



Health Careers

ILLINOIS
AHEC
network

About Illinois AHEC

The Illinois AHEC Network works to improve the supply, distribution and quality of health care professionals in Illinois. It improves health care for the underserved by promoting health careers to students, enriching learning environments for current students, and providing professional development opportunities.



Our regional centers partner with universities and health care organizations, encouraging collaboration and advancing local solutions to health care problems. These activities support our overall goal of achieving an equitable distribution of health professionals and services throughout all Illinois communities and regions.

About Illinois AHEC

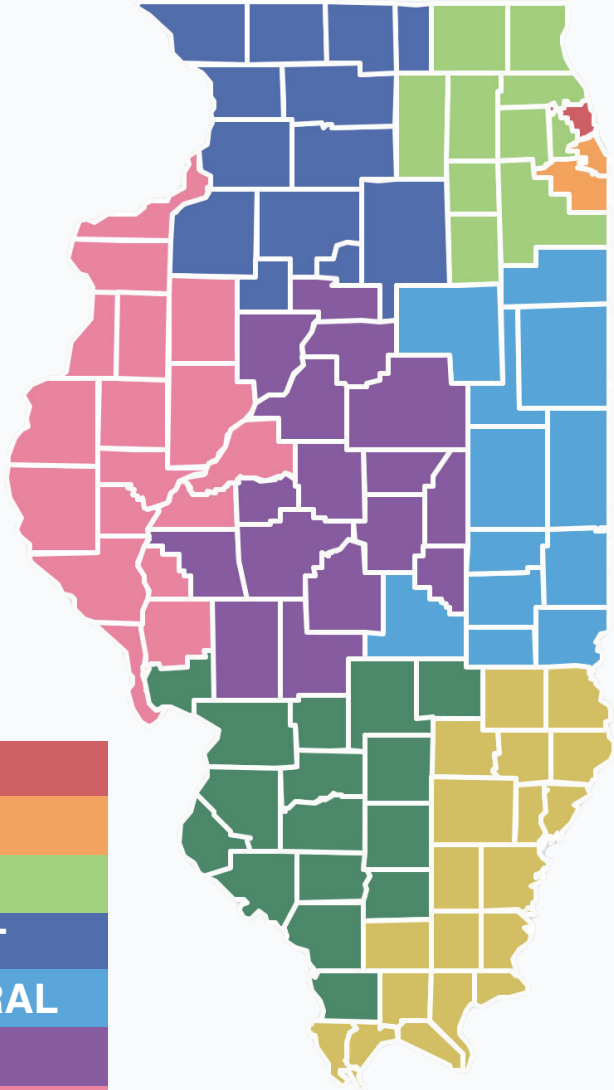


Early preparation – Opportunities to observe health professionals at work and having exposure to possibilities can set elementary and high school students on the path to a rewarding career.

Higher education – The undergraduate years are pivotal in preparation for many clinical careers, and bachelor's level preparation can open the door to many fields. Some health careers require graduate degrees or advanced clinical degrees. In Illinois, our underserved rural and urban communities are in dire need of primary care clinicians, dentists, psychiatrists, and physical therapists. Behavioral health needs often go unmet, a situation that will only be addressed by training more professionals with appropriate expertise.

Unique programs and opportunities – Throughout the state, our partner hospitals and organizations passionately work on the front lines of health care delivery and access. The National Center for Rural Health Professions, the Rural Medical Education program and the Urban Medicine Program provide unrivaled opportunities for those aspiring to work in areas of acute need. Illinois AHEC recognizes the importance of population health and a public health perspective and maintains an urban program office at the UIC School of Public Health.

Serving the community – Our programs offer enrichment and new opportunities to community health workers, working professionals, job seekers, school personnel, employers and the communities they serve. Many of our partner organizations provide healthcare services while our AHEC network nurtures a new generation of health professionals and public health experts.



- CHICAGO
- CHICAGO
- NORTHEAST
- NORTHWEST
- EAST CENTRAL
- CENTRAL
- WEST CENTRAL
- SOUTHEAST
- SOUTH CENTRAL

Accountant

Posts entries to the general ledger, prepares financial statements, completes bank reconciliations, monitors daily cashing and posting activities, analyzes variances in general ledger balances, completes financial surveys, can process accounts payable and refund checks.

Education/Training:

Bachelor's degree in Accounting

Median salary: \$79,880

Support Staff:

Indirect contact with patients



Accounting Clerk

Processes accounts payable checks, refund checks, and statistical reporting. Knowledge in Excel is required. May be cross trained in completing payroll.

Education/Training:

Associate's degree in Accounting preferred

Median Salary: \$47,440

Support Staff:

Indirect contact with patients



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Athletic Trainer

*Keep athletes rehabilitated and injury free.
Assess and treat sports injuries.*

Education/Training:

At least Bachelor's degree; Most have Master's degree / 4-6 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$57,930

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Audiologist

Experts in hearing and balance. Prescribe hearing aids and other assistive devices.

Education/Training:

Doctorate degree / 8 years postsecondary education

Median salary: \$87,740

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients

Certified Medical Assistant

Complete administrative and clinical tasks, such as scheduling appointments and taking patients' vital signs.

Education/Training:

Certificate

Median Salary: \$42,000

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Chiropractor

Use natural, nonsurgical health treatments, such as heat, ultrasound, massage, light, diet, water, exercise, and rest. Postural and spinal analysis involving correct alignment of the vertebrae.

Education/Training:

Doctorate degree / 7-8 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$87,740

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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Clinical Lab Scientist / Medical Lab Technologist

Analyze human blood, tissues, and body fluid using complex tests. Provide data to help physician's determine treatment of patients.

Education/Training:

Bachelor's degree / 4 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$71,448

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Clinical Lab Technician / Medical Lab Technician

Analyze human blood, tissues, and body fluid using routine tests. Provide data to help physician's determine treatment of patients.

Education/Training:

Associate's degree / 2 years postsecondary education

Median salary: \$60,780

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients

Community Health Worker

Advocate for residents' needs with healthcare providers and social service organizations. They implement wellness strategies by collecting data and discussing health concerns with members of specific populations.

Education/Training:

High school diploma / Certification may be required

Median Salary: \$48,200

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



CT/MRI Tech

CT techs use computerized tomography (CT) scanners to produce cross-section images of patients' internal organs and tissues MRI techs operate magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanners to create diagnostic images.

Education/Training:

Associate's degree / 2-4 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$76,020

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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Dental Assistant

Schedule appointments, keep records, send bills, order supplies, and other tasks to help the dentist. Assist with treatment and laboratory procedures.

Education/Training:

Certificate / Up to 1 year postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$46,540

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Dental Hygienist

Assess oral tissues and overall oral health. Remove plaque, apply cavity-preventing agents, and other procedures.

Education/Training:

Bachelor's degree, or Master's degree / 2-6 years postsecondary education

Median salary: \$87,530

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients

Dentist

Help people maintain overall oral health. Examine, diagnose, and treat diseases and injuries of teeth and gums.

Education/Training:

Doctor of Dental Surgery or Doctor of Medicine in Dentistry / 8 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$170,910

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Dietary Aide/Cook

Prepares, cooks, and portions food from established recipes, formulas and menu cycles within applicable regulations for all customers including those on therapeutic diets. Ensures proper temperatures and sanitation standards are adhered to during preparation, cooking, serving, and cooling; documenting evidence supporting this. Operates and monitors condition of commercial cooking equipment and appliances.

Education/Training:

High School Diploma, on-the-job training, food sanitation certification

Median Salary: \$32,420

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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Dietitian

Assess nutritional needs of patients. Design nutrition programs to protect health, prevent allergic reactions, and help people avoid symptoms of disease.

Education/Training:

Bachelor's degree or Master's degree / 4-5 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$69,680

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Paramedic

Come to help when a person calls 911 and needs assistance. Assess appropriate medical treatment, provide emergency and non-emergency medical care and transport patients to medical facilities.

Education/Training:

Specialized courses / A few weeks (EMT-B) up to 2 years (paramedic) postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$44,780

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients

Environmental Health Scientist / Specialist

Assesses and mitigates environmental hazards that can impact human health, such as pollution, chemical exposure, and infectious diseases. They conduct research, inspections, and develop policies to ensure safe and healthy living and working environments.

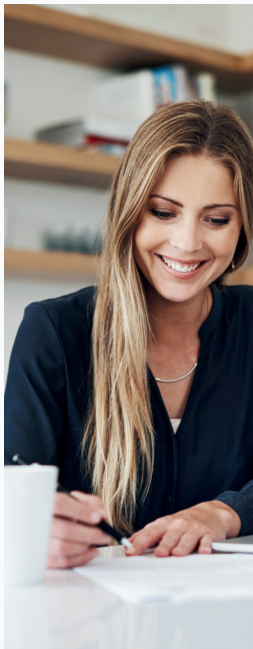
Education/Training:

Bachelor's degree or Master's degree / 4-5 years postsecondary education and some certifications or specialized courses

Median salary: \$78,980

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Health Care Administrator/ Health Services Manager

A Healthcare Administrator is a professional who directs the operations of a hospital. They're not directly involved in patient interactions on an everyday basis, but their jobs include shaping policy and making decisions that impact how well healthcare organizations can provide service to patients. Duties include managing department leaders, ensure the hospital upholds program standards, and overseeing budgets and financial performance.

Education/Training:

Bachelor's degree or Master's degree

Median Salary: \$110,680

Front Line:

Some Direct contact with patients



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Health Educator

Provide and manage health education programs. Develop, implement, and evaluate effective public health initiatives.

Education/Training:

Most have at least Master's degree/ 6 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$62,860

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars

Manage and analyze patient data, ensuring accuracy, accessibility, and security of health information systems. They play a crucial role in maintaining electronic health records (EHRs) and support healthcare providers by organizing and coding medical information for research, billing, and regulatory compliance.

Education/Training:

Bachelor's degree / 4 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$62,990

Support Staff:

Indirect contact with patients

Home Health and Personal Care Aids

Monitor the condition of people with disabilities or chronic illnesses and help them with daily living activities.

Education/Training:

High School diploma or equivalent

Median salary: \$33,530

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Housekeeper

A hospital housekeeper, also known as a janitor, custodian, cleaner or environmental services (EVS) technician, cleans and disinfects various areas of a hospital, including patient rooms, waiting rooms, restrooms, surgical areas, cafeterias, offices and other spaces. Cleaning patient rooms, bathrooms, and public areas, including dusting, vacuuming and washing windows; Disinfecting surfaces and equipment, using appropriate cleaning agents, and following infection control protocols; Changing bed linens and making beds in patient rooms; Maintaining an infection-free environment throughout the hospital; and trash removal.

Education/Training:

High School Diploma, On-the-job training

Median Salary: \$35,020

Support Staff:

Indirect contact with patients



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IT Technician

Providing assistance/support to staff utilizing a wide variety of software applications in a complex PC/Internet Server environment. Responds to inquiries and requests for assistance w/ the hospital's computer systems, troubleshoots and provides advice to assist users. Installs and supports various computer equipment and software. Performs basic diagnostic testing.

Education/Training:

Associates or Bachelor's degree /
2-4 years

Median Salary: \$60,810

Support Staff:

Indirect contact with patients



Maintenance Technician

Assist in the performance of duties necessary to keep the physical structure and equipment within the facility in good repair. Duties include preventative maintenance, work orders, plumbing, carpentry, electrical repairs and building repairs with the facility, as well as grounds maintenance, snow and ice removal.

Education/Training:

Secondary Education

Median salary: \$46,700

Support Staff:

Indirect contact with patients

Medical Assistant

Routine administrative and clinical tasks. Take medical histories, prepare patients for examination, handle medical records, schedule appointments.

Education/Training:

Certificate or Associate's degree / 1-2 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$42,000

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Medical Biller

Submission of claims to insurance companies for payment in an efficient manner to maintain cash flow and to maintain acceptable days outstanding in accounts receivable. Monitors claim denials and submits appeals.

Education/Training:

High School diploma, certification courses

Median Salary: \$47,070

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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Medical Coding

Responsible for reviewing a patient's medical records after a visit and translating the information into codes that insurers use to process claims from patients. Their duties include confirming treatments with medical staff, identifying missing information and submitting forms to insurers for reimbursement.

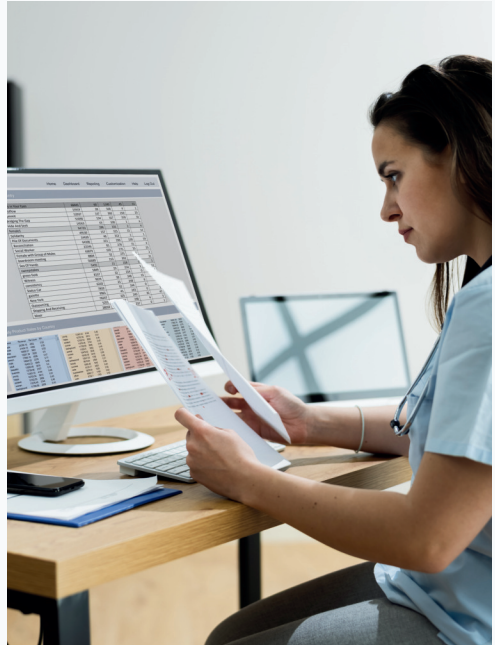
Education/Training:

Certificate/Diploma or Associate's degree

Median Salary: \$48,780

Support Staff:

Indirect contact with patients



Medical Record Manager

Managing medical records systems and personnel. Verifying the completeness and accuracy of patient records. Ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Maintaining confidentiality of patient medical information. Analyzing and evaluating the effectiveness of medical records systems.

Education/Training:

Bachelor's degree, Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) Certification

Median salary: \$42,683

Support Staff:

Indirect contact with patients

Medical Record Technician

Create, collect, and maintain patient records. Ensuring accurate and organized patient records are provided to healthcare providers promptly for coordination of patient care. Responding to medical record requests by insurance companies and other third parties.

Education/Training:

Certificate/Diploma or Associate's degree

Median salary: \$42,683

Support Staff:

Indirect contact with patients



Medical Transcriptionist

Listen to voice recordings that physicians and other healthcare workers make and convert them into written reports. They also may review and edit medical documents created using speech recognition technology.

Education/Training:

Certificate / Postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$37,060

Support Staff:

Indirect contact with patients



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Microbiologist

Study relationships between organisms and disease and effects of antibiotics. Investigate characteristics of bacteria, other microscopic organisms.

Education/Training:

At least Bachelor's degree; many have Doctorate degree / 4-8 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$85,470

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Nursing: Nurse (RN)

Observe, assess, and record symptoms, reaction, and progress. Develop and manage nursing care plans and instruct patients and their families in proper care. May work within a variety of specialty options.

Education/Training:

Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, or Diploma / 2-4 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$86,070

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients

Nursing: Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

Provide basic care for patients in hospitals and long-term care facilities. CNA responsibilities include helping patients bathe and maintain proper hygiene, feeding patients, helping with mobility needs, bathing and dressing patients, and assessing vital signs.

Education/Training:

Certificate / A few weeks postsecondary education

Median salary: \$38,130

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Nursing: Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)

Take vital signs, treat bedsores, prepare and give injections, and other hands-on procedures.

Education/Training:

Specialized program / 1 year postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$59,730

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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Nursing: Nurse Anesthetist

Safely provide anesthesia care to surgical, obstetrical, and trauma patients.

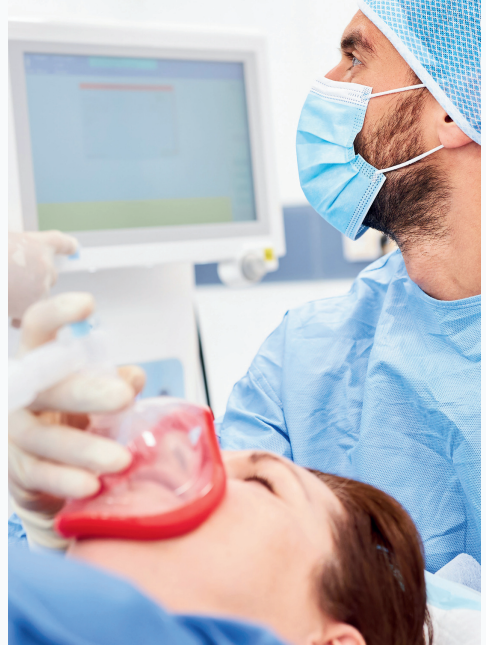
Education/Training:

Master's degree / 6-7 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$129,480

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Nursing: Nurse Practitioner (NP)

Nurse Practitioners typically work for various healthcare settings, including healthcare clinics, hospitals or private practices, and have the opportunity to specialize in areas like women's health, family health, pediatric health, behavioral health and more. They provide primary care to patients, diagnose and treat acute, episodic, or chronic illness.

Education/Training:

Master's degree / 6-8 years

Median Salary: \$126,260?

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients

Nuclear Medicine Technologist

Prepare and administer radioactive drugs for imaging or treatment.

Education/Training:

Associate's degree

Median salary: \$92,500

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Occupational Therapist (OT)

Treat injured, ill, or disabled patients with therapeutic use of everyday activities. Provide intervention to improve patient's ability to perform daily activities.

Education/Training:

Master's degree; Doctorate degree / 5-8 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$96,370

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA)

Assist occupational therapists in providing treatments and procedures.

Education/Training:

Associate's degree / 2 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$65,450

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Ophthalmic Technician

Assist ophthalmologists with clinical functions. Take medical histories and perform vision and diagnostic tests.

Education/Training:

On the job training or an accredited training program / 0-2 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$44,640

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients

Optician

Help fit eyeglasses and contact lenses, following prescriptions from ophthalmologists and optometrists.

Education/Training:

High School diploma or equivalent

Median salary: \$44,170

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Optometrist

Give eye exams and write prescriptions for eyeglasses and contact lenses. Treat diseases, injuries, or disorders of the eyes.

Education/Training:

Doctorate degree in Optometry / 8 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$131,860

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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Patient Financial Counselor/Collections

Handle collections on unpaid accounts, work with patients on payment plans, process financial assistance applications, and submit reports to external collection agencies. May also help with point of service collections.

Education/Training:

High School diploma, certification courses

Median salary: \$44,170

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Pharmacist

Dispense drugs prescribed by physicians and provide information to patients about medications. Advise physicians on which medications should be used and possible side effects.

Education/Training:

Doctorate degree in Pharmacy / 6-8 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$136,030

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients

Pharmacy Technician

Prepare medications under direction of pharmacist.

Education/Training:

Diploma, Certificate, or Associate's degree / 0-2 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$40,300

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Phlebotomist

Collect samples of blood and other fluids from patients.

Education/Training:

Certificate / Up to 1 year postsecondary education

Median salary: \$41,810

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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Physical Therapist (PT)

Plan rehabilitative programs to improve mobility, relieve pain, increase strength, and improve disabling conditions resulting from disease or injury.

Education/Training:

Doctor of Physical Therapy degree / 6-7 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$99,710

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Physician (MD or DO)

Examine patients, and order, perform, and interpret diagnostic tests. Provide emergency care, perform surgery, and care for patients with injuries and life-threatening illnesses. Choose a specialty from a wide variety of options.

Education/Training:

Medical Doctor or Doctor of Osteopathic / 8 years postsecondary education, plus residency, which varies in length of years depending on specialty

Median Salary: \$239,200

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients

Physician Assistant

Practice medicine on teams with physicians, surgeons, and other healthcare workers.

Education/Training:

Master's degree

Median Salary: \$130,020

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Podiatrist

Provide medical and surgical care for people with foot, ankle and lower leg problems.

Education/Training:

Doctoral degree or Professional degree

Median salary: \$141,650

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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Psychiatric Aide and Technician

Care for people who have mental illness and developmental disabilities.

Education/Training:

Postsecondary certificate

Median Salary: \$39,610

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Psychologist

Treat patients with mental and emotional problems. Study the behaviors that affect the mental and emotional health and mental functioning of human beings.

Education/Training:

Doctorate degree / 6-8 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$92,740

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients

Radiologic Technologist

Perform diagnostic imaging procedures. May specialize in specific techniques such as CT, mammography, MRI, or sonography.

Education/Training:

Associate's degree / 2-4 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$76,020

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Radiation Therapist

Administer doses of radiation to patients who have cancer or other serious diseases.

Education/Training:

Associate's degree

Median salary: \$98,300

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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Recreational Therapist

Plan, direct, and coordinate recreation-based treatment program for people with disabilities, injuries, or illnesses.

Education/Training:
Bachelor's Degree

Median Salary: \$57,120

Front Line:
Direct contact with patients



Registration / Reception

Whether working in a Hospital or Clinic setting, registration/reception clerks are responsible for greeting/welcoming patients, gathering and verifying patient information in an accurate manner, registering patients and checking their eligibility for treatment or services, point of service collection of patient co-pays/deductibles/co-insurance, and in some cases communication with insurance companies on prior authorization of patient services.

Education/Training:
High School Diploma, On-the-job training

Median Salary: \$35,840

Front Line:
Direct contact with patients

Respiratory Therapist

Assess, treat, and care for patients with temporary or chronic respiratory conditions like asthma, COPD, pneumonia, bronchitis or emphysema. Their duties include interviewing patients and completing diagnostic tests to determine their respiratory conditions, communicating with Physicians and Nurses to develop patient treatment plans and administering respiratory treatments to patients based on their conditions.

Education/Training:

Associate's degree or Bachelor's degree / 2-4 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$77,960

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)

Study human communication disorders. Assess and treat people with speech, language, voice, and fluency disorders.

Education/Training:

Master's degree / 6 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$89,290

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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Sonographer

Use specialized equipment to generate images used for assessing and diagnosing medical conditions. May earn certifications for specialty options.

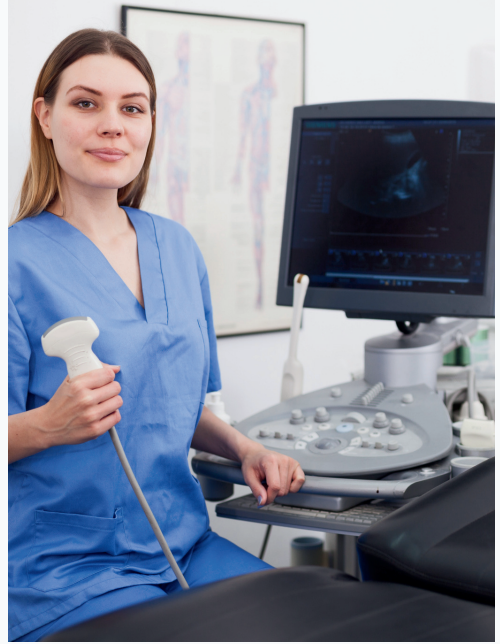
Education/Training:

Associate's degree/ 2 years postsecondary education

Median salary: \$80,850

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Social Worker

Help people solve and cope with problems in their everyday lives. Clinical social workers can diagnose and treat mental, behavioral, and emotional issues.

Education/Training:

Some have Bachelor's degree, but most have Master's degree for clinical positions / 4-6 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$58,380

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients

Surgical Technologist

Assist in operations, under the supervision of surgeons, nurses, or other surgical personnel. Set up operating room, prepare and transport patients, pass instruments, and other tasks to assist with surgery.

Education/Training:

Certificate or Associate's degree / 1-2 years postsecondary education

Median Salary: \$60,370

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



Veterinarian

Diagnose, treat, and research diseases and injuries of animals.

Education/Training:

Veterinary school / 8 years postsecondary education

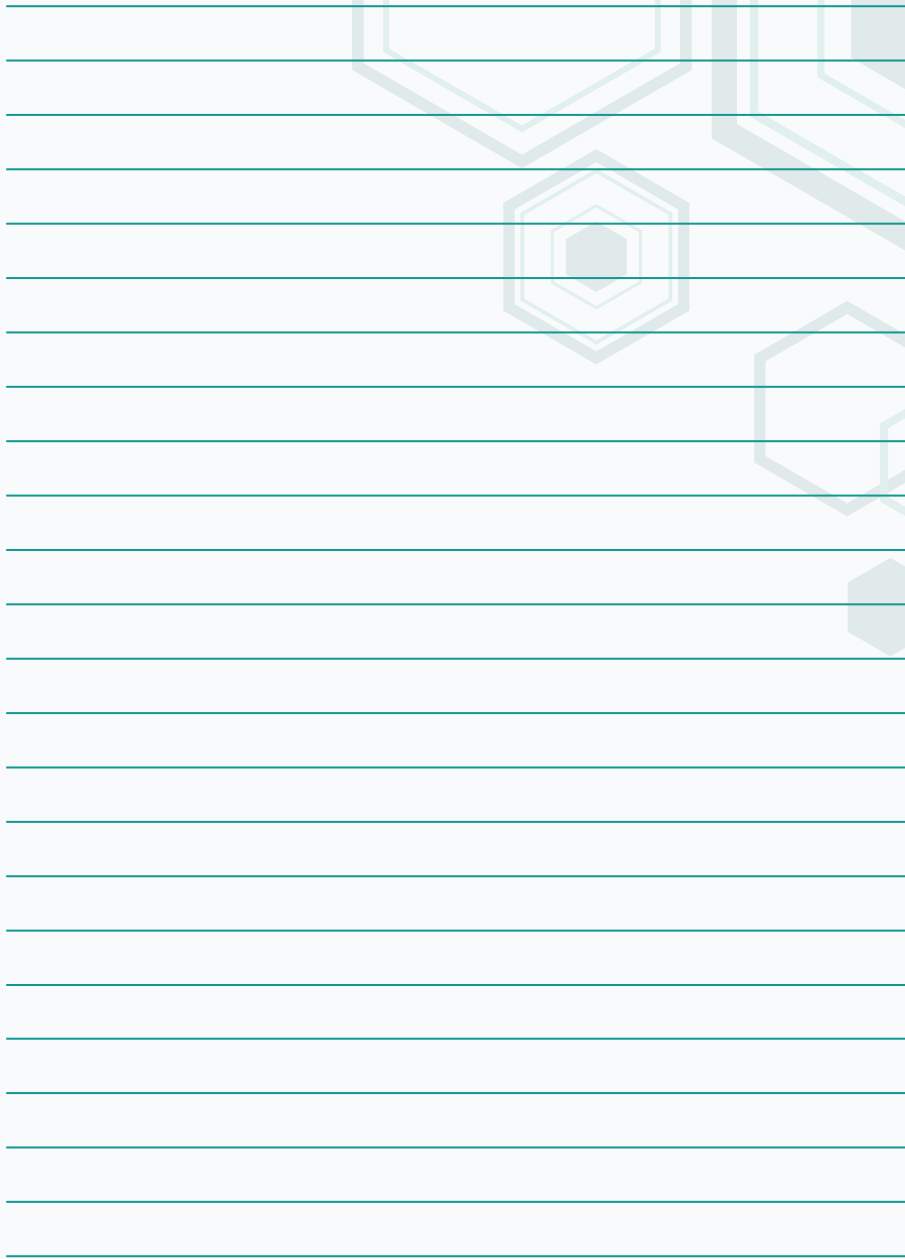
Median Salary: \$119,100

Front Line:

Direct contact with patients



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