HEALTH CAREERS HANDBOOK

CAREER PROFILES OF OVER 60 HEALTH PROFESSIONS

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Education • Financial Aid • Job Descriptions • Salary Information
Career Spotlights

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CHICAGO AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER IS A PROGRAM OF HEALTH AND MEDICINE POLICY RESEARCH GROUP

• The Area Health and Education Center (AHEC) network is a national workforce development organization.

• AHEC’s mission: enhance access to quality primary and preventive health care through recruiting, training and retaining a diverse population of health professionals committed to serving underserved populations.

• In accordance with the National AHEC, the Chicago Area AHEC network is focused on increasing diversity through educational outreach to youth in underserved communities.

• AHEC supports partnerships with academic medicine and community based organizations that engage minorities in mentorship, education and problem solving in health care.

CONNECTING STUDENTS TO CAREERS, PROFESSIONALS TO COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITIES TO BETTER HEALTH...

WHY A HEALTH CAREER MAY BE OF INTEREST TO YOU!

• Careers in health care, personal care and social assistance are projected to experience the fastest industry growth between 2010 and 2020.

• A growing population and increasing life expectancy means that more people are now living longer and will require a broad range of health services.

• The development of new technology will contribute to the expansion of careers like appliance and laboratory technicians.

• Healthcare reform is changing the industry; the Affordable Care Act will result in an expansion of the primary care and prevention workforce, in addition to addressing health disparities.

• The future job outlook is positive and excellent career choices include areas of scientific research, medicine and public health.
There are many possible stepping stones between career levels and many opportunities for growth and learning throughout all health professions. Each step on the career ladder can mean more responsibilities, higher salary and opportunities for leadership positions.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO PROGRESS WITHIN A CAREER:

1. **GO BACK TO SCHOOL**

   This is the most common way to advance. In order to move up, a job may require you to take more classes (called prerequisites) and get a higher level degree. Most of these classes (prerequisites) can be taken at a community college or professional program before enrolling back in school. Many advanced careers require you to pass additional tests after you get your degree. For example, to become a pharmacy assistant, you don’t need to pass a test, but to become a pharmacist you need to pass the Board of Pharmacy Licensure Examination, which you need several years of school to prepare for.

2. **ASK TO LEARN AND DO MORE**

   Showing that you are interested in gaining more responsibilities will put a spotlight on your motivation to advance. Perhaps your supervisor will allow you to observe more complicated tasks and you can then decide if a formal career move is right for you.

3. **FIND A MENTOR**

   Seek out someone whose job you are interested in and build a relationship with them. They may provide helpful advice about how to move up within a particular field. For example, if you are a certified nurse assistant (CNA), ask to shadow a nurse practitioner (NP) to find out more about their career path.
Your Education: What Matters?

Building a health career consists of several steps of preparation. Most importantly, a background of knowledge and training is essential. A post-secondary education consisting of an associate, bachelors, masters, or doctorate or medical degree is usually required in addition to a high school degree or GED. Jobs requiring a master’s degree are expected to grow the fastest, while those requiring just a high school diploma will most likely experience the slowest growth.

HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A SCHOOL OR PROGRAM:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM OFFERINGS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certain schools may or may not offer the degree you are looking for. Make a list of schools in your area and check each school’s website to see if your specific program is offered. Also, make sure your school has career services or a job placement office that will help you gain experience and networking opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<th>ACCREDITATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools that are ‘accredited’ meet academic requirements and are approved by the U.S. Department of Higher Education. Non-accredited schools often advertise lower tuition and higher acceptance rates. However, it is advised you do not attend these schools. Also, students who attend non-accredited schools do not qualify for federal financial aid and cannot take out student loans.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depending on the type of degree, schools require that you submit various documents, such as test scores and letters of recommendation on your behalf. Before considering a career, find out what you can do best to prepare for acceptance to your program of choice.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COST</th>
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<tr>
<td>When choosing a career, consider how many years you will need to attend higher education and how much it will cost. Program costs vary, but there is a variety of sources to help you fund your career preparation.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Funding Your Education

When we talk about “financial aid,” we mean sources of money to pay for your education. Post-secondary education can range from costing several thousand dollars to over one hundred thousand dollars. However, do not let cost discourage you from pursuing a degree. There are various ways of financing your education, including scholarships, grants, state and federal aid. There are many forms of aid: some need to be paid back, some do not.

| SCHOLARSHIPS |
| “Financial Aid” generally refers to money you can ask for to pay for school. It may be given on the basis of academic merit, financial need, gender, race, religion or other factors. Some scholarships are given out by specific colleges, and others designated for certain careers. Scholarships and grants do not need to be repaid after graduation, loans do. |

| GRANTS |
| Grants may be awarded by a specific academic institution, organization or the government. For example, the Pell Grant is given to many students each year on the basis of financial need. Grants do not need to be repaid after graduation. |

| FINANCIAL AID (FAFSA) |
| FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. It is a form that one can fill out to receive federal student aid for tuition. Federal and state aid in the form of grants does not need to be repaid after graduation. However, some federal and state financial aid comes in the form of loans, which do need to be repaid. |

| LOANS |
| Loans are given out by banks and the Federal government, and must be repaid after graduation. Before taking out a loan, consider the loan payments and their duration after graduation. Do not take a loan out for more money that is needed. |

| NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS |
| Healthcare professionals providing health services in underserved communities are offered loan repayment or scholarship opportunities for an education of up four years. |
## Helpful Websites about Careers and College Planning

- **What’s Next Illinois**: [www.whatsnextillinois.org](http://www.whatsnextillinois.org) (available in Spanish)
- **Big Future**: [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/) (available in Spanish)
- **Choose Your Future (Office of Pathways to College and Career (OPCC) at Chicago Public Schools)**: [www.chooseyourfuture.org](http://www.chooseyourfuture.org)

## How to Find Specific Schools and Academic Programs

- Visit [www.explorehealthcareers.org](http://www.explorehealthcareers.org). At the top, click on “Find Schools and Academic Programs”
- Visit “What’s Next Illinois?” at [www.whatsnextillinois.org](http://www.whatsnextillinois.org). Create a login to save your searches and personalize your portfolio, or you can search the website without an account.
- At the top, click on “college planning”
- Click on “explore programs and majors”
- Click on “Health Science”
- Once you choose a career, click on “Schools offering this program” on the left side bar.

## How to Find Funding Opportunities

- On [www.explorehealthcareers.org](http://www.explorehealthcareers.org), click on Career explorer and then funding opportunities. You can search by Career, Type of Aid, Ethnicity or State.
- On [www.whatsnextillinois.org](http://www.whatsnextillinois.org), click on Financial Aid Planning. Here you will find various articles on planning, scholarships, calculating expenses and financial fitness.
- On [bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org), click on Pay for College. Under Financial Aid 101, you will find many videos about gaining financial aid and information about calculating costs, scholarships and grants and loans.

## Where to Hear from Real Professionals and Students

- On [www.explorehealthcareers.org](http://www.explorehealthcareers.org), click on Profiles.

## Where to Learn about Service and Volunteering in the Health Profession

Rating Health Career Choices

This key is designed to help you see which careers may be of interest to you. Each career profile is rated on the basis of what level of education is required for a certain profession, how long it takes to complete after high school, how much it may cost in total and the salary you may expect to earn over the course of your career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COST OF EDUCATION &amp; TRAINING</th>
<th>DURATION OF EDUCATION &amp; TRAINING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $10,000</td>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000-$30,000</td>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000-$50,000</td>
<td>2 to 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$70,000</td>
<td>3 to 4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70,000+</td>
<td>Over 4 years</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>SALARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>$15,000-$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree/ Certificate</td>
<td>$30,000-$45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>$45,000-$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>$60,000-$75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate Degree</td>
<td>$75,000-$90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Degree</td>
<td>$90,000+</td>
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What are Target Occupation Profiles?

Target occupations are careers that the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership) has identified as priority occupations and that are in high need of professionals. Though this is not an exhaustive list of professions that need more qualified workers, they are sectors that have been identified as areas that students, career advisors, teachers, etc. should direct their attention to.

AS OF JUNE 2013, THESE CAREERS IN ILLINOIS ARE:

1. Physical Therapy Aide and Assistant
2. Registered Nurse
3. Veterinary Technician
4. Certified Nursing Assistant
5. Dental Hygienist and Dental Assistant
6. EMT and Paramedic
7. Laboratory Technologist/Technician
8. Licensed Practical Nurse
9. Medical Assistant
10. Medical Secretary and Health Information Technician
11. Medical Technologist and Technicians
12. Occupational Therapy Aide and Assistant
13. Occupational Therapy Aide and Assistant
14. Pharmacy Assistant

1. Nursing
   - Certified Nurse’s Assistant
   - Registered Nurse/Bachelor of Science in Nursing
   - Advanced Practice Nurse / Doctor of Nursing Practice
2. Dentistry
   - Dental assistant
   - Dentist
3. Public Health and Administration
   Advancing may or may not require additional education, usually in the form of a master’s degree. A career pathway can look something like this:
   - Administrative Assistant
   - Coordinator or Research Assistant
   - Manager
   - Assistant Director
   - Director
   - Community Health Worker
   - Health Educator
   - University Health Lecturer
- Acupuncture/Oriental Medicine Practitioner 13  
- Athletic Trainer 15  
- Audiologist 16  
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Community Health Worker 23  
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Dental Hygienist * 25  
Dentist 26  
Diagnostic Medical Sonographer* 27  
Dietetic Technician * 28  
Dietician/Nutritionist 29  
EMT/Paramedic * 30  
Environmental Health Scientist 31  
Health Educator 32  
Home Health/Personal Care Aide 34  
Licensed Practical Nurse * 36  
Massage Therapist 39  
Medical and Health Services Manager 40  
Medical Appliance Technician * 41  
Medical Assistant * 42  
Medical Equipment Preparer *43  
Medical Office Administrator 44  
Medical Records/ Health Information Technician * 45  
Medical Illustrator 18  
Medical Transcriptionist * 46  
Medical Writer 68  
Medical Simulation Technician 69  
Nuclear Medicine Technologist * 47  
Nurse Anesthetist  
Nurse Midwif e (CNM)  
Nurse’s Assistant (CNA) *  
Occupational Therapist 48  
Optometrist 49  
Orthotist and Prosthetist 50  
Pharmacist 51  
Pharmacy Technician * 52  
Phlebotomist * 53  
Physical Therapist 55  
Physical Therapy Assistant * 56  
Physician 54  
Physician’s Assistant 57  
Psychiatric Technician 58  
Psychologist 59  
Public Health Careers 60  
Radiation Therapist * 61  
Radiologic Technologist and Assistant * 62  
Recreational Therapist (Art, Dance, Music, Horticulture and Recreation) 63  
Registered Nurse 37  
Respiratory Therapist / Simulation 64  
Social Worker 65  
Speech Language Pathologist 66  
Surgical Technologist * 67  

* = New to the 2nd Edition  
* = Degree or certificate that can usually be completed at a community college
Acupuncture/Oriental Medicine Practitioner

Oriental Medicine incorporates acupuncture, herbology, Chinese massage, lifestyle counseling and other traditional modalities to help patients achieve balance.

WHAT DOES A ACUPUNCTURE/ORIENTAL MEDICINE PRACTITIONER DO?

