

# Employment

# Guidebook



## Careers in Healthcare

**INSIDE:** Careers in healthcare are skyrocketing. Labor Market projections show a 25% increase in the number of healthcare jobs between now and the year 2010.



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## The Healthcare Industry : An Overview

**Healthcare Jobs Growing Rapidly**—The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that there will be a 13% increase in health-care jobs between 2000-2010. Two important factors contribute to this growth. The first is the aging baby boomer population; and the second is the increased use of innovative medical technology.

Additional sources of new jobs will be in the rehabilitation field, health and fitness, wellness, imaging technologies, home healthcare, nutrition, new diagnostic services, and prevention.

**Changing Demographics, Increased Need for Medical Care**—According to the Administration on Aging, in 2000 there were 34.7 million people ages 65 and over. It is projected that in 2010, that number will increase to 39.4 million and to 53.2 million in 2020. With baby boomers living longer, the need for medical care is expected to increase.

**Manpower Shortages in Healthcare Jobs**—The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that, while employment in private hospitals is expected to grow slowly, employment in offices of health practitioners and in nursing and personal care facilities will grow faster than in most other industries. Healthcare manpower shortages are now commonplace and many healthcare providers take months to locate qualified personnel. An American Hospital Association (AHA) survey found that 70% of the surveyed hospitals reported a lack of qualified candidates. Furthermore, employment growth is not limited to the traditional full-time job. The AHA reports a 3% increase in part-time hospital positions.

Research additional labor market information at [www.dcnetworks.org](http://www.dcnetworks.org)

## Washington Region Healthcare Industry

### Jobs Available... Qualified Workers Needed

According to a study conducted by the Greater Washington Board of Trade titled, *"Who Cares?" Examining Greater Washington's Health Care Workforce*, there are more openings in the region's top healthcare professions than there are trained and educated students to fill them. Healthcare occupations such as registered nurses, nursing aides, medical and dental assistants, dental hygienists, medical records and health information technicians, and medical and clinical laboratory technologists are growing in the region. Indeed, these are careers worth investigating.

### Is Healthcare the Right Industry for You?

Healthcare workers administer "around-the-clock" care and services to millions of people – from newborns to the critically ill. This industry looks for individuals with a strong desire to help others and the ability to relate to people of diverse backgrounds in stressful situations. If you possess these basic skills, then perhaps the healthcare industry is right for you.

**Ten healthcare-related occupations are growing in the Washington, D.C. region, with almost 4,000 job openings created this decade. These are careers worth learning about.**



## Working Conditions in Healthcare

**In the District, the healthcare industry is comprised of three sectors:**

- Ambulatory Healthcare
- Hospitals and Nursing
- Residential Care Facilities

**Different types of healthcare facilities offer varied working conditions, including extended hours:**

- **Around the Clock**—Hospitals and nursing homes operate around the clock. Staff is needed at all hours of the day. Shift and weekend hours are expected in these facilities, so is the need for full-time employment.
- **Regular 8.5-Hour Business Days**—Doctors' offices, including those of dentists and other healthcare professionals, require staffing, full-time as well as part-time, during regular business hours with occasional evening hours.

- **Part-time Flexible Hours**—Direct patient care, or home healthcare, will generally require part-time and flexible work schedules. Persons working in this capacity will presumably have more than one client. Consequently, traveling is expected.



## Training and Education Requirements

Career advancements in healthcare often require a degree.

Students preparing for careers in healthcare can enter academic and training programs leading to industry certification or an associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree. Many healthcare professionals such as registered nurses, social workers, and physical therapists have, at a minimum, a Bachelor of Science degree. These jobs carry a higher level of responsibility and duties.

Employment is available for graduates of one or two-year training programs.

Graduates of industry-approved and recognized one or two-year training programs may operate technical equipment and assist practitioners with patients' diagnosis and treatments. Some of these occupations include:

- Medical Records Technicians
- Health Information Technicians
- Dental Hygienists

Many jobs do not require specialized education or training.

The healthcare industry also provides many job opportunities for people without specialized training and degrees. Among these are:

- Nursing Aides
- Home Health Aides
- Dental and Medical Assistants
- Personal and Home Care Aides

These jobs, however, are primarily geared toward helping the elderly, disabled, and infirm who are living at home instead of in an institution. Many of these workers are self-employed.

Training opportunities are available.

Hospitals are more likely than other employers to provide training programs and advancement opportunities to their employees. Some employers provide their workers with on-the-job or classroom training or will pay for courses in healthcare at an academic institution.



