

All in a Day's Work

By Chris Hayhurst

Thinking about what jobs are out there? Health care could be a great fit for you.

Ever think about what kind of work you'd like to do someday? If you think you would like helping people, health care is a terrific career to think about.

The future of health care careers is bright. That's the latest prediction from the U.S. Department of Labor. Jobs in pharmacy, physical therapy, and cardiovascular technology are all on its list of fastest-growing careers. That's not going to change anytime soon. By 2016, the department reports, there will be 3 million new health-care jobs in the United States. That's more than in any other industry.

Here is a look at just a few of the many interesting jobs in the field.

Physical Therapist

Physical therapists help people manage and recover from all kinds of injuries and conditions. They have an expert understanding of how the body moves.

Education required: master's degree

Where they work: private clinics, schools, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers

Featured pro: Guy Lev, Alameda County Medical Center, Oakland, Calif.

About his work: "Every day I meet new people. It's nice developing great relationships while knowing I'm helping them get back on their feet."

Lev, in his fourth year of work after receiving his Doctor of Physical Therapy degree, has seen it all: spinal cord injuries, broken bones—the works. "It's an amazing job," he says, "but it's also challenging. It's always way more complicated than 'OK, your shoulder hurts, let's do some exercises.' You've really got to think."

Physician Assistant

Physician assistants (PAs) practice medicine under the supervision of doctors. Conducting physical exams, interpreting tests, and writing prescriptions are all part of the job.

Education required: master's degree

Where they work: anywhere a doctor would

Featured pro: Jason McGrade, Lenox Hill Hospital, New York

About his work: "I'm the second set of hands for the surgeon," says McGrade, the hospital's associate chief PA in *cardiothoracic* (heart and chest) surgery. An example is when the team does a procedure in which a vein or an artery is taken from an arm or a leg to replace a damaged one closer to the heart. McGrade works on removing the vessel from its old spot while the surgeon opens the patient's chest. "We basically carry out the operation together," he says.

McGrade has other responsibilities too. He visits patients before procedures and tells them what to expect. After surgery, he monitors their progress and makes sure that all is well. "Every day," says McGrade, "there's something new. There's never a dull moment."

Blood Collection Specialist

Blood service professionals are the link between blood donors and people who need blood to survive. They hold blood drives and then help get blood to where it is needed.

Education required: bachelor's degree

Where they work: blood centers

Featured pro: Karen Kish, R.N., American Red Cross, Columbus, Ohio

About her work: "The most rewarding part for me," says Kish, a regional director of collections, "is knowing we've made a difference in someone's life."

Kish oversees up to 30 blood drives daily. A good day yields 750 pints of blood. How do you launch a career like hers? "Start by going to a blood drive with a parent who is donating blood," she says. If it doesn't make you

queasy, it may be for you. Kish is a registered nurse, but you don't need to be a nurse to do all the jobs in this field.

Medical Research Scientist

Medical scientists conduct the research that leads to new medicines, treatments, and vaccines. Researchers spend long hours in labs or clinics and write papers about their findings for scientific journals.

Education required: bachelor's degree, M.D. or Ph.D. for advanced positions)

Where they work: universities, private companies, government agencies

Featured pro: Jonathan Fuchs, M.D., M.P.H., San Francisco Department of Public Health and the University of California, San Francisco

About his work: "I run clinical trials of experimental preventive HIV vaccines," says Fuchs. He is director of vaccine studies with the San Francisco Department of Public Health. Clinical trials help scientists learn whether medicines or vaccines work and whether they are safe for people.

The field of vaccine research, says Fuchs, is wide open, especially when it comes to HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. "We've had some promising developments recently," he says, "but it will still take time to find an effective vaccine." The researchers of tomorrow, he notes, may be the ones to ultimately get it done.

Top Health-Care Jobs

When you think of health care, you may think of doctors and nurses.

Doctors are highly trained medical specialists who spend their days diagnosing and treating all sorts of injuries and illnesses. Nurses provide routine, day-to-day care for patients who have already seen doctors. Doctors and nurses are in high demand and are projected to be even more so in the coming years. Experts predict a shortage of 40,000 doctors by 2020 and 260,000 nurses by 2025.

Other health-care jobs with strong growth projection through 2016 and beyond:

- Home health aides
- Medical assistants

- Substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors
- Pharmacy technicians
- Dental hygienists
- Dental assistants

Degrees Deciphered

Bachelor's degree (B.S./B.A.) received after four years of college study

Master's degree (M.S./M.A.) advanced study after college

M.P.H. master's degree in public health

Ph.D. study beyond a master's degree; stands for Doctor of Philosophy

M.D. degree held by medical doctors; typically requires four years of study beyond college followed by additional on-the-job training

R.N. registered nurse; earning a license requires training and passing an exam

Scrubbing In

Francesca Jackson, 15, spent a week of her summer at the SCRUBS Health Career Exploration Camp at Bon Secours St. Francis Hospital in Charleston, S.C. Francesca wants to be an *anesthesiologist*—a doctor who helps patients sleep comfortably (and stay asleep!) during surgery. At the camp, she took classes in CPR and first aid, shadowed professionals on the job, and spent a lot of time in the hospital's neonatology unit with newborn babies. "We got to put on gloves and touch a *placenta*," an organ that nourishes babies before they are born, Francesca says. "That was so cool." After the camp, she continued to volunteer in the pain management department of the hospital, where she works with anesthesiologists.



*Courtesy of Scrubs Health Career
Exploration Camp*
Francesca, left, learns how to help
a person having a heart attack.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Which location was NOT listed as a place where a health care professional might work?

- A government agency
- B university
- C private company
- D public park

2. The author most likely highlighted health care professions other than doctors and nurses to

- A persuade the reader that other health care careers are better than doctors and nurses
- B provide information about health care careers about which the reader may not have known
- C demonstrate that in the future, health care industry will only need Physical Therapists, Physician Assistants, Blood Collection Specialists and Medical Research Scientists
- D show that doctors and nurses are currently in low demand

3. Which of the following conclusions about the health care field is supported by the passage?

- A More people need to work in the health care field.
- B Technology will replace workers in the health care field.
- C Most people make a lot of money in the health care field.
- D There are only a few different jobs in the health care field.

4. Read the following sentence: "Doctors and nurses are in high demand and are projected to be even more so in the coming years."

The word **projected** means

- A predicted
- B analyzed
- C recalled
- D researched

5. Which statement best reflects the main idea of the passage?

- A Physical Therapists treat injuries.
- B Health care careers are in low demand.
- C There are many opportunities in the health care industry.
- D Most health care careers require a M.D.

6. Why do health care careers have a bright future?

7. Francesca Jackson was able to attend a special Health Career Exploration camp and volunteer in a hospital. How could experiences like Francesca's, help other teens interested in a health career?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

_____ the health care industry growing, health care careers are expected to increase by the millions in the next several years.

- A As a result of
- B Although
- C Even though
- D Also

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

The U.S. Department of Labor predicts that by 2016 there will be 3 million new health-care jobs in the United States.

What? the U.S. Department of labor

(does) What? _____

(by) When? _____

Where? _____

Directions: Read the vocabulary word and definition below to complete questions 10a, 10b, and 11.

Vocabulary Word: **decipher** (de·ci·pher): the process of understanding something that is difficult to understand or read normally.

10a. Read the sentences below and underline all forms of the word **decipher**.

1. The nurse had to decipher the prescription that the doctor had written.
2. It took the spy a long time to decipher the secret code.
3. The doctor had to decipher the patient's symptoms to diagnose his illness.
4. In the video game, the players work together to decipher the clues which help them get to the next level.
5. Because the student spoke very quietly, it was hard for the teacher to decipher what the student was saying.

10b. Which document is likely harder for an English-speaker to decipher?



11. If the passage were written in Spanish would it be easier or more difficult to decipher? Why?