• Acupuncture/Oriental Medicine (AOM) is an ancient and empirical system of medicine based on the concept of qi (pronounced “chee”), which is usually translated as energy.

• Acupuncture/Oriental Medicine treatments identify a pattern of energetic imbalance within a patient and address that imbalance with treatments like acupuncture needling, cupping, acupressure and Chinese herbal preparations.

• Acupuncture practitioners treat patients by manipulating thin, solid needles that have been inserted into acupuncture points in the skin. According to Traditional Chinese medicine, stimulating these points can correct imbalances in the flow of qi through channels known as meridians.

• Chinese Herbal Medicine is used to treat illnesses and ailments through the use of herbs. A diagnosis is made and a combination of herbs is used to treat the problem.

Source: explorehealthcareers.org
Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselor

Substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors advise people with alcoholism or other types of addiction such as eating disorders, drug abuse or behavioral problems.

WHAT DO SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDER COUNSELORS DO?

• A substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselor implements treatment and recovery plans and performs assessments of their patient’s psychological condition. They may administer urine samples to determine whether a patient is drug-free. Substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors consult with other professionals in order to assess the physical or mental state of their patients.

• Substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors work with clients both one-on-one and in group sessions. They teach clients how to cope with stress and life’s problems in ways that help them recover. They help clients rebuild professional relationships and, if necessary, reestablish their career. They also help clients improve their personal relationships and find ways to discuss their addiction or other condition with family and friends.

Source: explorehealthcareers.org

MEDIAN SALARY: $43,300
(ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Athletic trainers prevent, diagnose and treat muscle and bone injuries while working with people of all ages and skill levels.

**WHAT DO ATHLETIC TRAINERS DO?**

- Athletic trainers are usually one of the first healthcare providers on the scene when injuries occur in sports. Athletic trainers work under the direction of a licensed physician and with other healthcare providers. They often discuss specific injuries and treatment options or evaluate and treat patients as directed by a physician. Some athletic trainers meet with a team physician or consulting physician regularly.

- Athletic trainers may do any of the following tasks: apply protective or injury-preventive devices such as tape, bandages, and braces; recognize and evaluate injuries; provide first aid or emergency care; or develop and carry out rehabilitation programs for injured athletes. Athletic trainers should not be confused with fitness trainers and instructors, including personal trainers.

~Audiologist

Audiologists diagnose and treat hearing and balance problems using various forms of technology.

WHAT DO AUDIOLOGISTS DO?

• Audiologists use audiometers, computers and other devices to test patients’ hearing ability and balance, determine the extent of hearing damage and identify the underlying cause.

• Treatment options vary and may include cleaning wax out of ear canals, fitting and checking hearing aids, or fitting and programming the patient with cochlear implants to improve hearing. Audiologists also counsel patients on other ways to cope with profound hearing loss, such as by learning to lip read or use American Sign Language.

• Some audiologists specialize in working with the elderly or with children. Others design products to help protect the hearing of workers on the job. Audiologists who are self-employed build a client base, hire employees, keep records, order equipment and supplies and do other tasks related to running a business.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/audiologists.htm

MEDIAN SALARY: $75,920
(ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Biomedical engineers design systems, machines and products to replace body parts while bringing together knowledge of biology, medicine and engineering.

WHAT DO BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERS DO?
• Biomedical engineers may design instruments, devices and/or conduct research needed to solve clinical problems. Biomedical engineers design electrical circuits, software to run medical equipment, or computer simulations to test new drug therapies. They also design and build artificial body parts to replace injured limbs. The work of these engineers spans many professional fields. For example, although their expertise is based in engineering and biology, they often design computer software to run complicated instruments, such as three-dimensional x-ray machines.
• Some work in hospitals where therapy occurs and others work in laboratories doing research. Still others work in manufacturing settings where they design biomedical engineering products. Additionally, engineers also work in commercial offices where they make or support business decisions.

Source: Science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/Alphabetical+List/Biomedical+Engineer

MEDIAN SALARY: $88,040 (ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Biomedical Visualization

Medical communication is an umbrella term used to encompass careers that deal with communicating scientific and medical information to healthcare professionals and the general public. In addition to medical writing, which is discussed in full elsewhere, this field includes biomedical visualization or medical illustration. Medical illustrators are trained artists who create visuals to communicate scientific information. Advancements in technology and the demand for new education materials are creating new opportunities for illustrators. The ability of technology to create and distribute digital images has opened the door for more creative approaches to the education of wider audiences. For example, using animation software to create and move 3D models helps makes once esoteric processes easier to understand. Most medical illustrators come from either an undergraduate science or art background; however, knowledge in both science and art is required to be a successful medical illustrator. Regardless of the exact path, illustrators must be able to conduct extensive research in order to prepare visualization projects.

WHAT DO MEDICAL ILLUSTRATORS DO?

- Illustrators create artwork for textbooks, journals, eBooks, trade shows, courtroom exhibits, patient education information in print and on the Internet, advertisements and museum exhibitions.
- Some develop mobile health apps for smartphones.

MEDIAN SALARY: $62,000
(ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)

Source: explorehealthcareers.org
Cardiovascular Technologist and Technician

Cardiovascular technologists and technicians help doctors diagnose heart conditions and ailments in patients by using imaging technology.

WHAT DO CARDIOVASCULAR TECHNOLOGISTS AND TECHNICIANS DO?

- Cardiovascular technologists monitor patients’ heart rates and help diagnose and treat problems with patients’ hearts. The procedures can be invasive (such as inserting catheters) or noninvasive (such as using ultrasound equipment to take images of the heart).

- Cardiovascular technicians prepare patients for procedures by taking their medical history and answering their questions. Technologists and technicians may work with imaging technology such as electrocardiograms or sonographs.

- They prepare and maintain imaging equipment and perform noninvasive procedures such as taking ultrasound images. Cardiovascular technologists analyze images to check for any abnormalities and discuss their findings with physicians.

Source: Science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/Alphabetical+List/Biomedical+Engineer

MEDIAN SALARY TECHNOLOGIST/TECHNICIAN: $65,620
(ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Child Life Specialist

Child Life Specialists help children and their families navigate the emotionally and physically demanding process of hospitalization.

WHAT DO CHILD LIFE SPECIALISTS DO?

• Child life specialists use their knowledge of child development and developmentally appropriate interventions to educate, prepare and support children through difficult tests, procedures and the sometimes drastic changes that happen within their families due to chronic or acute illness, treatment and recovery.

• As part of the health care team, child life professionals advocate for the special needs of children and their families. Child life programs provide children with opportunities to engage in normal play and recreational activities that promote growth, development and feelings of success and fulfillment. Child life professionals promote the role of parents and other family members as full partners on the health care team and promote the philosophy of patient- and family-centered care.

Source: www.mayo.edu/mshs/careers/child-life-specialist

“

Our main goal is to help decrease the stress and anxiety experienced in the hospital setting, and we’re doing that first and foremost by helping them understand what’s happening.

-Shawna G., Director of child life at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Tennessee

ENTRY LEVEL SALARY:
$22,290
(ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Chiropractor

Chiropractors treat patients with health problems of the musculoskeletal system, which is made up of bones, muscles, ligaments and tendons.

WHAT DO CHIROPRACTORS DO?

• Chiropractors focus on patients' overall health. Many believe that misalignments of the spinal joints interfere with a person's nervous system and can result in lower resistance to disease and many different conditions of diminished health. Some chiropractors use procedures such as acupuncture, massage therapy and ultrasound. They may also apply supports (such as straps, tape, braces or shoe inserts) to treat patients and alleviate pain.

• Some chiropractors specialize in sports injuries, neurology, orthopedics, pediatrics, nutrition, internal disorders or diagnostic imaging. Many chiropractors are solo or group practitioners who also have the administrative responsibilities of running a practice. In larger offices, chiropractors delegate these tasks to office managers and chiropractic assistants. Chiropractors in private practice are responsible for developing a patient base, hiring employees and keeping records.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/chiropractors.htm
Clinical Laboratory Technician

Medical laboratory technicians collect samples and analyze them in a laboratory for scientific study.

WHAT DO MEDICAL AND CLINICAL LABORATORY TECHNICIANS DO?

• Medical and clinical lab technicians typically analyze body fluids such as blood, urine and tissue samples to determine normal or abnormal findings. They collect and study blood samples for use in transfusions by identifying the number of cells, the cell morphology or the blood group, blood type and compatibility with other blood types. Technicians also operate sophisticated laboratory equipment such as microscopes and cell counters. After logging data from medical tests and entering results into a patient’s medical record, technicians discuss results and findings of laboratory tests and procedures with physicians.

• Medical laboratory technicians usually work under the supervision of medical laboratory technologists or laboratory managers.

Source: explorehealthcareers.org/en/career/28/Clinical_laboratory_scientistTechnician

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEALTH CAREER RATING KEY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Education Training: Less than $10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration of Education: Less than 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Requirements: Associate Degree/Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting Salary: $15,000-$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced Salary: $45,000-$60,000</td>
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MEDIAN SALARY: $51,770
(ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Community Health Worker

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are frontline public health workers who are trusted members of and/or have an unusually close understanding of the community they serve. CHWs serve as a link between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery.

WHAT DO COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS DO?

• IL House Bill 5412 defines a CHW as “a skilled and knowledgeable person of health issues and is essential to bringing health care and wellness to reduce health disparities in the community.” In general, CHWs function to address the social determinants of health.

• Although many CHWs work within the health care system, many others work in community-based settings and support health promotion in addition to disease management.

• CHWs working in the health care sector function most appropriately in support of medical interventions, increasingly as integral members of patient care teams.


MEDIAN SALARY: $45,360
(ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTIC 2017)
Dental Assistant

Dental assistants work alongside dentists to prepare patients for procedures, help during procedures and complete administrative office tasks.

WHAT DO DENTAL ASSISTANTS DO?

• Dental assistants typically work with patients to make them comfortable in the dental chair and to prepare them for treatments and procedures. They sterilize dental instruments, prepare the work area for patient treatment by setting out instruments and materials and help dentists by handing them instruments during procedures. Often, dental assistants will keep patient’s mouths dry by using equipment, instruct patients in proper dental hygiene and schedule patient appointments.

• Dental assistants may also work in the office and assist with record keeping, scheduling, billing, etc.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dental-assistants.htm

The responsibilities of dental assistants are expanding, partially to facilitate more people getting access to care in this country when they can’t afford to visit a dentist, and It’s not in patients' best interests to receive treatment from someone who isn’t fully qualified.”

Claudia P., former president of the American Dental Assistant Association and a veteran in the field with more than 35 years of experience

MEDIAN SALARY: $37,630
(ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Dental Hygienist

Dental Hygienists clean teeth, examine patients for oral diseases and educate patients on how to best take care of their teeth, gums and mouth.

WHAT DO DENTAL HYGIENISTS DO?

• Dental hygienists remove soft and hard deposits from teeth, teach patients how to practice good oral hygiene, and provide other preventive dental care. They examine patients' teeth and gums, recording the presence of diseases or abnormalities. Dental hygienists use hand and rotary instruments and ultrasonic devices to clean and polish teeth which includes removing tartar stains and plaque.

• Hygienists use x-ray machines to take dental pictures and sometimes develop the film. They may use models of teeth to explain oral hygiene, perform root planning as a periodontal therapy, or apply cavity-preventative agents such as fluorides and pit and fissure sealants.

• Dental hygienists also help patients develop and maintain good oral health. Hygienists sometimes make a diagnosis and other times prepare clinical and laboratory diagnostic tests for the dentist to interpret. Hygienists sometimes work chair-side with the dentist during treatment.

Source: science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf//Alphabetical+List/Dental+Hygienist

MEDIAN SALARY: $74,070
(ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Dentist

Dentists diagnose and treat problems with a patient’s teeth, gums and other parts of the mouth and also provide advice and instruction on how to best take care of one’s oral health.

WHAT DO DENTISTS DO?

• Dentists diagnose and treat problems with teeth and tissues in the mouth, give advice and administer care to help prevent future problems. They provide instruction on diet, brushing, flossing, the use of fluorides and other aspects of dental care. They remove tooth decay, fill cavities, examine x-rays, straighten teeth and repair fractured teeth. They also perform corrective surgery on gums and supporting bones to treat gum diseases. Dentists extract teeth and make models and measurements for dentures to replace missing teeth. They also administer anesthetics and write prescriptions for antibiotics and other medications.
• Dentists use a variety of equipment, including x-ray machines, drills, mouth mirrors, probes, forceps, brushes and scalpels. Lasers, digital scanners and other computer technologies may also be used.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dentists.htm
Diagnostic Medical Sonographer

Diagnostic medical sonographers use special imaging equipment that directs sound waves into a patient’s body to assess and diagnose various medical conditions.

WHAT DO DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL SONOGRAPHERS DO?

• Diagnostic medical sonographers typically prepare patients for procedures by taking a patient’s history and answering any questions about the procedure. They apply a gel to aid the sound waves’ ability to show the inside of the body and operate equipment to get diagnostic images of areas in the patient’s body. Diagnostic medical sonographers analyze the images to check for quality and adequate coverage of the area needed for diagnosis.

• Diagnostic ultrasound uses high-frequency sound waves to produce images of the inside of the body. The sonographer presses an instrument called an ultrasound transducer to the parts of the patient’s body that are being examined. For example, a sonographer may perform an ultrasound on a pregnant woman to check how the baby is growing and developing.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/diagnostic-medical-sonographers.htm

MEDIAN SALARY: $65,620
(ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Dietetic Technician

Dietetic technicians work with dietitians to plan menus and prepare food for people with special nutritional needs.

WHAT DO DIETETIC TECHNICIANS DO?

• They often work in hospitals, nursing homes and long-term care facilities. They are also employed by schools, day care centers, weight management clinics, government agencies and prisons.

• Dietetic technicians know a great deal about nutrition and how what we eat and drink influences our health. For people who have food allergies or other special dietary needs, dietetic technicians develop and prepare tasty, nutritious recipes that satisfy dietary restrictions.

• Changes in diet can help reduce the risk of obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other health problems. Dietetic technicians help people take control of their health by helping them understand how to make better choices about the food they eat.

Source: explorehealthcareers.org/en/career/140/Dietetic_Technician
Dietitian Nutritionist

Dietitians and nutritionists are experts in food and nutrition; they advise people on what to eat in order to lead a healthy lifestyle or achieve a specific health-related goal.

WHAT DO DIETICIANS AND NUTRITIONISTS DO?

- Dieticians work with individuals to explain nutrition issues and assess patients’ health needs and diet. They develop meal plans, taking both cost and clients’ preferences into account. Dieticians evaluate the effects of meal plans and change the plans as needed. They promote better nutrition by giving talks to groups about diet, nutrition and the relationship between good eating habits and preventing or managing specific diseases.

- Some dietitians and nutritionists provide customized information for specific individuals. For example, a dietitian or nutritionist might teach a patient with high blood pressure how to use less salt when preparing meals. Others work with groups of people who have similar needs. A dietitian or nutritionist might, for example, plan a diet with reduced fat and sugar to help overweight people lose weight.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dietitians-and-nutritionists.htm

HEALTH CAREER RATING KEY

| Cost of Education Training: $30,000-$50,000 | $$$ |
| Duration of Education: 3 to 4 years | ★★★★
| Education Requirements: Bachelor’s Degree/Internship | 🎓🎓🎓 |
| Starting Salary: $30,000-$45,000 | 💰💰 |
| Experienced Salary: $45,000-$60,000 | 💰💰💰 |

MEDIAN SALARY: $59,410
(ACCORDING TO BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Paramedic

EMT’s and Paramedics care for the sick or injured in emergency medical settings and transport patients to medical facilities.

WHAT DO EMT’S AND PARAMEDICS DO?

• A 911 operator sends EMTs and paramedics to the scene of an emergency, where they often work with police and firefighters. EMT’s and paramedics provide emergency assistance.

• When taking a patient to the hospital, one EMT or paramedic may drive the ambulance while another monitors the patient’s vital signs and gives additional care. Some paramedics work as part of a helicopter’s flight crew to transport critically ill or injured patients to a hospital.

• EMTs and paramedics also take patients from one medical facility to another. Some patients may need to be transferred to a hospital that specializes in treating their injury or illness or to a facility that provides long-term care, such as a nursing home.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/emts-and-paramedics.htm
Environmental Health Scientist and Specialists

Environmental scientists and specialists use their knowledge of the natural sciences to identify problems and find solutions that minimize hazards to the health of the environment and the population.

**WHAT DO ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENTISTS DO?**

- Environmental scientists and specialists analyze environmental problems and develop solutions. For example, many environmental scientists and specialists work to reclaim lands and waters that have been contaminated by pollution.
- Others assess the risks new construction projects pose to the environment and make recommendations to governments and businesses on how to minimize the environmental impact of these projects. They also identify ways that human behavior can be changed to avoid problems such as global warming.

*Source: Science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/Alphabetical+List/Biologist,+Environmental+Health+Scientist*

when working in an environmental health science field you will be immersed in a “big picture” perspective of how environment and actions heavily affect our daily health. This is a good field for anyone who is interested.

-Explore Health Careers 2017
Health Educator

Health educators teach people about behaviors that promote wellness and develop programs and materials to encourage people to make healthy decisions.

WHAT DO HEALTH EDUCATORS DO?

• In health care facilities, health educators often work one-on-one with patients and their families. They teach patients about their diagnoses and about necessary treatments or procedures. Health educators also help organize health screenings, such as blood pressure checks and health classes on topics such as correctly installing a child car seat. They train medical staff to interact better with patients. For example, they may teach doctors how to explain complicated procedures to patients in simple language.

• In public health departments, health educators administer public health campaigns on topics such as proper nutrition. They develop materials to be used by other public health officials. During emergencies, they provide safety information to the public and the media. They also help health-related nonprofits obtain funding and other resources. Some health educators work with other professionals to create public policies that support healthy behaviors. Some participate in statewide and local committees on topics such as aging.

Source: science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/Alphabetical+List/Health+Educator

MEDIAN SALARY: $45,360
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Health Information Technology

According to the federal government the term “health information technology” (health IT) is a broad concept that encompasses an array of technologies to store, share and analyze health information. “The role of a technician in health IT is to maintain accurate, secure and accessible information systems for medical professionals and institutions. Those who work in medical IT often have experience managing data systems. Health IT is considered a high growth field with the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimating 21 percent growth through 2020. In addition, wider access to technologies, such as smartphones and continued advancement has created a need for skilled professionals to help the medical field transition to more efficient information systems.

Source: www.healthit.gov for more information
Home Health and Personal Care Aides

Home health and personal care aides help people who are disabled, chronically ill, or cognitively impaired with activities such as bathing, dressing and taking medication.

WHAT DO HOME HEALTH AND PERSONAL CARE AIDES DO?

- Home health and personal care aides typically help clients in their daily personal tasks, such as bathing or dressing; they may also do light housekeeping such as laundry, washing dishes and vacuuming in a client’s home. Home aides organize a client’s schedule, plan appointments, and arrange transportation to doctors’ offices or for other outings.

- Aides often keep track of when a client’s prescriptions need to be filled or when the client has his or her next doctor’s appointment. Aides may prepare leisure activities, including exercise, to keep their clients active and healthy. They may go for walks with their clients or play games with them. In some states, home health aides may be able to provide some medical services. Aides may be expected to complete unpleasant tasks such as emptying a client’s bedpan or changing soiled bed linens.

Source: http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/home-health-aides.htm

HEALTH CAREER RATING KEY

| Cost of Education Training: Less than $10,000 | $ |
| Duration of Education: Less than 1 year | ⏰ |
| Education Requirements: High school | 📚 |
| Starting Salary: $15,000-$30,000 | 💰 |
| Experienced Salary: $15,000-$30,000 | 🅰️ |

MEDIAN SALARY: $23,130
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Careers in Focus: Nursing

ILLINOIS NURSING OPPORTUNITIES

• Nursing represents one of the largest professions in the state of Illinois as well as the United States as a whole.
• There are roughly 170,000 nurses in Illinois and the average starting salary $60,000.
• Cook County (Chicagoland Area) considered an underserved area for nurses.
• The average age of nurses in Chicago is 50, which means transitioning age period will open up more jobs.
• 20% of nurses in Cook County expected to retire in the next 5 years.
• There are a number of accredited nursing programs around the Chicagoland area ranging from community colleges, universities and specified nursing schools and institutes.

There are three main types of nurses specifically educated and trained to provide nursing care in Illinois. They are classified as follows:

- Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) - A licensed practical nurse is a general practice nurse, who handles basic caretaking duties under the supervision of physicians or registered nurses.
- Registered Nurse (RN) - A registered nurse provides and coordinates patient care, educates patients and the public about various health conditions and provides advice and emotional support to patients and their family members.

Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) - An advanced practice nurse must already be registered as a registered professional first as well as achieved their graduate’s degree from certified APN program. This includes various types of advanced practice nurses: Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist, Nurse Practitioner, Certified Nurse Midwife and Clinical Nurse Anesthetist.

HOW DO I BECOME A NURSE:

All nurses need to go through a program and pass a certification test to practice. Nursing programs usually require a science background, but there are a number of programs that people can enroll in to complete science requirements before enrollment or as part of general coursework.

The potential for employment as well as high salaries are strong in the field of nursing.

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<thead>
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<td>Home health careservices</td>
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<td>Offices of physicians</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing care facilities</td>
<td>$48,220</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(ILLINOIS CENTER FOR NURSING)

ADVANCING IN YOUR NURSING CAREER

People enter in nursing from a variety of directions and because of that, there are many programs that seek to provide opportunities for people to advance from one degree to the next or begin their nursing education from another field.

“Bridge programs” help people enter RN and LPN programs if their undergraduate degree did not include pre health courses. In these programs, students take a combination of prerequisite and the required nursing programs. There are also bridge programs that help RNs with BSN enter master’s level programs.

• CNA to LPN
  o Most logical next step for a CNA is a LPN
  o Unfortunately most CNAs will not be able use their degrees for credit towards an LPN degree but most programs look for experience
  o Prospective students will need to take prerequisite classes like other applicants
  o CNAs in LPN programs should expect to be in school for another two years if attending fulltime

• LPN to RN
  o Many LPN to RN bridge program do offer credits for LPN toward their degree
  o Also, many offer opt-out testing for some core classes, that can help learners save time and money
  o Depending on number of credits, completion of the program can take as short as a year.

ACCOMMODATING (APN) GRADUATE EDUCATION PROGRAMES IN CHICAGO:

• University of Illinois at Chicago, DePaul University, Loyola University, North Park University, RUSH University, Resurrection University and St. Xavier University.