Read about job profiles and the training required to help you decide which occupations are best suited for you.  
Get more details at [www.dcnetworks.org](http://www.dcnetworks.org)

**Registered Nurses (RNs)** treat and educate patients and the public about various medical conditions, and provide advice and emotional support to patients' family members. RNs record patients' medical histories and symptoms, help to perform diagnostic tests and analyze results, and operate medical machinery.  
**Training required:** Associate Degree, LPN-BSN, and MSN.  
**Wage:** \$22.00/hour

**Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants** care for the physically or mentally ill, and the injured, disabled, or infirm individual confined to hospitals, nursing care facilities, and mental health institutions.  
**Training required:** In many cases, a high school diploma or equivalent is necessary for a job as a nursing or psychiatric aide. Hospitals may require previous experience as a nursing aide or home health aide.  
**Wage:** \$9.00/hour

**Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses** care for the sick, injured, convalescent, and disabled under

the direction of physicians and registered nurses.  
**Training required:** All states and the District of Columbia require LPNs to pass the licensing examination, NCLEX-PN, after completing a state-approved nursing program.  
**Wage:** \$16.00/hour

**Medical Assistants** perform administrative and clinical tasks to keep the offices of physicians, podiatrists, chiropractors, and other health practitioners running smoothly.  
**Training required:** Most employers prefer graduates of formal programs in medical assistance. Such programs are offered at vocational-technical high schools, postsecondary vocational schools, and community and junior colleges.  
**Wage:** \$12.00/hour

**Dental Assistants** perform a variety of patient care, office, and laboratory duties. They work chair side as dentists examine and treat patients. They make patients as comfortable as possible in the dental chair, prepare them for treatment, and obtain

their dental records.  
**Training required:** Most assistants learn their skills on the job, although an increasing number are trained in dental-assistance programs offered by community and junior colleges, trade schools, technical institutes, or the Armed Forces.  
**Wage:** \$14.00/hour

**Home Health Aides** provide health-related services to the elderly, convalescent, or disabled persons living in their own homes instead of in a health-care facility. Under the direction of nursing or medical staff, they provide health-related services, such as administering oral medications.  
**Training required:** Usually, the only requirement for employment is on-the-job training, which generally is provided by employers. Some situations may require formal training which is available from community colleges, vocational schools, elder care programs, and home health-care agencies.  
**Wage:** \$9.00/hour

**Pharmacy Technicians** help licensed pharmacists provide medications and other health-care products to

patients. Technicians usually perform routine tasks such as counting tablets and labeling bottles to help prepare prescribed medication for patients.  
**Training required:** Although most pharmacy technicians receive informal on-the-job training, employers favor those who have completed formal training and are certified.  
**Wage:** \$22.00/hour

**Dental Hygienists** remove soft and hard deposits from teeth, teach patients how to practice good oral hygiene, and provide other preventive dental care. Hygienists examine patients' teeth and gums and record diseases or abnormalities.  
**Training required:** Dental hygienists must be licensed by the state in which they practice. To qualify for licensure, a candidate must graduate from an accredited dental hygiene school and pass both a written and clinical examination.  
**Wage:** \$28.00/hour

**Medical Records and Health Information Technicians** organize and evaluate medical records for completeness. Technicians

assemble patients' health information, make sure that the patients' initial medical charts and forms are completed, properly identified and signed, and inputted in the computer.  
**Training required:** Medical records and health information technicians entering the field usually have an Associate Degree from a community or junior college.  
**Wage:** \$12.00/hour

**Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists** examine and analyze body fluids and cells. They look for bacteria, parasites, and other microorganisms; analyze the chemical content of fluids; match blood for transfusions; and test for drug levels in the blood to show how a patient is responding to treatment.  
**Training required:** The preferred requirement for an entry-level clinical laboratory technologist is a Bachelor's Degree with a major in medical technology or in one of the life sciences. A combination of education, on-the-job, and specialized training may also qualify you for this position.  
**Wage:** \$18.00/hour



## What Do Healthcare Occupations Pay?

As in most industries, earnings in healthcare will vary based on the duties as well as the level of education and training required. Average earnings in healthcare, for example, will be higher in hospitals due to the number of positions requiring higher levels of education and training. Earnings can also be affected by the size and location of the facility. For example, salaries are typically higher in large hospitals and group practices than in small clinics.

For a complete breakdown of wages and salaries by occupation, visit [www.dcnetworks.org](http://www.dcnetworks.org)



### The Healthcare Industry is Growing

The maturing baby boomer population has caused an increase in older age groups with greater than average healthcare needs. For this reason, jobs in healthcare are growing in the District and the surrounding area. Between 2002-2012, significant growth is predicted for medical assistants, home health aides and nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants in the medical support services.

### Hospitals will be Impacted

Although job opportunities in hospitals are plentiful now, that may not be the case in the future as the demand for healthcare services is moving away from hospitals to homes and rehabilitative nursing facilities. Still, the largest number of positions available in healthcare will be in hospitals due to their large number of employees.

### Did You Know?

- **Healthcare jobs requiring all levels of education and training will increase and continue to be in demand.**
- **Specialized training is required in many healthcare positions and will be an asset for many administrative positions.**
- **In-home healthcare growth will occur in the residential care and nursing fields.**
- **Registered nurses and medical records and health information technicians will experience strong growth within the healthcare practitioner and technology sector.**



**These are the healthcare jobs  
that are growing the most in  
Washington, D.C.:**

**Washington, D.C.: Top 10  
Occupational Projections 2000-2010  
(By Employment Change)**



Healthcare-Related Occupations	Projected Employment 2010	Total 2002-2010 Employment change
Registered Nurses	10,573	832
Medical Assistants	2,179	430
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	4,081	423
Home Health Aides	1,155	220
Physician Assistants	374	85
Pharmacy Technicians	679	66
Audiologists	376	65
Dental Assistants	517	62
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	617	60
Speech Language Pathologists	410	59
Dental Hygienists	369	45
Occupational Therapists	373	38
Surgical Technologists and Technicians	267	10

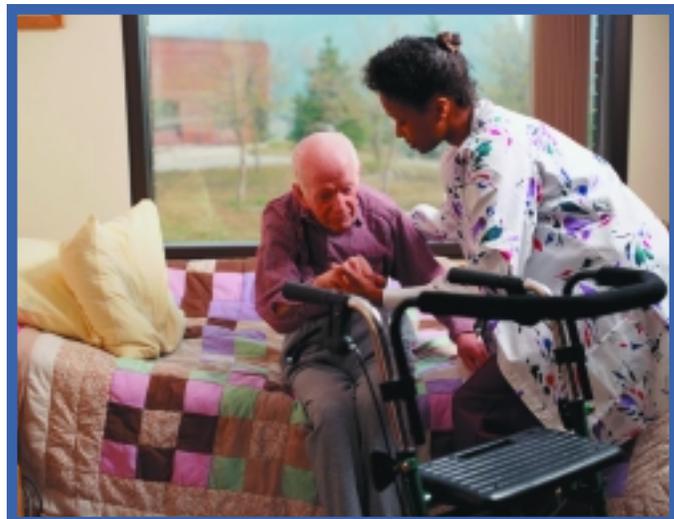
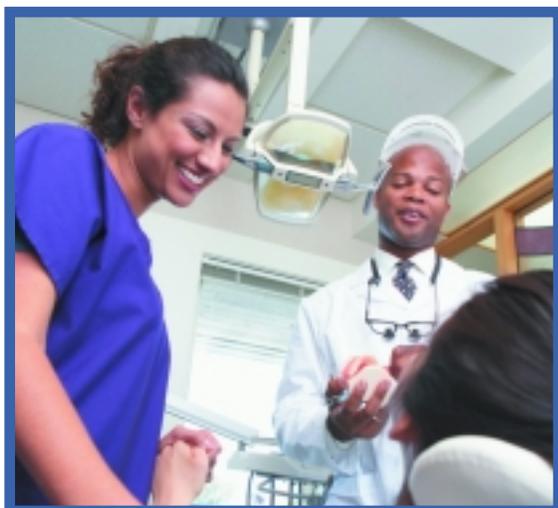
Source: Department of Employment Services

**Southern Maryland: Top 10 Occupational Projections 2000-2010 (By Employment Change)**



Healthcare-Related Occupations	Projected Employment 2010	Total 2002-2010 Employment change
Registered Nurses	18,890	7,790
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	11,690	3,432
Medical Assistants	5,160	1,700
Dental Assistants	3,750	1,120
LVN/LPN	4,090	1,100
Home Health Aides	3,020	880
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	2,010	780
Pharmacy Technicians	2,160	660
Dental Hygienists	1,660	560
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	1,550	440

Source: Greater Washington Board of Trade Healthcare Task Force



**Commonwealth of Virginia: Top 10 Occupational Projections 2000-2010 (By Employment Change)**



Healthcare-Related Occupations	Projected Employment 2010	Total 2002-2010 Employment change
Registered Nurses	55,671	11,256
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	31,774	6,889
Medical Assistants	10,248	4,113
Home Health Aides	11,901	3,921
Dental Assistants	18,331	3,453
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	5,404	3,040
Dental Hygienists	4,514	1,851
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	5,407	1,500
Pharmacy Technicians	4,756	1,126
Radiology Technologists and Technicians	3,714	891

Source: Greater Washington Board of Trade Healthcare Task Force



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Note: The statistics in this publication may change with receipt of additional information.

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In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Official Code Section 2-1401.01 et seq., (Act) the District of Columbia does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, disability, source of income, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.

The Department of Employment Services is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Provider. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities.