................................................. 3
Does ACSAP provide sponsorship? .................................................................................................................................. 3

Application Requirements ........................................................................................................................................... 3

Is there an application fee? .............................................................................................................................................. 3
Is there an application deadline? ........................................................................................................................................ 3
Can applications be mailed or dropped off in person? ........................................................................................................ 3
Does the ACSAP office accept original documents? ........................................................................................................ 4
Are applicants notified if something is missing in their application? .................................................................................. 4
What if an applicant has not completed or submitted one of the requirements (ie. the English language exam or the MCCQE Part I)? ........................................................................................................................................... 4
Does the ACSAP office accept additional documentation or credentials? ........................................................................ 4
How does an ACSAP applicant submit updates and/or additional information? ................................................................ 4
Does the program consider any other English language proficiency tests? ........................................................................ 4
If an applicant was trained in English and graduated from an English-speaking foreign university with English transcripts, is TOEFL or IELTS still required? ........................................................................................................................................... 4
What is meant by “Postgraduate Medical Education” (PGME)? .......................................................................................... 4
What is the process for sharing applicable documents through Physicians Apply? .......................................................... 5
Does the Physicians Apply document verification process need to be completed prior to application? ................................ 5
Do non-English documents require an English translation? ............................................................................................... 5
Does the ACSAP office accept French documents? ........................................................................................................... 5
Can documents be forwarded to other organizations on the applicant’s behalf? ................................................................. 5

Candidate Selection and Recruitment .......................................................................................................................... 5

How does an IMG progress through the ACSAP application process? ........................................................................... 5
After applying to a recruitment opportunity, when will the applicant be notified of their interview status? ......................... 6
Can applicants be considered for a new recruitment opportunity if they applied for a previous posting but were not selected? If so, does the applicant need to submit a new application form and documents? ................................................................. 6
Once offered a position in a program, are there any other certifications required? ............................................................ 6
What is meant by supervision? ............................................................................................................................................ 6
What method of evaluation is conducted during the program? ........................................................................................... 6

If you cannot find the answers to your questions here, please email your question to ACSAP@ahs.ca.
General Program Information

When do ACSAP programs start?
ACSAP receives requests from the site/service/zone and creates a program based on their needs, so programs could start at any time. ACSAP does not know in advance when these opportunities may become available.

How long are ACSAP programs?
The program consists of a period of assessment and evaluation which is usually 6 months in duration. Pending a successful completion of this phase of the program, the participant may commence an indefinite role as a Clinical Assistant (CA) or Clinical/Surgical Assistant (CSA) in a career-stream position.

How many applicants are accepted into ACSAP programs?
Because our programs, and the number of required individuals, are based on the needs of the sites/services/zones, we cannot anticipate how many applicants may be recruited into our programs in a given year. The clinical and surgical departments participating in ACSAP are the main drivers of need for Clinical Assistants and Clinical/Surgical Assistants and will contact ACSAP with upcoming opportunities.

Which departments have Clinical or Clinical/Surgical positions?
Past opportunities have involved clinical specialties such as General Internal Medicine, Gastroenterology, Cardiology and Pulmonary Medicine, and surgical specialties such as Orthopaedics, General Surgery, Burns, Plastics, Vascular and Thoracic Surgery.

What is the rate of compensation for a Clinical or Clinical/Surgical Assistant?
As employees of Alberta Health Services (AHS), Clinical Assistants (CAs) and Clinical/Surgical Assistants (CSAs) are entitled to an annual salary, including benefits. As of January 1, 2016, the new provincial salary grid for CAs and CSAs is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grid Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Base Salary</th>
<th>Total Compensation (With Benefits at 22.5%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACSAP Training</td>
<td>0 to end of 6 months or completion of probation, whichever comes first</td>
<td>$62,747</td>
<td>$78,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Completion of probation (typically 6 months) to end of 36 months</td>
<td>$87,915</td>
<td>$108,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>36 months + 1 day to end of 48 months</td>
<td>$113,624</td>
<td>$138,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>48 months + 1 day to end of 60 months</td>
<td>$141,405</td>
<td>$168,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Greater than 60 months + 1 day</td>
<td>$154,722</td>
<td>$182,648</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Annual Total Compensation includes AHS Management and Out of Scope employee benefits plus the employee base salary.

Do ACSAP program participants become employees of AHS?
Yes, all ACSAP Candidates are hired on as employees of Alberta Health Services (AHS) and receive an annual salary, including benefits.
Are ACSAP program participants eligible for independent medical practice?

No, successful completion of a program does not result in full licensure with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) or independent practice for the Candidate. If the Clinical or Clinical/Surgical Assistants continue in the current career pathway with AHS, they will remain on a Limited Practice Register Practice Permit, working under the supervision of a licensed physician. There is no direct connection between ACSAP and residency.

An IMG who is interested in acquiring an independent licence in Alberta has two options:

1) Meet the requirements set out by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) for independent licensure.
2) Apply to residency programs through the Canadian Resident Matching Service.

Is ACSAP considered as credit towards a residency program?

No, ACSAP is not affiliated with either the University of Alberta or University of Calgary postgraduate medical education programs, nor are we affiliated with the Canadian Resident Matching Service.

How do I go from Clinical or Clinical/Surgical Assistant to residency?

There is no pathway to residency through our program.

Can a program participant leave an ACSAP program for residency?

ACSAP cannot dictate when or where an IMG may apply to work or study. However, ACSAP strongly encourages that IMGs attempt all other avenues towards independent licensure first before considering applying to our program, as premature departure from an ACSAP program greatly impacts patient care at that site.

Does ACSAP provide sponsorship?

No, ACSAP does not provide sponsorship of any kind. If you require funding assistance, you may wish to review the Immigrant Access Fund (IAF) Program at http://www.iafcanada.org/.

Application Requirements

Is there an application fee?

No, there is no application fee for the Alberta Clinical and Surgical Assistant Program.

Is there an application deadline?

ACSAP applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. Deadlines for applications to ACSAP are in effect only when there are Recruitment Opportunities available.

Can applications be mailed or dropped off in person?

No, application packages should be emailed to the ACSAP office as per the Application Guidelines.
Does the ACSAP office accept original documents?
No, only certified copies of documents, which are emailed to ACSAP@ahs.ca, are accepted.

Are applicants notified if something is missing in their application?
Applicants are notified within 2 to 4 weeks regarding the application review. If they have not enclosed all mandatory documents or if the appropriate documents have not been shared or certified, then the application package is found to be incomplete, and applicants will be notified that their application has been denied.

What if an applicant has not completed or submitted one of the requirements (ie. the English language exam or the MCCQE Part I)?
Application packages submitted without all of the required documentation will be considered incomplete and will be denied. Please review the Application Guidelines thoroughly prior to submitting an application.

Does the ACSAP office accept additional documentation or credentials?
No, ACSAP only requires and accepts the documents listed in the Application Guidelines. Applicants should refrain from sending any additional documentation, as this can slow down the application process. Any additional credentials may be listed on your CV.

How does an ACSAP applicant submit updates and/or additional information?
Any changes to the applicant’s personal information (ie. phone numbers, email addresses, etc.) or any updated information should be included in a new CV, which may be emailed to ACSAP@ahs.ca.

Does the program consider any other English language proficiency tests?
No, the IELTS or TOEFL is a national requirement for program eligibility. Please note the Test of English of as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) will only be accepted for licensure until December 31, 2017 by the CPSA. As of January 1, 2018, we will only accept IELTS for this requirement.

If an applicant was trained in English and graduated from an English-speaking foreign university with English transcripts is the IELTS still required?
An applicant may be exempted from English language proficiency testing if he/she meets the English language exemption requirements as outlined on the CPSA website. If an applicant meets these requirements, he/she must share the applicable international documentation through Physicians Apply and/or include the applicable certified Canadian documentation with the emailed application package. Email ACSAP@ahs.ca for further clarification.

What is meant by “Postgraduate Medical Education” (PGME)?
The ACSAP PGME requirement is in place due to the licensing requirements of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA). According to the CPSA, any PGME must meet the following criteria:
a) Hospital based training in clinical services providing direct patient care interaction in the acute care setting that
b) Excludes medical or clinical research, fulltime administrative activity, and instruction in aspects of medicine not contributing to direct patient care (such as hospital systems management, medical records instruction, computer or network training).

**What is the process for sharing applicable documents through Physicians Apply?**
Applicants are responsible for registering with Physicians Apply, including all costs involved with this process, and for sharing each of the applicable documents with ACSAP. Applicants are able to share their documents once the documents have been posted to their account. Any questions regarding your Physicians Apply account should be directed to Physicians Apply.

**Does the Physicians Apply document verification process need to be completed prior to application?**
No, as long as the process of source verification has been initiated, the document will be available for sharing with ACSAP through your Physicians Apply account.

**Do non-English documents require an English translation?**
Yes, all non-English transcripts and documents must be translated into English. All documents that may require translation must be source verified through Physicians Apply and then shared with ACSAP; therefore you must follow any translation requirements according to Physicians Apply.

**Does the ACSAP office accept French documents?**
No, only documents written in English, or translated to English, are accepted at this time.

**Can documents be forwarded to other organizations on the applicant's behalf?**
No, the ACSAP office will not forward documents to other organizations on behalf of the applicant.

**Candidate Selection and Recruitment**

**How does an IMG progress through the ACSAP application process?**
ACSAP applicants will go through the following steps:

1) Apply to the program
2) Be a part of the applicant pool
3) Show interest in a specific Recruitment Opportunity
4) Go through the application process
5) Be selected for a program
6) Complete the 6-month program
7) Begin a career-stream role with AHS
See the ACSAP Application Progression Chart listed in our Program Overview for more information.

After applying to a recruitment opportunity, when will the applicant be notified of their interview status?
See the ACSAP Application Progression Chart listed in our Program Overview for clarification.

Can applicants be considered for a new recruitment opportunity if they applied for a previous posting but were not selected? If so, does the applicant need to submit a new application form and documents?
Applicants may apply to any Recruitment Opportunity posted by following the instructions on each individual Recruitment Notice. It is recommended that applicants only apply to those Recruitment Opportunities for which they are qualified and have the relevant experience.

NOTE: The application package should only be submitted once, and should not be submitted for application to subsequent Recruitment Opportunities. Instead, follow the instructions on the individual postings.

Once offered a position in a program, are there any other certifications required?
Once the Candidates for a specific program have been chosen, ACSAP will register the Candidates with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA). The CPSA will contact the Candidates from that point to arrange licensure. Additional certifications that must be obtained within 90 days of the program start are:

1) Basic Life Support (BLS) Level C Certificate
2) Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) Certificate (if required by the program)

Both are to be taken from an approved Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation provider, at the Candidates’ expense.

NOTE: AHS standards require BLS-certification every year and ACLS re-certification every two years.

What is meant by supervision?
The Candidate’s clinical and/or surgical knowledge and skills are formally evaluated under the direction and supervision of an attending physician and/or surgeon (supervisor) while providing care to patients in a hospital setting. Candidates are part of a clinical and/or surgical team comprised of attending physicians and/or surgeons, residents/medical students and a multidisciplinary team of health care providers, all of whom provide guidance and input into the Candidate’s evaluation.

What method of evaluation is conducted during the program?
There will be an evaluation of clinical and/or surgical skills. The purpose is to determine the Candidate’s success in meeting pre-defined learning objectives considered necessary to function as a competent Clinical or Clinical/Surgical Assistant.