



YouthBuild USA

Healthcare

Industry Spotlight

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Overview

This industry spotlight provides an introductory overview of the **healthcare** industry. It intends to support programs with understanding the **industry**, **career pathways**, and **occupations** and help YouthBuild participants determine whether the industry aligns with their interests and career goals.

About the Healthcare Industry

The healthcare industry provides indirect and direct services related to treating illness, maintaining wellness, and managing disease. Trained professionals deliver these services in jobs that can require technical, clinical, support, or administrative work. The industry is the fastest-growing sector in the economy. Establishments in this sector include hospitals, clinics, dental offices, out-patient surgery centers, birthing centers, emergency medical care, home health care, and nursing homes.

Quick Facts



Over 900,000
businesses in the sector



About 2.4 million
new jobs by 2029



\$10,966 = Health spending
per person in the U.S. in 2019

Source: [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), CareerOneStop, [U.S. Census Bureau's County Business Patterns](#)

Health Care Classification and Subsectors

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) classifies the healthcare industry under the [Health Care and Social Assistance sector](#). Activities in this sector are closely related and sometimes difficult

Key Definitions



Industry: broad groups of businesses or organizations with similar activities, products, or services



Career Pathways: combine high-quality education and training to prepare individuals for work



Occupation: a set of activities or tasks that pays employees to perform

Key Definitions



Sector: a broad term to describe the large segments of the economy



Subsectors: part of a larger sector



Career Clusters: occupations in the same field of work that require similar skills

to distinguish. The larger sector consists of **subsectors**, or **career clusters**. According to the BLS, there are four subsectors:

- Ambulatory Health Care Services
- Hospitals
- Nursing and Residential Care Facilities
- Social Assistance

About the Healthcare Subsectors

Ambulatory Health Care Services

Industries in the [ambulatory health care services](#) subsector provide out-of-hospital health care services directly or indirectly to patients. This subsector employed 7.7 million people in 2021. Examples of occupations in this subsector include emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and medical assistants.

Hospitals

Industries in the [hospitals](#) subsector provide medical, diagnostic, and treatment services that include physician, nursing, and other health services to primarily inpatients and sometimes outpatients. This subsector employed 5.1 million people in 2021. Examples of occupations in this subsector include medical and clinical laboratory technologists, radiologic technologists and technicians, and licensed practical and vocational nurses.

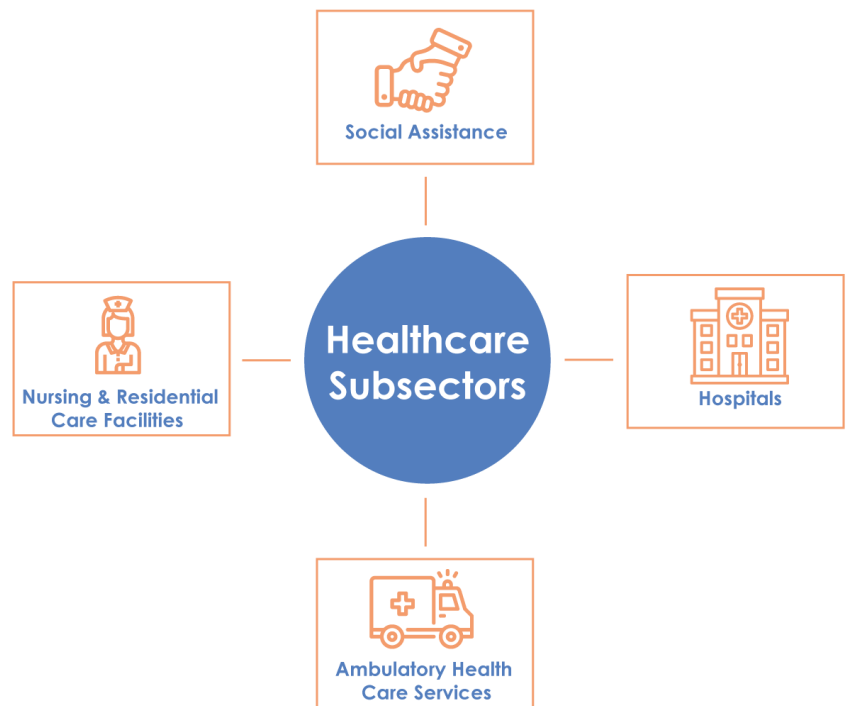
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities

Industries in the [nursing and residential care facilities](#) subsector provide residential care combined with either nursing, supervisory, or other types of care as required by the residents. This subsector employed over 3 million people in 2021. Examples of occupations in this subsector include home health aides, licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses, and medical and health service managers.

