

Explore Health Careers

The following sections have been taken from www.explorehealthcareers.org.

Allied Health Professions

The allied health professions fall into two broad categories: (1) Technicians and (2) Therapists/Technologists. Technicians are trained to perform procedures, and their education lasts less than two years. They are required to work under the supervision of technologists or therapists. This part of the allied health field includes physical therapy assistants, medical laboratory technicians, radiological technicians, occupational therapy assistants, recreation therapy assistants, and respiratory therapy technicians.

- Athletic Training
- Audiology
- Cardiovascular Perfusion Technology
- Cytotechnology
- Dental Hygiene
- Diagnostic Medical Sonography
- Dietetics
- Emergency Medical Sciences
- Health Administration
- Health Information Management
- Medical Technology
- Nuclear Medicine Technology
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Physician Assistant
- Radiation Therapy Technology
- Radiography
- Rehabilitation Counseling
- Respiratory Therapy
- Respiratory Therapy Technology
- Speech-Language Pathology

Arts and Humanities in Health

The arts and humanities can be good preparation for a health care career because a bachelor's degree in the arts and humanities gives you practical skills in communication, creative expression, and analytical thinking.

- Art Therapist
- Medical Historian
- Medical Illustrator/Animator
- Medical Librarian

Chiropractic Medicine

Chiropractic medicine focuses on the relationship between the body's main structures – the skeleton, the muscles, and the nerves – and the patient's health. Chiropractors believe that health can be improved and preserved by making adjustments to these structures, particularly to the spinal column. They do not prescribe drugs or perform surgical procedures, although they do refer patients for these services if they are medically indicated.

Once derided by the mainstream medical community, chiropractic medicine has become a well-recognized and highly respected health care field. Chiropractic services are covered by health insurance, including Medicare, and chiropractors are bound by the same regulations and ethics as allopathic doctors (M.D.) and osteopathic doctors (D.O.).

Dentistry

Today's dentists are highly sophisticated health professionals who provide a wide range of oral health care that contributes to the general health and quality of their patients' lives. They are at the forefront of a range of new developments in dental implants, computer-generated imaging, cosmetic and aesthetic procedures.

- Dentist
- Dental Assistant
- Dental Hygienist
- Dental Laboratory Technician

Environmental Health

Environmental health professionals work to improve public health by identifying, tracking, and addressing environmental risk factors. For more info: <http://www.aehap.org/>

- Environmental Health Advocate
- Environmental Health Practitioner
- Food Safety Specialist
- Occupational Health and Safety Expert

Forensic Science

Forensic scientists use chemistry, physics, biology, mathematics and even psychology to help protect people, serve justice and promote better public health. In addition to working with law enforcement to help solve crimes, forensic scientists investigate and collect data on employee drug use, doping by athletes and environmental contamination for public use. For more info:

<http://www.aafs.org/students/choosing-a-career/>

- Crime Science Investigator
- Forensic Biologist
- Forensic Chemist
- Forensic Odontology
- Forensic Pathology
- Forensic Toxicologist

Geriatrics

Geriatrics is the medical field dedicated to the care of older adults. Physicians, nurses, pharmacists, social workers, mental health professionals, and many other health professionals may choose to specialize in geriatrics. Health care workers who care for older adults often work as a team, providing comprehensive care for patients, their caregivers, and other family members.

- Audiologist
- Dental Lab Technician
- Dietitian
- Geriatric Pharmacist
- Geriatric Psychiatrist
- Geriatric Staff Nurse
- Geriatrician
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Physician Assistant
- Podiatrist
- Social Worker

Health Administration and Management

Unlike clinicians, health administrators or managers do not deal directly with patients on a day-to-day basis. Instead, they help to shape policy, make needed changes and lead our nation's health-related organizations in a way that serves individual patients by helping to improve the healthcare system. Most health administrators work long hours. Since the facilities they manage (nursing homes, hospitals, clinics, etc.) operate around the clock, a manager may be called at all hours to deal with issues. Some travel also is involved in this field, since managers may need to inspect satellite facilities, attend meetings, etc.

Healthcare managers work in a variety of settings, including hospital and health systems management, medical groups, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, care management organizations, health information technology firms, supply chain companies, government/policy organizations, investment banks, health insurers and healthcare management consulting firms. Some graduates may also work with large corporations directing their health and benefits programs.

