RESPIRATORY CARE

Employment of respiratory therapists is expected to increase as fast as the average for all occupations through the year 2021, because of substantial growth in the numbers of the middle-aged and elderly population, a development that will heighten the incidence of cardiopulmonary disease. Growth in demand also will result from the expanding role of respiratory therapists in case management, disease prevention, emergency care, and the early detection of pulmonary disorders. Although hospitals will continue to employ the vast majority of therapists, a growing number can expect to work outside of hospitals in home health care services, offices of physicians or other health practitioners, or consumer-goods rental firms. Job opportunities are expected to be very good, especially for respiratory therapists with cardiopulmonary care skills or experience working with infants.

Employment Information

**Greater Kansas City Area:** In 2016, those employed in the respiratory care field held an estimated 1,010 jobs in the fifteen counties that make up the Kansas City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), with 1,077 jobs projected by 2021 (+6.6%). Of those jobs in 2016, 754 were respiratory therapists (841 projected, +12%); and 256 were respiratory therapy technicians (237 projected, -7%). All together over 67 openings are anticipated due to the need for replacements and growth.

**State:** In Kansas, those employed in the respiratory care field held an estimated 1,239 jobs in 2016, with 1,334 jobs projected by 2021 (+7.7%). Of those jobs in 2016, 1,132 were respiratory therapists (1,233 projected, +9%); and 107 were respiratory therapy technicians (101 projected, -6%). All together over 95 openings are anticipated due to the need for replacements and growth.

**National:** About 136,295 jobs were held by those employed in the respiratory care field in 2016, with 145,204 jobs projected by 2021 (+6.5%). Of those jobs in 2016, 126,057 were respiratory therapists (135,430 projected, +7%); and 10,239 were respiratory therapy technicians (9,774 projected, -5%). Approximately 8,909 openings are expected due to growth and the need for replacement workers.

Salary Information

**Greater Kansas City Area:** Respiratory therapists employed in the Greater Kansas City area earned an average hourly wage of $27.21 in 2016. Meanwhile, respiratory technicians earned $24.63 per hour.

**State:** Respiratory therapists in Kansas earned an average hourly wage of $21.62 in 2016. In addition, respiratory technicians earned $23.81 per hour on average.
National: Respiratory therapists working full-time earned an average hourly wage of $24.83 in 2016. Furthermore, respiratory technicians earned $28.62 per hour.

JCCC Placement and Salary Information

The JCCC Office of Institutional Research conducts a follow-up study of program completers one year after completion. Ninety percent of the graduates who responded to the follow-up study conducted during 2015-16, and were employed, were employed in a related field and reported earning an average hourly wage of $21.90.

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.