Key Definitions

Health care: refers to a set of actions or services performed to improve the health of a patient.

Healthcare: refers to a system, industry, or field.



Social Assistance

Industries in the [social assistance](#) subsector provide a wide variety of services that include individuals, family, child day care, vocational rehabilitation, community food, housing, and emergency relief. This subsector employed 3.9 million people in 2021. Examples of occupations in this subsector include childcare workers, social workers, personal care and home aides, and social and human service workers.

Healthcare Industry Career Facts

The healthcare industry offers job security and many different career options with strong projected growth. People need healthcare, which means there will always be a demand for qualified professionals to fill clinical, support, technical, and administrative jobs. The work in healthcare can be fast-paced and require multitasking. It also typically involves interacting with new people daily. At facilities that provide care 24/7, it is typical to work rotations that include days, evenings, nights, weekends, and holidays ([CareerOneStop](#)). **Learn more in the following sections about whether a career pathway in healthcare is the right pathway for YouthBuild programs and participants.**

Varied Job Opportunities

There are several career pathways to explore in healthcare. The BLS classifies healthcare occupations into two groups: [Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations](#) and [Healthcare Support Occupations](#). Healthcare practitioners and technical workers are responsible for a broad range of job functions. Some have specific medical training that they use to diagnose, treat, and prevent illnesses. Others have technical skills that enable them to perform procedures or operate specialized equipment. Healthcare support workers play an important role in patient care by fulfilling tasks such as drawing blood for laboratory work or monitoring the health status of patients. Workers in support roles may also be responsible for administrative tasks such as scheduling patient appointments or maintaining records.

Examples of Occupations by Group



Routes to High Paying Wages

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median annual wage for healthcare practitioners and technical occupations was \$69,870 in May 2020, which was higher than the median annual wage for all occupations in the economy of \$41,950. However, healthcare support occupations had a median annual wage of \$29,960 in May 2020, lower than the median annual wage for all occupations in the economy.

YouthBuild Program Tip *Find Your Local Living Wage*

What is considered a good salary in one region may not be in another. To determine a viable, living wage in a specific region, use the [MIT living wage](#) calculator.

Wages and salary tend to correspond with skill, competency, credential attainment, and experience. Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations are associated with higher salaries because they typically require more training, licenses, or credentials. **Image 1.0** provides examples of healthcare practitioners and technical occupations that require some postsecondary education beyond high school but not quite a bachelor's degree. Most occupations that fall under medium preparation require training in vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, or an associate degree. These programs may last from a few weeks to two years. All three examples are expected to see faster than average growth.

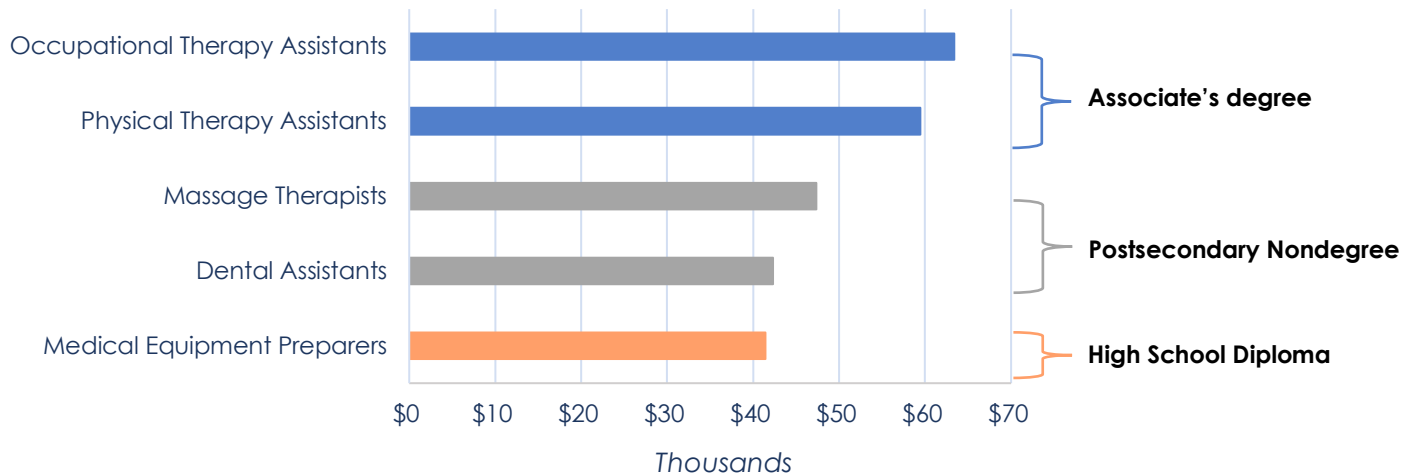
Image 1.0 2020 Median Wage Examples of Technical Occupations that Require Medium Preparation

\$61,900	\$49,710	\$44,090
 Radiologic Technologists	 Surgical Technologists	 Medical Records Specialist

Source: [O*NET](#)

The healthcare support workforce is among the lower-wage occupations. **Image 1.1** includes some of the highest paid healthcare support occupations and the typical entry-level education.

Image 1.1: Highest Paying Healthcare Support Occupation, May 2020



Source: [Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics](#)

Options for Entry and Advancement

Healthcare careers identify with the level of education required, certifications, and licensure. Often some form of training is needed, whether it is formal or informal. While more education and training may be required to advance, some jobs provide accessible entry points into the healthcare industry. These include jobs that provide tests, scans, or patient care; assist with therapy and dental care; or keep medical records.

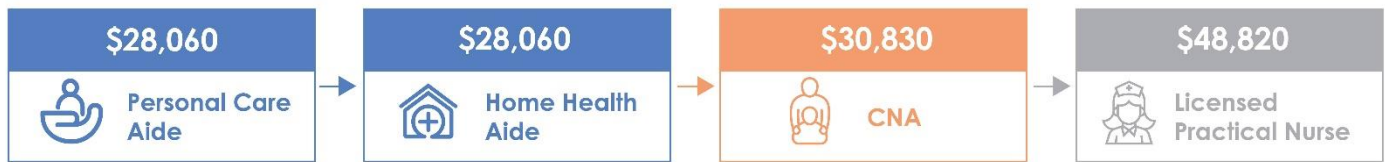
Image 2.0 is an example of career progression options for workers starting as personal care aides, a common entry-level job for those with a high school diploma or equivalent. This career progression does not require a four-year degree. While personal care and home health aides are in high demand, they are low paying jobs. The image below provides examples of occupations for those looking to gain the skills and knowledge needed to advance beyond these roles.

Typical entry-level education for all four occupations ranges from high school diploma or equivalent to postsecondary nondegree.

YouthBuild Program Tip *Map Career Paths*

YouthBuild programs can help participants attain upward mobility in this industry by connecting participants to meaningful healthcare competencies, in-demand credentials, and apprenticeship opportunities. Programs can also work with participants on mapping out education and training beyond the YouthBuild program. Specific certification requirements may vary by state.

Image 2.0 Example Career Progression and Annual Median Pay in 2020



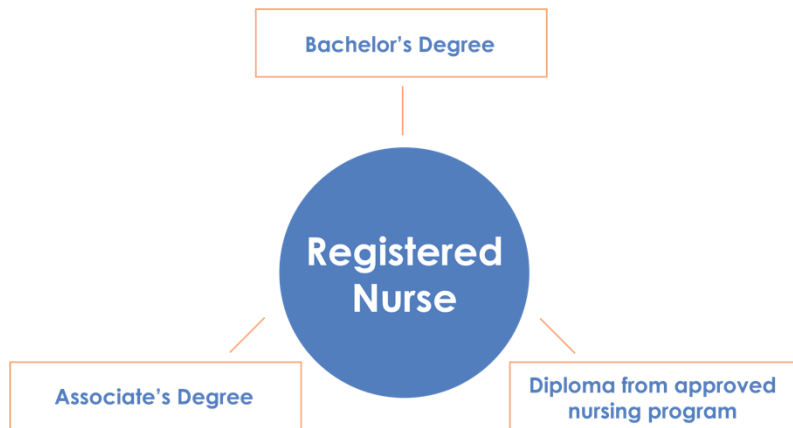
Education & Training: High school diploma or equivalent, but some positions do not require it. Those working in certified home health or hospice agencies must complete formal training and pass a standardized test. Home health aides require further medical knowledge and care tasks.

Education & Training: 4–12-week state-approved training program and state certification exam. On-the-job training is typically required.

Education & Training: Approved state-educational program that awards a certificate (about 1 year to complete). A NCLEX-PN license is required.

Source: [BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook](#)

Image 2.1



There are also higher-paying jobs that allow multiple education paths. For example, registered nurses usually take one of three education paths, as depicted in **Image 2.1**. No matter the education path, registered nurses must also become licensed by passing the National Council Licensure Examination.

“Earn and Learn” Training Options

[Registered Apprenticeship Programs \(RAP\)](#) have expanded into the healthcare industry over the years. On-the-job training has been an important part of any healthcare career, and apprenticeships offer a formal worker training opportunity to get started in a healthcare field. A RAP is a

YouthBuild Program Tip *Leverage Resources*

Workforce associations such as H-CAP can be a tool to map out in-demand credentials. H-CAP oversees a national collaboration that builds Registered Apprenticeships that address employer needs. YouthBuild programs can find a list of Registered Apprenticeships in healthcare through H-CAP’s [National Library](#) that houses over 40 healthcare apprenticeship certifications and licensures for healthcare occupations can also be found through the [CareerOneStop Certification Finder](#).

“earn and learn” training model that combines on-the-job work experience, classroom learning, mentorship, and credential attainment. Examples of high-demand apprenticeship occupations in healthcare include Dental Assistant, Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic, Medical Coder, Pharmacist Assistant, Certified Nurse Aide, Long-term Care Nurse Manager. For more information, visit www.apprenticeship.gov and [Healthcare Career Advancement Program \(H-CAP\)](#).

Industry and Workforce Trends

Each subsector is experiencing advancements in technology and innovation. The following industry trends may expand the types of healthcare jobs available and create new in-demand skills:

- Telehealth developments continue to expand to make patient care more accessible.
- Advancements in biotechnology and medical research and development.
- Mental healthcare, behavioral health, and substance abuse services are expanding, as they have become increasingly destigmatized.

Source: BLS, [CareerOneStop](#)

Entry-Level Certifications to Explore

There are numerous entry-level certifications for those with a high school diploma or equivalent to explore. Many YouthBuild grantees currently offer credentials for entry-level positions such as Home Health Aide, Certified Nurse Aide (or state equivalent), Administrative Medical Assistant, and Phlebotomist through in-house and employer-led training. Examples of credentials that require a high school diploma or equivalent include [Nationally Certified Patient Care Technician](#), [Medical Laboratory Assistant](#), [Child Development Associate Credential](#), and the [Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant](#).

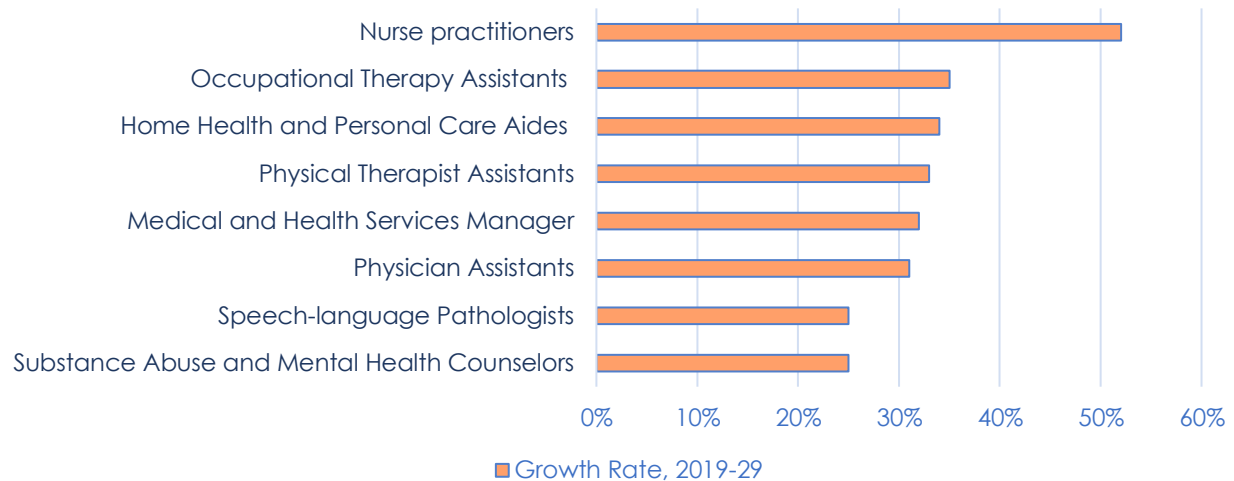
National Career and Occupation Outlook

Healthcare occupations are projected to add more jobs than any of the other sectors in the coming years. This projected growth is mainly due to an aging population and longer lifespans. The BLS expects occupations in the industry to grow 15 percent from 2019 to 2029, much faster than the average for all occupations, adding about 2.4 million new jobs. Nearly 1.5 million jobs are projected to be added to healthcare support occupations and over 830,000 jobs to be added to healthcare practitioners and technical occupations.

Fastest Growing Occupations

8 out of the 20 fastest growing occupations across every sector of the economy relate to healthcare ([BLS](#)). **Image 3** represents the occupations expected to grow the fastest.

Image 3: Fastest Growing Occupations in Healthcare by Growth Rate



Employment for the Largest Occupations

Registered nurses and home health and personal care aides are the most employed out of any other occupation in healthcare averaging 3 million employed in each occupation group ([BLS](#)). As of May 2020, 8.6 were employed in the healthcare practitioners and technical occupations group and 6.4 million were employed in healthcare support occupations.

Healthcare Career Pathways

Within the healthcare industry, four common career pathways offer various occupations.

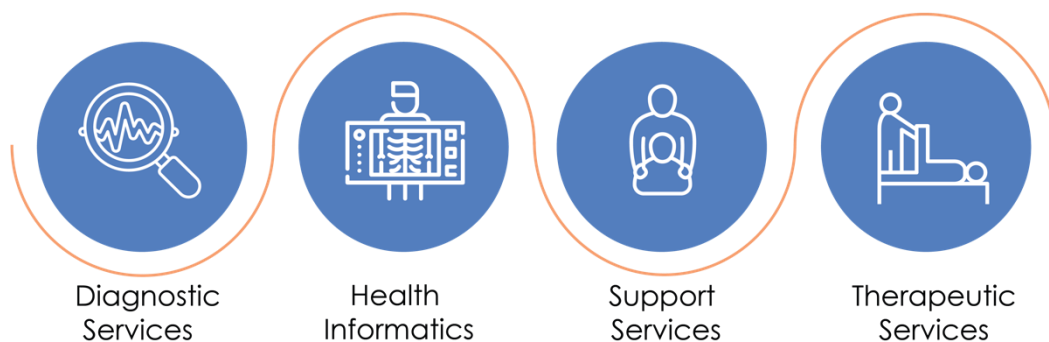


Table 1 includes occupations expected to grow in the coming years. They are organized by each of the four common career pathways in the healthcare industry. While national labor market information can provide insight into general industry trends and occupations in demand, YouthBuild programs are encouraged to consult with local employers and workforce development stakeholders to identify how to meet local economies and regional business needs. For local labor market data and information, visit the Department of Labor's state labor market projection website at projectionscentral.org or contact your local Workforce Development Boards.