Informatics

People who work in medical informatics are highly educated in both information science and healthcare. They understand how to acquire, store, protect, retrieve, and use a wide range of information about health and medicine. They understand the "ins and outs" of computerized and non-

computerized information systems and are familiar with clinical guidelines, workflows, and medical terminology. Informaticians work in various occupational settings, including hospitals, health systems, clinics, ambulatory and extended-care facilities, academic institutions, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, vendor and consulting firms, and private practice. For more info: <https://www.amia.org>

- Clinical Informatics
- Clinical Research Informatics (including data mining, knowledge representation and discovery, natural language processing)
- Consumer Health Informatics
- Dental Informatics
- Mental Health Informatics
- Veterinary Informatics
- Nursing Informatics
- Pharmacy Informatics
- Primary Care Informatics
- Public Health/Population Informatics
- Telemedicine and Mobile Computing Informatics
- Translational Bioinformatics

Medicine

Physicians (M.D.s/D.O.s) diagnose illness and injury, prescribe and administer treatment, and advise patients about how to prevent and manage disease. There are two paths to becoming a doctor: allopathic medicine, which leads to an M.D. (medical doctor), or osteopathic medicine, which leads to a D.O. (doctor of osteopathic medicine).

- Medical Doctor (M.D)
- Biogerontologist
- Clinical Ethicist
- Disaster Medical Specialist
- Osteopathic Physician (O.D.)
- Pathologist
- Physician Assistant

Mental Health

Mental health is a broad field with a wide range of career choices. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.” Recent studies suggest that positive mental health is positively associated with better physical health. Working with individuals and/or groups of all ages, health professionals in this field help children, adolescents, and adults deal with a variety of life stresses and problems, including addiction/substance abuse; problems with self-esteem; aging-related mental health issues; family, parenting or marital problems; grief, anger or depression; and other emotional or behavioral issues.

- Professional Counselors
- Psychiatric Nurses
- Psychiatrists
- Psychologists
- Social Workers

Nursing

Nurses promote health, prevent disease and help patients cope with illness. They have a unique scope of practice and can practice independently, although they also collaborate with all members of the healthcare team to provide the care needed by each patient as an individual. Nurses are hands-on health professionals who provide focused and highly personalized care. The field has a wide range of career opportunities, ranging from entry-level practitioner to doctoral-level researcher.

- Advanced Practice Registered Nurse
- Ambulatory Care Nurse
- Camp Nurse
- Cardiac Care Nurse
- Cardiac Cath Lab Nurse
- Case Management Nurse
- Clinical Nurse Leader
- Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Correctional Facility Nurse
- Critical Care Nurse
- Dermatology Nurse
- Developmental Disability Nurse
- Diabetes Nurse
- Domestic Violence Nurse
- Emergency Nurse
- Family Nurse Practitioner
- Flight/Transport Nurse
- Forensic Nurse
- Gastroenterology Nurse
- Genetics Nurse
- Geriatric Nurse
- Gerontological Nurse Practitioner
- Health Policy Nurse
- Hematology Nurse
- HIV/AIDS Care Nurse
- Holistic Nurse
- Home Health Care Nurse
- Hospice Nurse
- Independent Nurse Contractor
- Infection Control Nurse
- Informatics Nurse
- Infusion Nurse
- International Nurse
- Labor and Delivery Nurse
- Lactation Consultant
- Legal Nurse Consultant
- Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN)
- Long-term Care Nurse
- Managed Care Nurse
- Military Nurse
- Missionary Nurse
- Neonatal Intensive Care Nurse
- Nephrology Nurse
- Neuroscience Nurse
- Nurse Anesthetist
- Nurse Attorney
- Nurse Life Care Planner
- Nurse Researcher
- Nurse Advocate
- Nurse Entrepreneur
- Nurse Executive
- Nurse Manager
- Nursing Quality Improvement
- Nurse Writer, Author or Historian
- Occupational Health Nurse
- Oncology Nurse (cancer nurse)
- Ophthalmic Nurse
- Orthopaedic Nurse
- Otorhinolaryngology Nurse (head and neck nurse)
- Pain Management Nurse
- Parish Nurse
- Pediatric Endocrinology Nurse
- Pediatric Nurse Practitioner
- Perianesthesia Nurse (Recovery Room Nurse)
- Perinatal Nurse
- Plastic Surgery Nurse
- Poison Information Specialist
- Psychiatric Nurse
- Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner
- Public Health Nurse
- Pulmonary Care Nurse (respiratory nurse)
- Radiology Nurse
- Rehabilitation Nurse
- Reproductive Nurse
- Rheumatology Nurse
- School Nurse
- Sub-Acute Nurse
- Substance Abuse Nurse
- Supplemental Nurse
- Telemetry Nurse
- Telephone Triage Nurse
- Toxicology Nurse
- Transcultural Nurse
- Transplant Nurse
- Trauma Nurse
- Travel Nurse
- Urologic Nurse
- Veteran Affairs (VA) Nurse
- Wound and Ostomy Nurse

Nutrition and Dietetics

Dietetics is the science of how food and nutrition affect human health. The field of dietetics has a strong emphasis on public health and a commitment to educating all Americans about the importance of making proper dietary choices.