There are dozens of other Advanced Practical Nursing Graduate Degree Programs in Chicagoland area.

HOW TO PICK THE RIGHT NURSING PROGRAM?

There are advantages and drawback to all of these options related to time and financial commitment an individual is able to make.

However, nursing is projected to be the fastest growing job in the U.S. between the years of 2010-2020.
Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)

An LPN is a person who is specifically prepared in the techniques of nursing, is a graduate of an accredited school of practical nursing and whose qualifications have been examined by a state board of nursing, they have also been legally authorized to practice as a licensed practical nurse and must have the basic nursing knowledge, judgment and skill acquired by completing an approved practical nursing education program.

WHAT DO LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES DO?

• Practical nursing involves assisting in the nursing process under the direction of a registered professional nurse. The practical nurse may work under the direction of a licensed physician, dentist, podiatrist, or other healthcare professional.

• Academic Requirements after completion of accredited Nursing Program:

• Nurses must score a passing grade on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). If the exam is not passed within 3 years of when the first exam taken, nurses must recomplete an approved LPN program prior to re-application.

• According to the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, 88% of candidates passed the “licensed practical nursing” licensure examination

MEDIAN SALARY: $45,030
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
upon graduation from an Illinois approved nursing education program.

Source: explorehealthcareers.org
Registered Nurse

ARN is specifically prepared to promote health and the prevention of disease and helps patients cope with illness. When providing direct patient care they observe, assess and record symptoms, reactions and progress, assist physicians during surgery, treatments and examinations, administer medications and help in the convalescence and rehabilitation of patients.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AFTER COMPLETION OF ACCREDITED NURSING PROGRAM:

Nurses must score a passing grade on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). If exam is not passed within 3 years of the date of the first exam taken, nurses must recomplete an approved LPN program prior to re-application.

According to the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation: 85% of candidates passed the “registered nursing” licensure examination on their first attempt post-graduation from an Illinois approved nursing education program.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AFTER COMPLETION OF ACCREDITED NURSING PROGRAM:

Nurses must score a passing grade on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). If exam is not passed within 3 years of the date of the first exam taken, nurses must recomplete an approved LPN program prior to re-application. [source: nursing.illinois.gov/education.asp]

According to the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation: 85% of candidates passed the “registered nursing” licensure examination for the first time upon graduation from an Illinois approved nursing education program.

MEDIAN SALARY: $67,490
(UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
An APN is licensed as a registered professional nurse and meets the requirements for licensure. An APN cares for patients by using advanced diagnostic skills, the results of diagnostic tests and procedures ordered by the advanced practice nurse, a physician assistant, a dentist, a podiatrist, a physician, and professional judgment to initiate and coordinate the care of a patient. An APN can also order diagnostic tests, prescribe medications and drugs and administer medications and drugs.

In Illinois, all APNs must be educated at the Graduate Level for licensure, which drastically increases the cost.

FOUR TYPES OF APN’S:
Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM) - Cares for childbearing women during preconception, prenatal, labor and delivery and postpartum periods, and provides family-planning counseling and gynecological care.
Certified Nurse Practitioner (CNP) - CNP’s provide care to individuals, families and groups while working to reduce disparities in access to care and promote cost effectiveness through patient advocacy, policy advancement and the development of innovative models of care to improve patient outcomes.
Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) - primary providers of anesthesia care in rural America, enabling healthcare facilities in these medically underserved areas to offer obstetrical, surgical, pain management and trauma stabilization services.
Certified Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) - An expert at diagnosing and treating illness in their area of expertise. Primarily focus on patients and their families, nurse management, or administration.

NURSING PROGRAMS IN CHICAGO
Accommodating (LPN) Programs in Chicago:

ACCOMODATING ASSOCIATE/BACCALAUREATE (RN) PROGRAMS IN CHICAGO:
Associates Degree Programs: Malcolm X College, Richard J Daley College, Truman College, Wilbur Wright College, Prairie State College and Robert Morris University.
Baccalaureate Programs: Chicago State University, Loyola University, North Park University, St. Xavier University and University of Illinois at Chicago.

ACCOMMODATING (APN) GRADUATE EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CHICAGO:
University of Illinois at Chicago, DePaul University, Loyola University, North Park University, RUSH University, Resurrection University and St. Xavier University.
COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER (CHW)

According to the American Public Health Association, community health workers are: Frontline public health workers who are trusted members of and/or have an unusually close understanding of the community they serve. This trusting relationship enables CHWs to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery. CHWs also build individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support and advocacy.  
(American Public Health Association, 2008)

Though there has been more visibility of community health workers, they have been a critical part of community health for decades. In 2009, CHWs were listed in 2010 Standard Occupational Classifications for the first time. There are many ways and types of community health work. Responsibilities of community health workers can include:

- Linking individuals to care
- Health education
- Advocacy and organizing around local health needs
- Home visits for the chronically ill
- Providing basic health services
- Translating and interpretation across language and cultural barriers

How health workers work with communities is usually determined by the needs of the community that they are in. Additionally, since CHWs are usually from the community they serve, many can help other medical and mental health providers by providing more context on communities and why barriers to care may occur.

There are also different rules and regulation around certification, depending on the state you are in. In Illinois, as of 2015, there are two verification programs in Illinois, Malcolm X Community College and South Suburban College. There is still a great deal of debate regarding whether CHWs need to be certified to perform their duties.
Massage Therapist

Massage therapists treat clients by using touch to manipulate the soft-tissue muscles of the body to relieve pain, rehabilitate injuries, reduce stress and increase relaxation.

WHAT DO MASSAGE THERAPISTS DO?

- Massage therapists use their hands, fingers, forearms, elbows and sometimes feet to knead muscles and soft tissue of the body to treat injuries and to promote general wellness. A massage can be as short as 5-10 minutes or could last more than an hour. Therapists also may use lotions and oils, massage tables or chairs and medical heat lamps when treating a client. Massage therapists may offer clients information about additional relaxation techniques to practice between sessions.

- Massage therapists can specialize in many different types of massage, called modalities. Swedish massage, deep-tissue massage and sports massage are just a few of the many modalities of massage therapy. Massage therapists can work in clinics, hotels, fitness centers, spas and other settings.

- Usually, the type of massage given depends on the client’s needs and physical condition. For example, therapists may use a special technique for elderly clients that they would not use for athletes. Some forms of massage are given solely to one type of client; for example, prenatal massage is given to pregnant women.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/massage-therapists.htm
Medical and Health Services Manager

Medical and health services managers plan, direct and coordinate medical and health services.

WHAT DO MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES MANAGERS DO?

• Medical and health services managers might manage an entire facility, specialize in managing a specific clinical area or department, or manage a medical practice for a group of physicians. They work to improve efficiency and quality in delivering healthcare services, keep up to date on new laws and regulations so the facility complies with them and supervise assistant administrators in facilities that are large enough to need them.

• They also manage the finances of the facility, such as patient fees and billing, create work schedules, organize records and communicate with members of the staff and department heads. Additionally, may also represent the facility at investor meetings or on governing boards.

Source: science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/Alphabetical+List/Manager+Medical+and+Health+Services

MEDIAN SALARY: $98,350
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Medical Appliance Technician

Medical appliance technicians construct, fit and repair medical supportive devices, including prosthetic limbs, arch supports, facial prosthesis and foot and leg braces.

WHAT DO MEDICAL APPLIANCE TECHNICIANS DO?

- Technicians read work orders or specifications from a podiatrist, orthoptist, prosthetist, or other healthcare professional. They decide which materials will be needed and create a pattern for the unmolded or unshaped plastic material.

- Medical appliance technicians bend, form, or shape materials and use hand or power tools to create devices and repair or change medical supportive devices as directed by a healthcare professional.

- Medical appliance technicians use different types of materials, such as metal, plastic and leather to create a variety of medical devices for patients who need them because of a birth defect, an accident, disease, amputation, or the effects of aging. For example, some medical appliance technicians make hearing aids.

Source: Science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/Alphabetical+List/Technician, +Medical+Appliance

MEDIAN INCOME: $35,250
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Medical Assistant

Medical assistants complete administrative and clinical tasks in healthcare settings.

WHAT DO MEDICAL ASSISTANTS DO?

• Medical assistants perform administrative and clinical tasks to keep the offices of health practitioners running smoothly.
• Administrative medical assistants update and file patients’ medical records, fill out insurance forms, and arrange for hospital admissions and laboratory services. They also perform tasks such as answering telephones, greeting patients, handling correspondence, scheduling appointments, billing and bookkeeping.
• Clinical medical assistants’ responsibilities include taking medical histories and recording vital signs, explaining treatment procedures to patients, preparing patients for examinations, and assisting physicians during examinations. They might draw blood, prepare patients for x-rays, take electrocardiograms, remove sutures and change dressings.

Source: Explorehealthcareers.org/en/career/36/Medical_Assistant

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<th>HEALTH CAREER RATING KEY</th>
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<td>Duration of Education: Less than 1 year</td>
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<td>Education Requirements: Associate Degree/Certificate</td>
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MEDIAN SALARY: $32,480
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Medical Equipment Preparer

Medical equipment preparers prepare, sterilize, install, or clean laboratory or healthcare equipment and may perform routine laboratory tasks and operate or inspect equipment.

WHAT DO MEDICAL EQUIPMENT PREPARERS DO?

- Medical equipment preparers clean instruments before sterilization, operate and maintain steam autoclaves, keep records of loads completed, items in loads, and maintenance procedures performed. They also organize and assemble routine or specialty surgical instrument trays or other sterilized supplies, filling special requests as needed.
- Medical equipment preparers examine equipment to detect leaks, worn or loose parts, or other indications of disrepair. They start equipment and observe gauges and equipment operation to detect malfunctions and to ensure equipment is operating to prescribed standards.
- They report defective equipment to appropriate supervisors or staff, stock crash carts or other medical supplies, purge waste from equipment by connecting equipment to water sources and flushing water through systems.

Source: Science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/Alphabetical-List/Medical-Equipment-Preparer

MEDIAN INCOME: $46,340
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Medical Office Administrator

Secretaries and administrative assistants perform routine clerical and organizational tasks. They organize files, draft messages, schedule appointments and support other staff.

WHAT DO MEDICAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS DO?

• Secretaries and administrative assistants perform a variety of clerical and organizational tasks that are necessary to run an organization efficiently. They use computer software to create spreadsheets, compose messages, manage databases, and produce presentations, reports and documents. They may also negotiate with vendors, buy supplies, manage stockrooms or corporate libraries and get data from various sources. Specific job duties vary by experience, job title and specialty.

• Medical office assistants transcribe dictation, prepare messages and help physicians or medical scientists with reports, speeches, articles and conference proceedings. They also take simple medical histories, arrange for patients to be hospitalized and order supplies. Medical secretaries need to be familiar with medical terminology, insurance rules, billing practices, medical records and hospital or laboratory procedures.

Source: science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/Alphabetical+List/Secretary.+Medical

HEALTH CAREER RATING KEY

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MEDIAN INCOME: $35,370
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Medical Records and Health Information Technician

Medical records and health information technicians organize and manage health information in paper and electronic systems.

WHAT DO MEDICAL HEALTH RECORDS AND INFORMATION TECHNICIANS DO?

• They use various classification systems to code and categorize patient information for insurance reimbursement purposes, for databases and registries, and to maintain patients’ medical and treatment histories.

• They work regularly with physicians and other healthcare professionals to make sure that records are complete and accurate.

• The increasing use of electronic health records (EHRs) will continue to change the job responsibilities of medical records and health information technicians.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-records-and-health-information-technicians.htm

“Tobe in this field you need to be extremely detail-oriented and motivated, rather than discouraged, by continual change. Health care reform, advances in technology, the migration from paper to electronic health records and increased regulatory compliance make this an ever-evolving profession. Manesis says, “We’re in an unprecedented time in health care, which can be kind of scary. But I love that challenge.”

-Traci A., Residency in Iowa

MEDIAN SALARY: $39,180
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Medical Simulation Technician

Medical simulation is an emerging field that merges elements of IT, education and research. In the medical field, simulations can be used in a variety of ways to mimic real-life scenarios enabling students and researchers to learn from them in a controlled environment. Most people who enter this field have previous medical training and experience.

WHAT DO SIMULATION TECHNICIANS DO?

There are two main branches within simulation:

- **Simulations Education**: In education, simulation can vary in complexity. They can be as simple as using food in place of body parts to simulate surgery, or in some cases, mechanized manikins are used in place of human subjects for students to practice providing care in a realistic medical situation. Medical simulation technicians provide maintenance for these manikins as well as operate the manikins as part of trainings. Simulation technicians work in partnership with educators to build curriculum and drive student’s educational experience.

- **Simulation Research and Assessment**: In research, simulation technicians help develop programs that model communities. These models can be used to predict health outcomes such as birthrates or infection rates by using trends and data that has been previously gathered. These simulations are important for testing high casualty situations such as terrorist attacks or the spread of epidemics.

- **A Simulation technician will need at least a Bachelor’s degree. Though certification is not required, it is highly recommended. Certification as a healthcare simulation operation specialist, a healthcare simulation educator or healthcare simulation educator-advanced is also available. In order to get certified, students would enroll in a course and take a certification test.**
Medical Transcriptionist

Medical transcriptionists listen to voice recordings that physicians and other health professionals make and convert them into written reports.

WHAT DO MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTIONISTS DO?
• The primary function of the medical transcriptionist is to listen to audio files made by physicians and other health care personnel, which must be transcribed into accurate electronic medical reports, correspondence, and administrative materials. The text is keyed into a word processing program or a personal computer system. The medical transcriptionist must carefully edit this text for grammar and clarity errors.
• This professional is able to produce documents that include the following reports: discharge summaries, physical examination reports, medical history reports, operative reports, autopsy reports and consultation reports. After these reports are completed, the medical transcriptionist returns the electronic files to the health professionals for correction and signatures. Most medical transcription employers strongly prefer candidates with training from an accredited institution.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-transcriptionists.htm
Medical Writers

Medical writers are professionals who write on medically related topics and work alongside other medical professionals such as doctors and researchers. They may also collect data during studies or research, or help a lay audience understand medical terms. The goal for a medical writer is to make scientific writing easier to understand and ensure that written documents and reports are correct.

WHAT DO MEDICAL WRITERS DO?

• Medical writers read and review data and information gathered during research or a study. They review information provided by other medical professionals and use that information to write newspapers, reports, and documents that disseminate the information and present it in a clear, concise manner. Medical writers use current style and structure guidelines to ensure that information is accurate and presented clearly. They ensure that documents comply with all regulations and guidelines.

• Though one can enter the field from a variety of angles, most medical writers have a bachelor’s education in English/writing or the sciences. Many obtain a master’s degree in health communication, public health or journalism. There are certificate programs in medical writing, but receiving an additional degree in medical writing is not usually necessary. Though it is possible to be a medical writer without an advanced degree, attaining a degree is highly recommended.

Source: http://www.careersinpublichealth.net/careers/medical-writer

![HEALTH CAREER RATING KEY](HEALTH CAREER RATING KEY)

| Cost of Education Training: $10,000-$30,000 | $ $ |
| Duration of Education: 2 to 3 years | 🍂 🍂 |
| Education Requirements: Master’s Degree | 🎓 🎓 🎓 |
| Starting Salary: $30,000-$45,000 | 🍃 🍂 |
| Experienced Salary: $60,000-$75,000 | 🍃 🍃 🍃 |

MEDIAN SALARY: $70,240
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Nuclear Medicine Technologist

Nuclear medicine technologists use a scanner to create images of various areas of a patient’s body, prepare radioactive drugs and administer them to patients undergoing scans.

WHAT DO NUCLEAR MEDICINE TECHNOLOGISTS DO?

- Radioactive drugs give off radiation, allowing special scanners to monitor tissue and organ functions. Abnormal areas show higher-than-expected or lower-than-expected concentrations of radioactivity. Physicians then interpret the images to help diagnose the patient’s condition. For example, tumors can be seen in organs during a scan because of their abnormal concentration of radioactive drugs.

- Nuclear medicine technologists typically explain imaging procedures to the patient and answer questions. They follow safety procedures to protect the patient and themselves from excessive radiation exposure.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/nuclear-medicine-technologists.htm

Medicine just fit my personality the best, “I love the chemistry side of things, the pharmacy side of things, and I like how it’s not quite as fast-paced as some of the other modalities. It’s not quite so in and out.”

- Lauren W., a senior nuclear medicine technologist in Iowa

MEDIAN SALARY: $75,660
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Occupational Therapist

Occupational therapists treat patients with illnesses, or disabilities through the therapeutic use of everyday activities.

WHAT DO OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS DO?

• Patients with permanent disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, often need help performing daily tasks. Therapists show patients how to use appropriate adaptive equipment, such as leg or knee braces, wheelchairs and eating aids.

• Some therapists provide early intervention therapy to infants and toddlers who have or are at risk of developmental delays. Therapists who work with the elderly help their patients lead more independent and active lives. Occupational therapists may also work in mental health settings where they help patients who have developmental disabilities or mental illnesses.

• In some cases, occupational therapists help patients create functional work environments. They evaluate the work space, plan work activities and meet with the patient’s employer to collaborate on changes to the patient’s work environment or schedule.

MEDIAN SALARY: $83,200
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
• Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/occupational-therapists.htm
Optometrist

Optometrists perform eye exams to check for vision problems and diseases. They prescribe eyeglasses or contact lenses as needed.

WHAT DO OPTOMETRISTS DO?

• Optometrists perform vision tests to check for sight problems such as nearsightedness or farsightedness. They prescribe eyeglasses, contact lenses, medications and provide other treatments, such as vision therapy or low-vision rehabilitation. Optometrists provide pre- and postoperative care to patients undergoing eye surgery—for example, examining a patient’s eyes the day after surgery. Also, optometrists promote eye health by counseling patients, including explaining how to clean and wear contact lenses.

• Some optometrists spend much of their time providing specialized care, particularly if they are working in a group practice with other optometrists or doctors. For example, some optometrists mostly treat patients with only partial or no sight, a condition known as low-vision. Others may focus on pre- or postoperative care if they work in a facility that does many eye surgeries. Optometrists may also teach or do research in optometry colleges or work as consultants in the eye care industry.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/optometrists.htm

MEDIAN SALARY: $110,300
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Orthotist and Prosthetist

Orthotists and prosthetists design medical support devices such as artificial limbs. They also measure and fit patients for these devices.

WHAT DO ORTHOTISTS AND PROSTHETISTS DO?

• Orthotists and prosthetists evaluate and interview patients to determine their needs. They measure patients to design and fit medical devices and design orthopedic and prosthetic devices based on physicians’ prescriptions. They take a mold of the body part that will be fitted with a brace or artificial limb and select materials to be used for the orthotic or prosthetic device. Orthotists and prosthetists fit, test, and adjust devices on patients and instruct patients in how to use and care for their devices. They can also repair or update prosthetic and orthotic devices as well as document care in patients’ records.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/orthotists-and-prosthetists.htm
Pharmacist

Pharmacists dispense prescription medications to patients and offer advice on their safe use.

WHAT DO PHARMACISTS DO?

• Pharmacists distribute prescription drugs to individuals. They also advise their patients, physicians, and other health practitioners on the selection, dosages, interactions, and side effects of medications, as well as monitor the health and progress of those patients to ensure that they are using their medications safely and effectively.

• Compounding the actual mixing of ingredients to form medications is a small part of a pharmacist’s practice because most medicines are produced by pharmaceutical companies in standard dosages and drug delivery forms.

• Most pharmacists work in a community setting, such as a retail drugstore, or in a healthcare facility such as a hospital. Pharmacists in community pharmacies dispense medications, counsel patients on the use of prescription and over-the-counter medications, and advise physicians about medication therapy.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/pharmacists.htm
Pharmacy Technician

Pharmacy technicians help licensed pharmacists dispense prescription medication.

WHAT DO PHARMACY TECHNICIANS DO?

• Pharmacy technicians help licensed pharmacists prepare prescription medications, provide customer service and perform administrative duties within a pharmacy setting.

• Pharmacy technicians generally are responsible for receiving prescription requests, counting tablets and labeling bottles. Technicians receive written prescription requests from patients. They must verify that the information on the prescription is complete and accurate. To prepare the prescription, technicians retrieve, count, pour, weigh, measure and sometimes mix the medication. Then they prepare the prescription labels, select the type of container and affix the prescription and auxiliary labels to the container.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/pharmacy-technicians.htm

One of the most challenging aspects [of the job] comes down to maintaining knowledge on all the changes that occur within the field. Another challenge is interacting with patients who are "not always feeling their best. The majority of your customers that you're going to be dealing with are sick - whether it be a cold or sinus infection or a much more serious, chronic condition. So it takes a lot of compassion and empathy."

-Mike J, Pharmacy Technician
Phlebotomist

Phlebotomists collect blood for donation or analysis in a clinical laboratory.

WHAT DO PHLEBOTOMISTS DO?

• Blood tests are used to diagnose illness, evaluate the effectiveness of medications and determine whether a patient is receiving proper nutrition. To collect blood from an arm vein, the phlebotomist first applies a tourniquet to the upper arm to slow blood flow. An alcohol swab is used to disinfect a small area near the inside of the elbow. The phlebotomist then locates a vein and inserts a needle, a process called “venipuncture.”

• Phlebotomists can also sample blood through skin puncture, such as pricking a finger to test a patient’s blood sugar or determine blood type.

• The phlebotomist must ensure that all equipment is properly sanitized before it is used to collect blood. Accurate labeling, proper storage and careful transport are also key responsibilities.

Source: explorehealthcareers.org/en/career/156/Phlebotomist

“

I start my mornings at 3 a.m. to get to work by 5 a.m. when she begins seeing patients. She may draw blood from as many as 150 patients a day. To ensure things go smoothly, I employ laughter to help the patient feel better. As she puts it, "There’s a body attached to that arm."

-Lisa S., an assistant phlebotomy supervisor, who has been working in the field for more than 30 years

MEDIAN SALARY: $33,670
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Physician

Physicians and surgeons diagnose and treat injuries and illnesses in patients.

**WHAT DO PHYSICIANS DO?**

- Physicians examine patients, take medical histories, prescribe medications, as well as order, perform, and interpret diagnostic tests. They often counsel patients on diet, hygiene and preventive health care. Surgeons operate on patients to treat injuries such as broken bones, diseases such as cancerous tumors, and birth defects such as cleft palates.

- Physicians often choose to specialize their practice. One type of specialty is family or general practice. Family physicians assess and treat arrange of conditions that occur in everyday life. These conditions include anything from sinus and respiratory infections to broken bones. Family and general physicians typically have a base of regular, long-term patients. These doctors sometimes refer patients with more serious conditions to specialists or other healthcare facilities for additional care.

- Another type of specialty is surgery. Surgeons correct physical deformities, repair bone and tissue after injuries, or perform preventive surgeries on patients who are under anesthesia and using a wide variety of instruments.

Source: science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/Alphabetical+List/
physician, +pulmonary
Physical Therapist

Physical therapists help people who have injuries or illnesses improve their movement and manage their pain during periods of rehabilitation.

WHAT DO PHYSICAL THERAPISTS DO?

• Physical therapists (PTs) are healthcare professionals who diagnose and treat individuals of all ages, from newborns to the very old, who have medical problems or other health-related conditions, illnesses, or injuries that limit their abilities to move and perform functional activities as well as they would like in their daily lives.

• Physical therapists examine each individual and develop a plan using treatment techniques to promote the ability to move, reduce pain, restore function and prevent disability. In addition, PTs work with individuals to prevent the loss of mobility before it occurs by developing fitness and wellness-oriented programs for healthier and more active lifestyles.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physical-therapists.htm

“ I first learned about the profession at age 15, when he was involved in a motocross accident. He required physical therapy, and over the next 10 months of rehab, he got to know his therapist really well, and the field appealed to him. "Physical therapy is a real safe, happy approach," he says. "It offers a meaningful and positive alternative to pharmaceuticals or surgery."


MEDIAN SALARY: $85,400
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2016)
Physical Therapist Assistant

Physical Therapist Assistants work alongside Physical Therapists and help patients recover from injury, illness and regain movement after surgery.

WHAT DO PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANTS DO?

• Physical therapist aides often do tasks that are indirectly related to patient care, such as cleaning and setting up the treatment area, moving patients and clerical tasks.
• Physical therapist assistants help physical therapists provide care to patients. They give therapy through exercise; therapeutic methods, such as electrical stimulation, mechanical traction and ultrasound; massage; and gait and balance training. Physical therapist assistants observe patients before and during therapy, help patients do exercises, use devices and equipment such as walkers to help patients and educate patients and family members about what to do after treatment.

Source: explorehealthcareers.org/en/career/19/Physician__Assistant

MEDIAN SALARY: $46,920 (BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Physician Assistant

Physician Assistants (PAs) practice medicine under the direction of physicians and surgeons, examine patients, diagnose injuries and illnesses, and provide treatment.

WHAT DO PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS DO?

• The physician assistant is academically and clinically prepared to practice medicine under the direction and responsible supervision of a doctor of medicine or osteopathy. PAs make clinical decisions and provide a broad range of diagnostic, therapeutic, preventive, and health maintenance services. The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings. PA practice is centered on patient care and may include educational, research, and administrative activities.

• Physician assistants work in all areas of medicine, including primary care and family medicine, emergency medicine, and psychiatry. The work of physician assistants depends in large part on their specialty and what their supervising physician needs them to do. For example, a physician assistant working in surgery may close incisions and provide care before and after the operation. A physician assistant working in pediatrics may examine a child or give routine vaccinations.

Source: explorehealthcareers.org/en/career/19/Physician_Assistant
Psychiatric Technician and Aide

Psychiatric technicians and aides care for people who have mental illness and developmental disabilities.

WHAT DO PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIANS AND AIDES DO?

• Psychiatric technicians observe patients’ behavior, listen to their concerns, record their condition, and lead patients in therapeutic and recreational activities.

• They may give medications and other treatments, following instructions from doctors and other medical professionals, help with admitting and discharging patients, help patients with activities of daily living, including eating and bathing, and restrain patients who may become physically violent.

• Psychiatric aides monitor patients’ behavior and location in a mental healthcare facility. They also help patients with their daily living activities, such as bathing or dressing, serve meals and help patients eat, and help keep facilities clean by doing tasks such as changing bedlinens.

• Aides interact with patients, leading them in educational or therapeutic activities. Aides may also participate in group activities, such as playing sports or going on field trips.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/psychiatric-technicians-and-aides.htm

HEALTH CAREER RATING KEY

| Cost of Education Training: Less than $10,000 | $ |
| Duration of Education: Less than 1 year | ⭐ |
| Education Requirements: Associate Degree/Certificate | 📚 |
| Starting Salary: $15,000-$30,000 | 🎓 |
| Experienced Salary: $30,000-$45,000 | 🎓 🎓 |

MEDIAN SALARY: $29,330 (BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Psychologists

Psychologists study mental processes and human behavior by observing, interpreting, and recording how people relate to one another and the environment.

WHAT DO PSYCHOLOGISTS DO?

• Psychologists often look for patterns that will help them understand and predict behavior using scientific methods, principles, or procedures to test their ideas. Through such research studies, psychologists have learned much that can help increase understanding between individuals, groups, organizations, institutions, nations, and cultures.

• Areas of specialization within clinical psychology include health psychology, neuropsychology, and child psychology. Types of psychology include: clinical psychology, counseling psychology, school psychology, industrial-organizational psychology, developmental psychology, social psychology, experimental or research psychology, and forensic psychology.

Source: www.apa.org

“This field is not stagnant; there’s so many new and innovative ways to approach treating the mental health issues, “You can start in one place and end in another place. I love that flexibility.”

-David S., a Psychologist in Austin, Texas

MEDIAN SALARY: $77,030
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Public Health

Public health is the “big picture” science and art of creating healthy communities through education, research, and promotion of healthy lifestyles. In public health, the focus is on health promotion and disease/injury prevention; this is in contrast to the medical model of care, which focuses more heavily upon diagnosing and treating illnesses and conditions after they occur. Public health professionals deal more specifically with populations, rather than individual patients.

WHAT ARE TYPES OF CAREERS IN PUBLIC HEALTH?

• You can choose from over fifteen degrees within public health, including undergraduate, masters and doctoral degrees.

• There are over 20 major fields of study. The five core disciplines are: Behavioral Science/Health Education, Biostatistics, Environmental Health, Epidemiology, and Health Services Administration.

• Public health careers vary greatly. Epidemiology and biostatistics involve mathematics and modeling. Environmental health includes a wide range of science skills. Health administration incorporates business and management skills. Health education involves skills required to develop community-wide prevention programs. Health policy includes an understanding of law-making processes.

• Public health professionals work in a variety of settings, including: federal, state, and local government agencies, clinics and hospitals, insurance companies, international/global health agencies, pharmaceutical and hospital supply firms, educational institutions, advocacy groups, and law firms and legal support organizations.

Source: http://www.whatispublichealth.org

HEALTH CAREER RATING KEY

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<th>Cost of Education Training:</th>
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<td>Experienced Salary:</td>
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2017 MEDIAN SALARY

• EPIDEMIOLOGIST: $69,660 PER YEAR (MASTER DEGREE)

• OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY SPECIALISTS: $67,720 (BACHELOR DEGREE)

• HEALTH AND SAFETY ENGINEERS: $88,510 (BACHELOR DEGREE) (BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS)
Radiation Therapist

Radiation therapists treat cancer and other diseases in patients by giving radiation treatments.

**WHAT DO RADIATION THERAPISTS DO?**

- Radiation therapists typically examine machines to make sure they are safe and work properly, explain treatments to patients and answer questions, and follow safety procedures to protect the patient and themselves from overexposure.
- Therapists x-ray the patient to determine the exact location of the area requiring treatment, check computer programs to make sure that they give the correct dose of radiation to the correct area of the patient’s body, and then operate equipment to treat the patient with radiation.
- Most radiation therapy uses machines called linear accelerators. These machines direct high-energy x-rays at specific cancer cells in a patient’s body, shrinking or removing them.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/radiation-therapists.htm

"I didn't like that I didn't get to know my patients very well, but four months before she was due to graduate, Hargrove took an elective course in radiation therapy that changed her life. “I watched therapists who knew their patients by name, you got to know patients and be a part of their recovery, and that was so different than general X-ray. It was love at first patient.”

-Dorothy H., Chief radiation therapist

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<th>HEALTH CAREER RATING KEY</th>
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<td>Cost of Education Training: $30,000-$50,000</td>
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<td>Duration of Education: 2 to 3 years</td>
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<td>Starting Salary: $30,000-$45,000</td>
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<td>Experienced Salary: $50,000-$70,000</td>
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MEDIAN SALARY: $80,570
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
at a Hospital in Oregon.
Radiologic Technologist

Radiologic technologists perform diagnostic imaging examinations, such as x-rays, on patients.

WHAT DO RADIOLOGIC TECHNOLOGISTS DO?

- Radiologic technologists and technicians perform diagnostic imaging examinations like x-rays, computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging, and mammography. Some radiologic technologists and technicians, referred to as radiographers, produce x-ray films (radiographs) of parts of the human body for use in diagnosing medical problems.
- They prepare patients for radiologic examinations by explaining the procedure, removing jewelry and other articles through which x-rays cannot pass, and positioning patients so that the parts of the body can be appropriately radiographed.
- In addition to preparing patients and operating equipment, radiologic technologists and technicians keep patient records and adjust and maintain equipment. They also may prepare work schedules, evaluate purchases of equipment, or manage a radiology department.

Source: science.education.nih.gov/lifeworks.nsf/Alphabetical+List/Technologist,+Radiologic

MEDIAN SALARY: $60,070
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Recreational Therapist

Recreational therapists plan, direct, and coordinate recreation programs for people with disabilities or illnesses using techniques including arts and crafts, drama, music, dance, sports, games, and field trips.

WHAT DO RECREATIONAL THERAPISTS DO?

- Recreational therapists help people reduce depression, stress, and anxiety; recover basic physical and mental abilities; build confidence; and socialize effectively. They help people with disabilities integrate into the community by teaching them how to use community resources and recreational activities.
- Recreational therapists use activities such as arts and crafts, dance and movement, gardening or sports to help their clients. For example, people who are paralyzed on one side may need therapists to teach them to recover basic motor skills, such as picking up a cup with their functional side.
- Recreational therapists work in places such as substance abuse centers, rehabilitation centers, assisted living facilities, special education departments, and parks and recreation departments.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/recreational-therapists.htm

Every session he has definitely improved, and now that we are getting the muscles going, it's less working on form and more on balance and core strength and it's been a real treat to see that [recreational therapy] has helped him improve.

MEDIAN SALARY: $47,680
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
-Marli V., Recreational patient
Respiratory Therapist

Respiratory therapists care for patients who have trouble breathing; for example, from a chronic respiratory disease, such as asthma or emphysema.

WHAT DO RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS DO?

• Respiratory therapists use various tests to evaluate patients. For example, therapists test lung capacity by having patients breathe into an instrument that measures the volume and flow of oxygen when they inhale and exhale. Respiratory therapists may also take blood samples and use a blood gas analyzer to test the oxygen and carbon dioxide levels present.

• Respiratory therapists perform chest physiotherapy on patients to remove mucus from their lungs and make it easier for them to breathe. Removing mucus is necessary for patients suffering from lung diseases, such as cystic fibrosis, and involves the therapist vibrating the patient’s rib cage, often by tapping the patient’s chest and encouraging him or her to cough.

• Respiratory therapists may connect patients who cannot breathe on their own to ventilators to deliver oxygen to the lungs. Therapists insert a tube in the patient’s windpipe and connect the tube to ventilator equipment. They set and monitor the equipment to ensure that the patient is receiving the correct amount of oxygen at the correct rate.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/respiratory-therapists.htm
Social Worker

There are two main types of social workers: direct-service social workers who help people solve and cope with problems in their everyday lives, and clinical social workers who diagnose and treat mental, behavioral, and emotional issues.

WHAT DO SOCIAL WORKERS DO?

• Social workers help people cope with challenges in every stage of their lives. They help people cope with a wide range of situations, such as adopting a child or being diagnosed with a terminal illness. Social workers work with many populations, including children, people with disabilities, and people with addictions.

• Many clinical social workers work in private practice. Some work in a group practice with other social workers or mental health professionals. In private practice, clinical social workers often do administrative and recordkeeping tasks. Among these tasks is working with clients and insurance companies to receive payment for their services. In addition, social workers market their practice to bring in new clients and to network with other professionals who may recommend them.

Speech-Language Pathologist

Speech-language pathologists diagnose and treat communication and swallowing disorders in patients.

WHAT DO SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS DO?

• Speech-language pathologists, (sometimes called speech therapists) assess, diagnose, treat, and help to prevent communication and swallowing disorders in patients. Speech, language, and swallowing disorders result from a variety of causes such as a stroke, brain injury, hearing loss, developmental delay, a cleft palate, cerebral palsy, or emotional problems.

• Speech-language pathologists work with patients who have problems with speech, such as being unable to speak at all or speaking with difficulty, or with rhythm and fluency problems, such as stuttering. They may work with those who are unable to understand language or with people who have voice disorders, such as inappropriate pitch or a harsh voice.

• Speech-language pathologists must also do various administrative tasks, including keeping good records of diagnoses, treatment progress, and final evaluation when the patient finishes the therapy.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/speech-language-pathologists.htm

MEDIAN SALARY: $76,610
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
Surgical Technologist

Surgical technologists, also called operating room technicians, assist in surgical operations. They prepare operating rooms, arrange equipment, and help doctors and nurses during surgeries.

WHAT DO SURGICAL TECHNOLOGISTS DO?

• Surgical technologists work as members of a healthcare team alongside physicians and surgeons, registered nurses, and other healthcare workers. Before an operation, surgical technologists prepare the operating room by setting up surgical instruments and equipment. They also prepare patients for surgery by washing and disinfecting incision sites, positioning patients on the operating table, and covering patients with sterile drapes. Surgical technologists prepare sterile solutions used in surgery and check that all surgical equipment is working properly. They help the surgical team put on sterile gowns and gloves.

• During an operation, surgical technologists pass instruments and supplies to surgeons and first assistants. Technologists also may prepare, care for, and dispose of specimens taken for laboratory analysis. In addition, they apply dressings. After an operation, surgical technologists may help transfer patients to recovery rooms and may clean and restock operating rooms.

Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/surgical-technologists.htm

“Even though surgical technologists are not well known as part of the surgery team, we are the backbone of surgery."

-Jonathan F., surgical technologist at

MEDIAN SALARY: $46,310
(BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS 2017)
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SPECIAL POPULATIONS AND CONSIDERATION
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) People

LGBTQ people are a critical part of the healthcare workforce.

Even within the field of medicine, discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity is common. According to a study by the Stanford University School of Medicine, a third of LGBTQ+ identified medical students are not out. Of the students who identify as LGBTQ, 40 percent noted workplace discrimination as their reasoning for not disclosing (Academic Medicine, 2015). There are many laws and policies in place that are meant to protect LGBTQ identified or perceived people but laws vary by state.

In Illinois there are numbers of laws that protect LGBTQ workers or students. These are:

Executive Order 13672
- This is an executive order signed by President Obama in 2014, which prohibits federal contractors and sub-contractors from discriminating against LGBTQ employees. Federal contractors may include certain hospitals that due work for the federal government. However, this act is not farreaching.

The Illinois Human Rights Act
- The IHRA includes both sexual orientation and gender identity, and prohibits discrimination in employment in the state of Illinois. This means that, other than a church, you can’t be denied employment or be fired for being LGBTQ. This includes religious run hospitals, clinics or organizations.

Title IX
- Title IX ensures that people have equal access to education opportunities in both k-12 and higher education, certification, or secondary education training programs. Title IX specifically ensures that people do not experience discrimination in education based on gender, which includes transgender and gender nonconforming people. Under the Trump administration “Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, not gender identity”.

If you do experience discrimination, students and professionals can seek legal resources at a number of organizations. In Illinois, this would include Lambda Legal and the ACLU. Title IX complaints can be directed to the US Department of Ed (find a form at http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html).

There are also a number of supports for students and professionals. Affinity groups in education but also by careers can provide critical peer support. Also, encouraging people who are just starting out in the health career trajectory to find mentors that they trust discussing their identity and experience with can help professional developed long-term, affirming networks.

There are also systemic changes that need to occur to make medicine more welcoming for LGBTQ people. Advocating for the creation of institutional policies that address LGBTQ issues are important, especially in light of implementation issues related federal and state labor laws. Also, providing training for staff on not only how to create safe and inclusive environments for patients, but also their colleagues has been shown to have positive outcomes in workplaces.

- If someone does experience discrimination, students and professionals can seek legal resources at a number of organizations. In Illinois, this would include Lambda Legal and the ACLU.
  - Lambda Legal (312-663-4413)
  - ACLU (312-201-9740, acluofillinois@aclu-il.org)

There are also number of supports for students and professionals. There are affinity groups in education and careers that can provide critical peer support. It is also a good thing for people who are just starting out in the health field to find mentors whom they trust to discuss their identity and experience. This can help professionals develop long-term, affirming networks. (glma.org)

There are also systemic changes that need to occur to make medicine more welcoming for LGBTQ
people. Advocating for the creation of institutional policies that address LGBTQ issues are important, especially in light of implementation issues related to state labor laws. Also, providing training for staff on not only how to create safe and inclusive environments for patients, but also their colleagues has been shown to have positive outcomes in workplaces. (citation needed)

For more information:
http://www.hrc.org/resources/a-history-of-federal-non-discrimination-legislation
http://www.equalityillinois.us/issue/employment/
http://www.illinois.gov/dhr/FilingaCharge/Pages/Employment.aspx

With the advent of cheaper and faster criminal background checks, criminal records are becoming more of a barrier for people seeking to join the healthcare workforce. Records relief is an attempt to ensure that people with criminal records have a chance at continuing their life. Records relief is any procedure that lessens the effect of incarceration on employment, education, etc. that includes:

- Expungement
- Sealing
- Waivers
- Pardons
- Certifications of relief for good behavior or disability
- Executive clemency

In any of these processes, the most important steps are finding what is on your rap sheet. Even if a case is dismissed or you are sent home from the police station, you may still have a record that future employers can see. You should collect your records from the city, state, and records from any court cases that happened in the juvenile court to get a clear picture of what records you may have.

Records and Services Division of
the Chicago Police Department
3510 S Michigan, Chicago IL 60653
(312)745-5508
Mon-Fri 8am-12pm

After retrieving your record, it is best to sit down with legal professionals to figure out which option works best for you. Expungement is the destruction on the record. If a record is expunged, only the military, FBI and police offices will be able to see the record. Not all records can be expunged. Sealing a record means the record is not available to public, but documentation may still come up through background checks. For healthcare professionals, people are often encouraged to fill out waivers regarding their criminal record, but it is unclear how this affects the hiring process in practice. Additionally, applicants can petition for executive clemency by the governor or seek certification of good behavior to address the changes they have made in their life since their arrest. Regardless, speaking to a professional to decide on best course of action is a necessary step. In Illinois, please contact these organizations for more information:

The Expungement Helpdesk (Juvenile Records)
1100 S. Hamilton Ave
Chicago, IL
(312) 229-6359
Monday and Tuesday: 9am - 4pm
Wednesday - Friday: 9am - noon

Cabrini Green Legal Aid
740 N Milwaukee Ave,
Chicago, IL 60642
(312) 738-2452

Legal Assistance Fund
120 S La Salle St #900
Chicago, IL 60603
(312) 341-1070

Bluhm Legal Clinic Off the Record Project*
375 E Chicago Ave,
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 503-8576

This project works to help people charged with juvenile sex offenses to remove registration requirements.
Like in many labor markets in the United States, immigrants are becoming a larger portion of the population. This is especially true in health careers. A 2012 study by Brookings showed that immigrants make up about a quarter of the employees in fields such as home health aides and nursing aides (Brookings, 2012). Additionally, with the influx of immigrants who are first generation citizens, there is need for providers that are familiar with their particular health needs and barriers. Though these skills can be learned through training, people with lived experience would be the ideal providers of care and trainers of their peers. With the growing number of non-native born workers, there is also rising need for resources to make finding careers more accessible to and informed by immigrant experiences.

Immigrants face a special set of barriers in regards to pursuing health career paths. These include accessing financial aid, transferring credentials from their country of origin, and lack of culturally competent employers and educational institutions.

- Accessing financial aid can be challenging regardless of your country of origin. To be eligible for U.S. federal aid you must be:
  - A permanent resident
  - U.S. national (includes natives of American Samoa or Swains Island)
  - Hold a Visa

- Have Arrival-departure Record (I-94) saying that you are a
  - Refuge
  - Recipient of Asylum
  - Cuban-Haitian Entrant (status Pending)
  - Conditional Entrant
    - (valid only if issued before April 1, 1980)
  - Parolee

- A battered immigrant-qualified alien
- A citizen of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Island, or the Republic of Palau

A permanent resident is someone who is legally residing permanently in the United States.

For those who do not fall into any these categories, private funding and institutional grants are still available to you. Be sure to fill out the FAFSA so that institution will be able to see if you qualify for any of their funding.

Transferring credentials from one country to the next can also be a barrier. Unfortunately, there are very few regulations regarding how this happens in the United States in general and policies vary by state. In Illinois, all foreign trained health professionals can seek licensure in Illinois as long as they meet state requirements. You can check to see if you qualify by contacting an evaluation service like Educational Records Evaluation Services (www.eres.com). Services such as these also provide information on educational credits for those who want to apply for school in United States after some training abroad. This includes professionals trained in Puerto Rico. To apply, you must pay a $50 fee and $75 for a temporary license.

There is a laundry list of special considerations for non-native born health workers and students, especially those who might be undocumented. Individuals who are interested in gaining additional information on this topic can refer to resources provided by Health & Medicine Policy Research Group.
HOW DO YOU TRANSLATE FIELD EXPERIENCES INTO A CIVILIAN HEALTH CAREER?

It is relatively easy to transfer certification and experience in the military into a civilian health career. Training and certification received in the service are valid once a civilian. Many institution seek out veterans because they can easily work in high stress, high volume situations. Additionally, no additional certification or training is needed as part of the transition. For those who are interested in heath careers, it is highly suggested that prospective professionals take advantage of the many training and funding opportunities exclusive to veterans. This includes the GI bill. Also, during wartime institutions often waive tuition and fees for active military personnel.

POSSIBLE BARRIERS:

Many of challenges that veterans interested in health careers have transitioning back to civilian life are similar to their non-medically related counterparts. The biggest barrier will be language and terminology. Description of duties and job titles differ greatly between the military and civilians. For more information on how to find equivalent language for resumes and cover letters, please visit the Department Labor website.

RESOURCES FOR VETERAN:

There are numerous resources and programming available to assist veterans in finding civilian employment. One example is in health information technology. The Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Veterans Health Initiative in conjunction with Bellevue College and the United States Department of Labor, Education and Training Administration work toward creating pathways for veterans in the health IT field. This includes public education, training and certification programs for veterans. For more information on career programs for veterans, please visit the council for Adult and Experiential Learning at www.cael.org.
WORKFORCE RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Americans with DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (ADA) prohibits covered employers from discriminating against individuals with disabilities in the full range of employment-related activities, from recruitment to advancement, to pay and benefits. Covered employers are also required to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants/employees with disabilities when needed. This is to ensure equal opportunity in the application process, to allow an employee to perform the job, or to provide equal opportunity to any benefits associated with the job. A reasonable accommodation is any change or adjustment to the way things are typically done in the workplace.

The ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals that associate with individuals with disabilities, such as a family member, co-worker or friend. The ADA also prohibits harassment against applicants/employees with disabilities and prohibits employers from retaliating against an applicant/employee that has exercised their rights under the ADA. The following resources provide basic information on employment with respect to individuals with disabilities in the workplace:

The ADA: Questions and Answers
- EEOC Answers to common questions about employment and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Employment Rights Who has Them and Who Enforces Them
- Department of Labor article on federal laws covering non-discrimination on the basis of disability and which government agencies are responsible for enforcing these laws.

(Job Accommodations Network (JAN), a free service of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy, is the national resource that can provide people with confidential, expert, and accurate technical assistance about job accommodations for individuals with disabilities and employment laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Rehabilitation Act. Employers, individuals, service providers, and others can use JAN at no cost! The following resources can be used to learn more about how JAN can help to increase the productivity of workplaces using low-cost, practical solutions to accommodation situations:

JAN TOOLKIT
WORK SUPPORT
(Retrieved from http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=80571)

Employment First
Community-based, integrated employment as the first option for employment-related services for individuals with disabilities, physical, intellectual, or behavioral is known as the Employment First policy. The idea is that all Illinois citizens, regardless of disability, are capable of full participation and integration in their communities and that includes employment. Illinois has adopted an Employment First policy via the Employment First Act (20 ILCS 40) in 2013 and Executive Order (14-08) that requires the participation of multiple state agencies to fully implement Employment First across the State. This law states that “competitive and integrated employment shall be considered the first option when serving persons with disabilities of working age” and requires all State agencies to follow the policy as well as ensure...
its effective implementation within their programs and services (IDHS). Despite this desire, 25 years after the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, nationally only 20% of people with disabilities are employed. In Illinois, only six percent of people with developmental disabilities are employed in integrated settings (Equip for Equality, 2014).

**Employment First Resources**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR’S OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY - EMPLOYMENT FIRST STATE LEADERSHIP MENTORING PROGRAM

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION’S REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (FEDERAL VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION)

ILLINOIS DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

**Work Incentives Planning and Assistance**

“WORK INCENTIVES” make it possible for people with disabilities receiving Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to work and still receive monthly payments and Medicaid or Medicaid. Work Incentives Planning and Assistance is a federally funded program created to help individuals receiving SSI/SSDI make informed choices about being employed. Whether someone is working, has a job offer, or is ready to start employment, services are offered to help people understand how working is affecting their benefits, such as Medicaid, subsidized housing, TANF, food stamps, worker’s compensation and unemployment.

Those SSA Disability Beneficiaries needing general information about going to work are encouraged to contact the WIPA Call Center at 866-968-7842.

Contact the IATP WIPA Program toll free at (800) 852-5110 (voice/tty), (217) 522-7985 or email us at iatp@iltech.org

Statewide Resource (other than the city of Chicago):

Illinois Assistive Tech program

https://www.iltech.org/

**MAYOR’S OFFICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES EMPLOYMENT SERVICES UNIT (MOPD ESU)**

MOPD’s ESU staff provides one-on-one comprehensive benefits analysis to SSI/SSDI recipients with disabilities on the effects of working and receiving benefits.

A benefits analysis can be scheduled by appointment. This service is provided for job seeking individuals with disabilities as well as youth in transition between the ages of 14-22.

For more information, please contact the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities Employment Services Unit at 312.746.5743 (voice), 311, or mopdesywipa@cityofchicago.org

Overview of Individualized Placement and Supports (IPS) and IPS Supported Employment

IPS supported employment helps people with severe mental illness work at jobs of their choosing. Although variations of supported employment exist, IPS refers to the evidence-based practice of supported employment. Characteristics of IPS Supported Employment include:

- It is an evidence-based practice
- Practitioners focus on each person’s strengths
- Work promotes recovery and wellness
- Practitioners work in collaboration with state vocational rehabilitation counselors
- IPS uses a multidisciplinary team approach
- Services are individualized and long lasting
- The IPS approach changes the way mental health services are delivered

**Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

Supported employment provides personalized supports for people with significant disabilities to find and retain paid employment—with the proper supports, any person, regardless of the nature or extent of his or her disability, can be gainfully employed. This is unfortunately an underutilized resource and a complicated system to navigate in Illinois.

Many people are deemed ineligible based on presumptions about their employability. Vocational rehabilitation counselors are often unwilling to open a supported employment case, in part due to a misunderstanding of what services may be provided by different agencies at the same time. This is compounded by the fact that supported employment services through the Division of Rehabilitation Services are limited to 18 months. While it is possible to receive supported employment services under one of the Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services waivers when those...
services have expired, transitioning between funding streams is difficult and cumbersome. Supported employment services for people with serious mental illnesses have been successfully provided using the Individualized Placement and Support model, but due to inadequate funding there are an insufficient number of qualified providers delivering these services (Equip for Equality, 2014).

**JOB DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES**

**OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY**

HTTPS://WWW.DOL.GOV/ODEP/

- Free disability employment guides for job-seekers with disabilities to find information to develop their skills and find the support they need to get a job. Adobe Acrobat Reader is required to view the products and is available for download at: https://orders.gpo.gov/odep.aspx

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth)

The NCWD/Youth website houses numerous youth-focused resources including the Guideposts for Success and extensive information related to Career Development, Professional Development, and Youth Development and Leadership to promote success for youth with disabilities entering the world of work.

- Guideposts for Success — Following an extensive review of research and best practices in education, vocational rehabilitation, and workforce development, ODEP and NCWD/Youth produced the Guideposts for Success, a comprehensive set of interventions that can make a difference in the lives of all youth. Targeted Guideposts have also been identified for:
  - Employers Success
  - Youth Involved in the Juvenile Corrections System
  - Youth in Foster Care
  - Youth with Mental Health Needs
  - Youth with Learning Disabilities

- Career Development — Career development is a three-step process involving self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management, which can assist all youth in choosing and preparing for careers that fit their interests, skills, and values. Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs) can play an important role in the career development process.

- Professional Development — Youth service professionals require competencies in many fields (youth development, education, workforce development, disability, etc.) in order to effectively guide youth in transition and maximize their potential.

- Youth Development and Leadership — Youth development is the process by which youth prepare for the challenges of adolescence and adulthood by building skills and competencies through coordinated, progressive activities and experiences.

**Workforce Recruitment Program**

The Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) is a recruitment and referral program that connects federal sector employers nationwide with highly motivated college students and recent graduates with disabilities who are eager to prove their abilities in the workplace through summer or permanent jobs.

To be eligible for the WRP, candidates must be current, full-time undergraduate or graduate students with a disability, or have graduated within one year of the release of the database each December. For the 2018 WRP release, interviews will be held in the fall of 2017. A candidate who graduated in April, 2016 or later would still be eligible to participate. Candidates must be U.S. citizens. If you are an eligible candidate, share this information with your school’s disability services or career services coordinator, and ask him or her to contact the WRP Coordinator at WRP@DOL.GOV. Please understand that we work directly with college coordinators, and cannot respond to inquiries from individuals. Please CLICK HERE TO view available resources regarding employment of people with disabilities. Check back on a regular basis for additional links and resources.

**Career Exploration & Job Search**

- http://thinkbeyondthelabel.com/
- https://www.illinoisworknet.com/disabilityworks
- O-Net Online
- Ability Links
- Getting Hired
Health career considerations

It’s often the organizations and resources that make all the difference when it comes to landing a healthcare job for people with disabilities. Even with employer accommodations, there are still barriers to people working in healthcare such as facilities and equipment that funnel people into more support functions rather than directly providing healthcare. For example, working in records-keeping or laboratory work. However, there are programs specifically designed to train and recruit trainees with disabilities in healthcare. These programs can start as early as high school.

- Project Search at the Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center and provides employability skills training and workplace internships for individuals with significant disabilities, particularly youth transitioning from high school to adult life. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training through worksite rotations (Monster.com)

A few organizations offer help to workers with specific disabilities in certain healthcare occupations:

National Organization of Nurses with Disabilities

- NOND™ aims to work with youth and students of all ages, nurses with disabilities, nursing programs and nursing educators, and boards of nursing/professional regulations/nursing organizations through research, training and education, and dissemination of regional and national resources to:
  o Identify organizational needs and capacity for including students and nurses with disabilities in the nursing profession.
  o Generate relevant questions and actively participate in developing and implementing research and service learning initiatives.
  o Apply research and service learning results for use in practical activities.
  o Connect with local community in cooperative experiences to promote the inclusion of students and nurses with disabilities in the nursing profession.
  o Disseminate information related to the inclusion of students and nurses with disabilities in the nursing profession.

Association of Medical Professionals with Hearing Losses

- Provides information, promote advocacy and mentorship, and create a network for individuals with hearing loss interested in or working in healthcare fields.
- Sheltered workshops and segregated settings for people with disabilities.
- Transition services for youth transitioning out of Special Education
- Including People with Disabilities: Public Health Workforce Competencies
- Lack of disability related training in public health
- Workforce development

Other workforce developments programs for people with disabilities are not widespread. The recent passage of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act may change how employment and workforce development services are delivered to people with disabilities. It expands the investment and role of the state vocational rehabilitation agency in transition services, requiring opportunities to work in integrated settings. It requires the investment and role of the state vocational rehabilitation agency in transition services, requiring opportunities to work in integrated settings before placement in segregated settings that pay subminimum wage. The Act also extends the availability of supported employment services to 24 months. Finally, the Act authorizes workforce development activities, such as One Stop Career Centers, to focus on people with disabilities.
Sources

- UIC School of Public Health: http://publichealth.uic.edu/
- Urban Health Program Chicago: http://www.uic.edu/depts/uhealth/
- South Suburban College https://www.ssc.edu/
- Illinois Center for Nursing: http://nursing.illinois.gov/
- Chicago CHW Local Network: https://chwnetwork.wordpress.com
- Practical Nursing: http://www.practicalnursing.org
- Illinois Center for Nursing; Education Opportunities: http://nursing.illinois.gov/
- Certified Nurse Midwives: https://www.nurse.com/home-b?adobe_mc_ref=
- Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists Fact Sheet: https://www.aana.com/
- Clinical Nurse Specialist: https://www.discovernursing.com/specialty/clinical-nurse-specialist
- FAFSA: http://fafsa.ed.gov
- National Health Service Corps: http://www.nationalhealthcorps.org/