

Middle-Wage Jobs Industry Data Series: HEALTH CARE



MIDDLE-WAGE JOB: Occupations requiring some training or education beyond high school, but not necessarily a 4-year degree, and paying a living wage.ⁱ

HEALTH CARE SECTORⁱⁱ: Combining medical technology and the human touch, the health care industry diagnoses, treats, and administers care around the clock, responding to the needs of millions of people – from newborns to the terminally ill.

HEALTH CARE OCCUPATIONSⁱⁱⁱ: Health care firms employ large numbers of workers in professional and service occupations. Professional occupations, such as physicians and surgeons, dentists, registered nurses, social workers, and physical therapists, usually require at least a bachelor's degree in a specialized field or higher education in a specific health field, although registered nurses also may enter through associate degree or diploma programs. Professional workers often have high levels of responsibility and complex duties. In addition to providing services, these workers may supervise other workers or conduct research. Some professional occupations, such as medical and health services managers, have little to no contact with patients.

Health technologists and technicians work in many fast-growing occupations, such as medical records and health information technicians, diagnostic medical sonographers, radiologic technologists and technicians, and dental hygienists. These workers may operate medical equipment and assist health diagnosing and treating practitioners. These technologists and technicians are typically graduates of 1-year or 2-year postsecondary training programs. Service occupations attract many workers with little or no specialized education or training. For instance, some of these workers are nursing aides, home health aides, building cleaning workers, dental assistants, medical assistants, and personal and home care aides. Nursing or home health aides provide health-related services for ill, injured, disabled, elderly, or infirm individuals either in institutions or in their homes. By providing routine personal care services, personal and home care aides help elderly, disabled, and ill persons live in their own homes instead of in an institution. With experience and, in some cases, further education and training, service workers may advance to higher-level positions or transfer to new occupations.

2010 MIDDLE-WAGE HEALTH CARE JOBS BY EARNINGS AND EDUCATION

The following occupations are identified as Health Care Jobs in Demand for Seattle-King County.[†]

Occupation	2010 Jobs	Current Median Hourly Earnings	Education Level
Registered nurses	12,925	\$37.45	Associate's degree
Radiation therapists	76	\$45.97	Associate's degree
Respiratory therapists	378	\$31.54	Associate's degree
Dental hygienists	694	\$46.33	Associate's degree
Cardiovascular technologists and technicians	121	\$33.64	Associate's degree
Diagnostic medical sonographers	306	\$38.79	Associate's degree
Nuclear medicine technologists	103	\$40.03	Associate's degree
Radiologic technologists and technicians	921	\$32.00	Associate's degree
Occupational therapist assistants	56	\$25.82	Associate's degree
Physical therapist assistants	137	\$25.09	Associate's degree
Medical equipment repairers	262	\$25.41	Associate's degree
Surgical technologists	394	\$23.90	Postsecondary vocational award
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses	1,582	\$22.80	Postsecondary vocational award
Health care technologists and technicians, all other	789	\$22.16	Postsecondary vocational award
Massage therapists	646	\$27.66	Postsecondary vocational award
First-line supervisors/managers of office and administrative support workers	6,764	\$25.62	Work experience in a related field

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. (EMSI)

[†] Demand occupations are defined by the Demand/Decline list for Seattle-King County Workforce Development Area.

MIDDLE-WAGE HEALTH CARE OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS – Seattle-King County

Middle-wage Health Care Occupations are slated for long-term growth for the region.

Occupation	Avg. Annual Growth Rate 2008-2013	Avg. Annual Growth Rate 2013-2018
Registered nurses	2.8%	3.1%
Radiation therapists	3.3%	2.9%
Respiratory therapists	3.3%	2.9%
Dental hygienists	1.6%	2.9%
Cardiovascular technologists and technicians	2.7%	2.3%
Diagnostic medical sonographers	2.1%	2.1%
Nuclear medicine technologists	2.2%	2.0%
Radiologic technologists and technicians	2.0%	2.0%
Occupational therapist assistants	3.9%	3.8%
Physical therapist assistants	2.6%	2.6%
Medical equipment repairers	1.6%	1.7%
Surgical technologists	2.8%	3.0%
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses	1.6%	2.3%
Health care technologists and technicians, all other	1.8%	1.9%
Massage therapists	3.0%	2.9%
First-line supervisors/managers of office and administrative support workers	-0.3%	1.0%

Source: Washington State Employment Security Department Workforce Explorer – www.workforceexplorer.com

MAJOR HEALTH CARE EMPLOYERS LOCALLY

Major Health Care Employers in the King County area include Northwest Hospital & Medical Center, Virginia Mason Medical Center, Swedish Medical Center, Harborview Medical Center, Children’s Hospital, University of Washington, and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, to name a few.

Industry Title	Number of Individuals Employed in Industry by Occupation 2007 Seattle-King County WDA				
	Number of Employers in King County	Registered Nurses	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Office and Admin. Support Workers
Offices of Physicians	2,212	1,797	298	189	314
Employment Services	443	1,143	306	62	330
Community Care Facility for the Elderly	316	303	271		
Outpatient Care Centers	307	873	158	37	
Home Health Care Services	156	570	232		
Nursing Care Facilities	139	790	745		
Medical and Diagnostic Laboratories	123			333	
Insurance Carriers	88	55	1		293
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	38	9,866	405	737	209

Source: Washington State Employment Security Department Workforce Explorer – www.workforceexplorer.com

† Demand occupations are defined by the Demand/Decline list for Seattle-King County Workforce Development Area.

i. Accessible middle-wage jobs are identified as those paying at least \$21 an hour in 2008 and requiring some education beyond high school but not necessarily a 4-yr degree. \$21/hr, assuming 2 full-time earners, is equivalent to annual earnings of \$43,680 per person, \$87,903 for two earners, which is roughly the median family income for King County for 2008 (American Community Survey).

ii. <http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs035.htm#nature>

iii. <http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs035.htm#related>