Dietitian Nutritionists use nutrition and food science to help people improve their health. Nutrition and dietetic technicians work with dietitian nutritionists to provide care and consultation to patients. Both dietitian nutritionists and nutrition and dietetic technicians may also provide general nutrition education. Both are nationally credentialed and are an integral part of health care and foodservice management teams.

Professionals in the field of Dietetics often focus their efforts on specific populations, facilities or initiatives, including:

- Designing individual nutritional therapies to address specific health issues, such as unhealthy weight, diabetes, or hypertension
- Developing facility-wide nutrition programs for health care, educational, correctional and other institutions
- Increasing public awareness of proper nutritional standards and habits
- Improving the accuracy and comprehension of food labels
- Ensuring the safety of our food supply
- Researching how changes in diet (such as reducing salt intake) affect health (by reducing blood pressure)
- Working with food manufacturers to improve the nutritional quality of prepared foods

Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy is a science-driven, evidence-based profession that helps people of all ages to recover from injury, disability or illness and participate in activities of daily living. For example, they might help young children with disabilities participate fully in school or support older adults coping with physical or cognitive decline.

Occupational Therapy services typically include:

- Customized treatment programs to improve the ability to perform daily activities
- Comprehensive home and job site evaluations with adaptation recommendations
- Performance skills assessments, treatment, and evaluation
- Adaptive equipment recommendations and usage training
- Task and activity modification training
- Guidance for family members and caregivers

Occupational Therapy practitioners practice from a holistic perspective, and actively integrate the client and their family in the therapy treatment plan. They emphasize adapting the environment to the specific needs of the client.

Optometry

Optometry is the field involving virtually everything that has to do with eyes and vision, including examination, diagnosis and treatment of the eyes and surrounding structures, and the treatment of vision problems.

Doctors of Optometry (ODs) are independent primary health care professionals for the eyes. They should not be confused with Ophthalmologists or Dispensing Opticians. Ophthalmologists are physicians who perform eye surgery, in addition to diagnosing and treating eye conditions. Dispensing Opticians fit eyeglasses and contact lenses, following prescriptions written by Ophthalmologists or Optometrists.

Pharmacy

Pharmacy is a doctoral health profession in which licensed professionals provide information about medications to patients and health care professionals. As "medication experts," pharmacists are concerned with safeguarding the public's health in matters relating to medication distribution and use and disease state management.

- Pharmaceutical Scientist
- Pharmacist
- Pharmacy Technician

Podiatric Medicine

Podiatric medicine is a branch of the medical sciences devoted to the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of foot disorders resulting from injury or disease. The human foot has a complex interrelation with the rest of the body, which means that it may be the first area to show signs of serious conditions such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Employment of doctors of Podiatric Medicine is projected to grow 14% from 2014 to 2024, faster than the average for all occupations, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In order to become a Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (D.P.M.), students must first earn a bachelor's degree and then apply to and be accepted at a college of Podiatric Medicine. The D.P.M. program is four years, with two years of classroom instruction and laboratory work, followed by clinical science courses and practical experience in college clinics, community clinics and accredited hospitals.

Public Health

Public health is the 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, in contrast to the medical model of care, which focuses more heavily on diagnosing and treating illnesses and conditions after they occur.

Public Health professionals analyze and develop programs that protect the health of individuals, families, and communities in the United States and abroad. The United States is placing a high priority on building up the nation's Public Health workforce.

There are over 20 major fields of study. The five core disciplines are:

- Behavioral Science/Health Education
- Biostatistics
- Environmental Health
- Epidemiology
- Health Services Administration

Sports Medicine

Sports Medicine focuses on helping people improve their athletic performance, recover from injury and prevent future injuries. It is a fast-growing healthcare field because health workers who specialize in sports medicine help all kinds of people, not just athletes. Sports medicine professionals treat amateur athletes, those who want better results from their exercise program, people who have suffered injuries and are trying to regain full function and those with disabilities who are trying to increase mobility and capability.

The field of sports medicine encompasses many different health careers, including:

- Athletic Trainer
- Exercise Physiologist
- Kinesiotherapist
- Nursing
- Nutrition/Dietetics
- Sports Medicine Physician (can be a D.O. or an M.D.)

The career path you take will depend on your interests, your educational goals and the environment in which you want to work. Many careers in this field require advanced degrees, and certification can improve your chances of landing a great job.

Veterinary Medicine

Veterinarians are best known for healing ill and injured animals and maintaining the health and well-being of pets and farm animals, but that's not all they do.

For instance, as more and more links are being found between human and animal diseases, such as SARS, mad cow disease, West Nile virus and avian flu, among others, Veterinarians are working alongside other medical professionals in public health and research.

Resources

- <https://www.bls.gov/>
- <http://www.careersinpublichealth.net/careers/>
- <https://explorehealthcareers.org/>
- <https://www.healthcarepathway.com/Health-Care-Careers/what-can-i-do-with.html>
- <http://www.publichealthonline.org/careers/>