How to evaluate viable occupations based on regional needs

National career and occupation projections can help YouthBuild programs understand labor demands and trends. On a local level, labor market information may vary. Programs are encouraged to converse with employers regarding local job openings and skills needed to fill those jobs. To determine the occupations that are most viable in the health care industry, YouthBuild programs can utilize and consider the following criteria:

- **Competitive and Family-Sustaining Wages:** Does the occupation offer competitive, family-sustaining wages?
- **Occupation Growth:** Is there local demand for these roles? Is there enough supply to meet demand?
- **Accessibility:** Are there accessible entry-level points? Is the employer willing to create more accessible entry-level points?

Table 1: Healthcare Occupations by Career Pathways

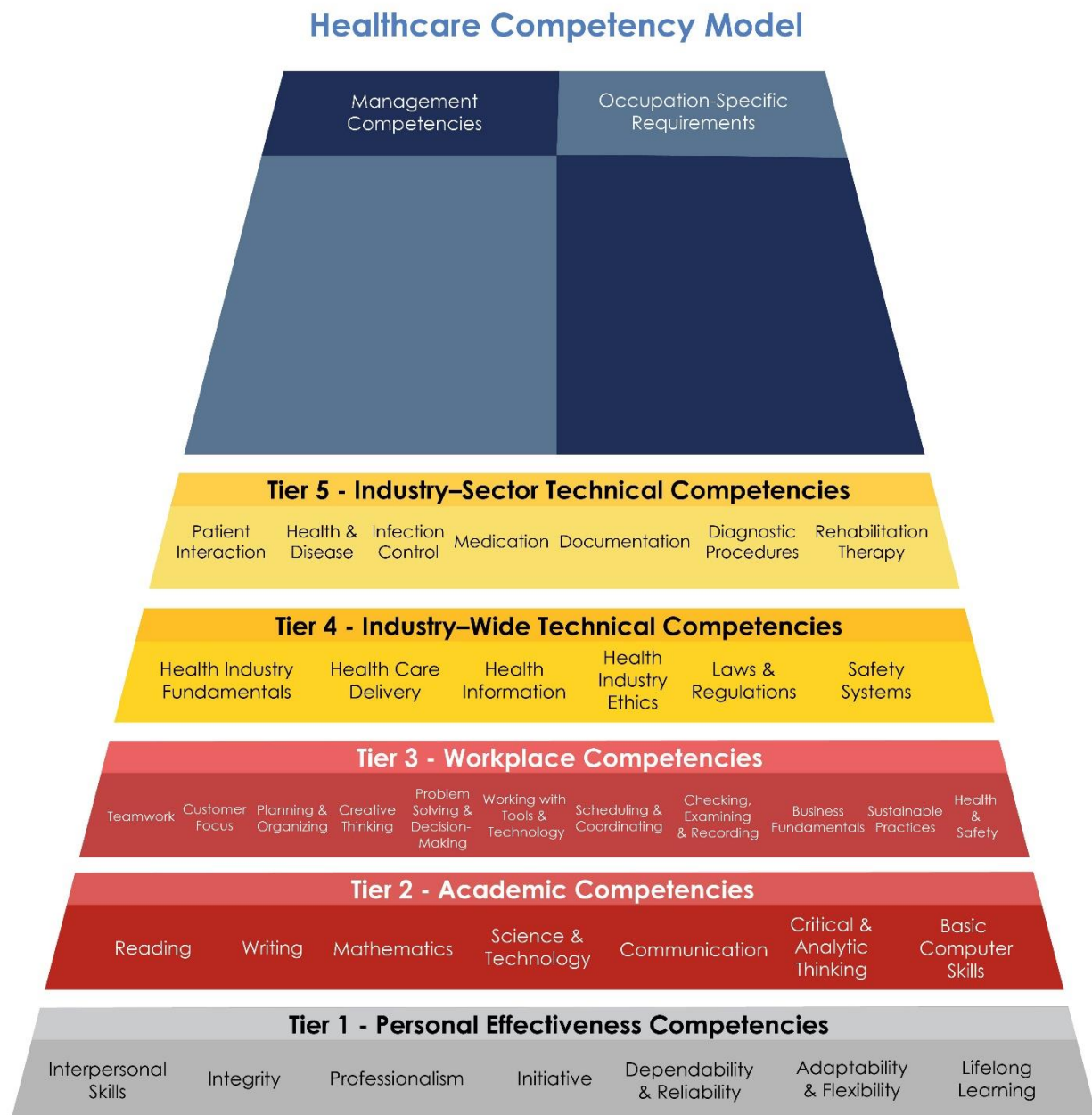
Diagnostic Services		
Occupation	2020 Median Salary	Typical Entry-Level Education
*Veterinary Assistants	\$29,930	High School Diploma
*Radiologic and MRI Technologists	\$61,900	Associate's degree
*Cardiovascular Technologists/ Technicians	\$59,100	Associate's degree
*Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	\$75,920	Associate's degree
*Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists	\$74,690	Associate's degree

Health Informatics		
Occupation	2020 Median Salary	Typical Entry-Level Education
*Medical Secretaries	\$37,350	High school diploma
*Medical Records Specialist	\$44,090	Postsecondary nondegree
Support Services		
Occupation	2020 Median Salary	Typical Entry-Level Education
*Nursing Assistants and Orderlies	\$30,850	High school diploma or equivalent
Pharmacy Aides	\$29,280	High school diploma or equivalent
*Phlebotomists	\$36,320	Postsecondary nondegree
*Medical Equipment Preparers	\$38,800	Associate's degree
*Medical and Health Services Managers	\$104,280	Bachelor's degree
Therapeutic Services		
Occupation	2020 Median Salary	Typical Entry-Level Education
*Home Health Aides	\$27,080	High school diploma or equivalent
*Occupational Therapy Aide	\$30,180	High school diploma or equivalent
Opticians	\$38,530	High school diploma or equivalent
Pharmacy Technicians	\$35,100	High school diploma or equivalent
*Medical Assistants	\$35,850	Postsecondary nondegree
*EMT and Paramedics	\$36,650	Postsecondary nondegree
*Dental Assistants	\$41,180	Postsecondary nondegree
*Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses	\$48,820	Postsecondary nondegree
*Surgical Technologists	\$49,710	Postsecondary nondegree

[O*NET](#), the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Information Network, categorizes occupations with an asterisk as Bright Outlook, meaning they are anticipated to grow more quickly than others on a national level. Wages listed are as of May 2020. For the most current wage information, visit [O*NET](#).

Industry Skill Needs and Competencies

CareerOneStop, in partnership with the Department of Labor, offers the [Healthcare Competency Model](#) that employers in the healthcare industry developed. This model identifies a multi-tier set of building blocks defining the competencies needed for success in healthcare, starting with Personal Effectiveness Competencies and building up to Management Competencies and Occupation-Specific Requirements. A detailed description of all the specific skills that comprise each tier of competencies can be accessed in the Healthcare Competency Model.



Source: [Competency Model Clearinghouse, CareerOneStop](#)



YouthBuild Program Tip

Building Competency Models

DOL YouthBuild grantees' program model is designed to address the first three tiers of the competency model. In the upper tiers of the competency model, it is essential to work with industry partners to customize a Construction Plus (C+) pathway that meets the local needs of employers.

Conclusion

Over the next decade, the anticipated job growth in healthcare occupations presents a unique opportunity to connect YouthBuild participants to meaningful, long-term, family-sustaining careers in this field. YouthBuild programs can use Industry Spotlights to gain a basic understanding of the healthcare industry, continue to monitor local labor market information and work alongside employers to design C+ pathways. YouthBuild participants with strong empathy, communication, teamwork skills, and an interest in advancing their medical knowledge or technical skillsets should consider exploring a career in healthcare.