HEALTH OCCUPATIONS

Overall employment of home health aides will grow faster than the average through the year 2021, although individual occupational growth rates will vary. Home health aides will be amongst the occupations adding the most new jobs. The expected growth is due to the projected rise in the number of elderly people, an age group that often has mounting health problems and that needs some assistance with daily activities. The elderly and other patients, such as the mentally disabled, increasingly rely on home care.

Home health aides is expected to be one of the fastest growing occupations, as a result of both growing demand for home services from an aging population and efforts to contain costs by moving patients out of hospitals and nursing care facilities as quickly as possible. Consumer preference for care in the home and improvements in medical technologies for in-home treatment also will contribute to much-faster-than-average employment growth for home health aides.

Nursing Assistant positions will grow faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2021, in response to the long-term care needs of an increasing elderly population. Financial pressures on hospitals to discharge patients as soon as possible should boost admissions to nursing care facilities. As a result, job openings will be more numerous in nursing and residential care facilities than in hospitals. Modern medical technology also will drive demand for nursing assistants because as the technology saves and extends more lives, it increases the need for long-term care provided by aides. Persons who are interested in, and suited for, this work should have excellent job opportunities.

Employment Information

Greater Kansas City Area: In 2016, those employed in a health occupation held an estimated 16,612 jobs in the fifteen counties that make up the Kansas City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), with 18,994 jobs projected by 2021 (+14.3%). Of those jobs in 2016, 3,596 are home health aides; 12,739 are nursing assistants, and 277 are healthcare support workers.

State: In Kansas, those employed in a health occupation held an estimated 30,925 jobs in 2016, with 34,015 jobs projected by 2021 (+10%). Of those jobs in 2016, 7,854 were home health aides (9,237 projected, +18%); 22,419 were nursing assistants (24,061 projected, +7%); and 653 healthcare support workers (717 projected, +10%).

National: About 2,839,541 jobs were held by those employed in a health occupation in 2016, with 3,218,288 jobs projected by 2021 (+13.3%). Of those jobs

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in 2016, 1,190,323 were home health aides (1,421,561 projected, +19%); 1,546,540 were nursing assistants (1,687,890 projected, +9%); and 102,679 were healthcare support workers (108,837 projected, +6%). Approximately 378,747 openings are expected due to growth and the need for replacement workers.

**Salary Information**

**Greater Kansas City Area:** Home health aides employed in the Greater Kansas City area earned an average hourly wage of $10.72 in 2016. Additionally, nursing assistants earned $11.86, and healthcare support workers earned $19.60.

**State:** Healthcare support workers earned an hourly wage of $10.89 in 2016. Additionally, nursing assistants earned $11.32 per hour; and home health aides earned $9.78 per hour.

**National:** Home health aides earned an average hourly wage of $10.69 in 2016. Additionally, nursing assistants earned $12.61 per hour; and healthcare support workers earned $17.31.

**JCCC Placement and Salary Information**

The JCCC Office of Institutional Research conducts a follow-up study of program completers one year after completion. Sixty-eight percent of the graduates who responded to the follow-up study conducted during 2015-16, and were employed, were employed in a job related to their program and reported earning an average hourly wage of $12.60.

**Note:** Salary Information for Greater Kansas City, State, and National is based on EMSI 2016 third quarter data. JCCC information for career program completers is based on data supplied by respondents to follow-up studies and is not necessarily representative of all career program completers. Other sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics.