

## What is Healthcare?

# The Industry

About one in ten Utah workers is employed in healthcare. Where do these healthcare workers work? The broad industry sector of healthcare is divided up into four sub-industries. Most people think if you are in healthcare, you work at a hospital. Not so. Only about 27 percent, or 30,900, of all 114,400 Utah healthcare industry jobs, are in hospitals. Did you know there are different hospital types? Most hospitals are “general medical and surgical” but nearly 4,000 workers are employed in psychiatric and substance abuse facilities, and there are a number of rehabilitation and transitional care hospitals as well.

The largest healthcare sub-industry sector is “ambulatory healthcare services.” It accounts for 40 percent of total healthcare workers, or 46,100. These are the doctors offices in clinics, outpatient care centers, laboratories, home health care, and others. In Utah, nearly 4,900 establishments were active in this sub-sector. Most of these offices are small in terms of employment.

Another 21,300 employees work in the sub-sector of “nursing and residential care facilities.” In 2008, nearly 500 of these establishments were active around the state.

The last sub-sector is social assistance. It includes individual and family services, vocational rehabilitation services, emergency and other relief services, and childcare services. Combined, about 14 percent of total healthcare workers, or 16,100, are employed in this industry that has about 960 firms.

### Is healthcare a growing industry?

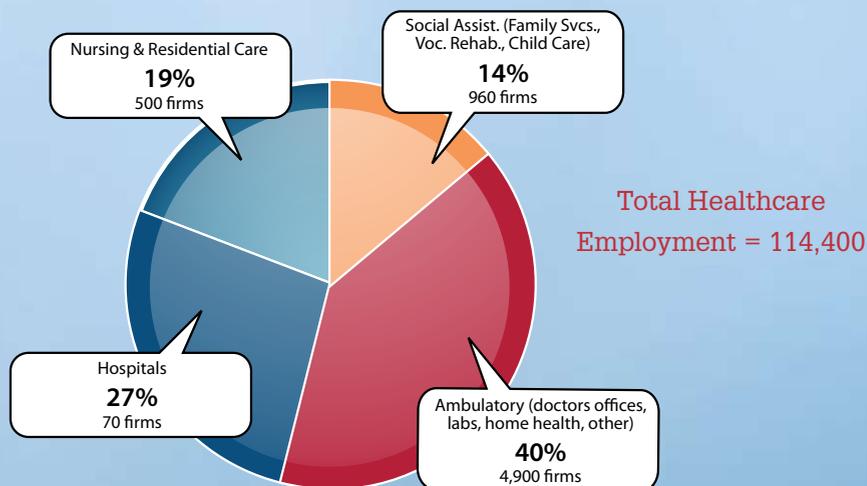
Yes, and it is largely the only industry growing at this time. Healthcare is generally recession-resistant, not recession-proof. Still, the industry continues to grow even in light of the shrinking broader economy. In 2008, employment in healthcare grew by an annual rate of 5.3 percent. Compared to Utah’s overall total growth rate of 0.1 percent, that’s growth at light speed. As population grows and baby boomers age (the first baby boomers reach age 65 in 2011), the demand for healthcare continues to increase. Regardless of the method of healthcare reform that is currently being implemented, people will still need healthcare services.

### Healthcare Wages—Across a Wide Spectrum, Big Bucks and Small Cents

Wages in healthcare span the range from the highest of all occupations in the state to some of the lowest wages. There is a direct relationship between education and earnings. Those at the top of the earning list are the medical professionals that include physicians, surgeons and dentists—those professions that require extensive training and professional licensure. Also included in the top earnings are medical and health managers. Most of the high-level occupations in this group had annual earnings in excess of \$100,000.

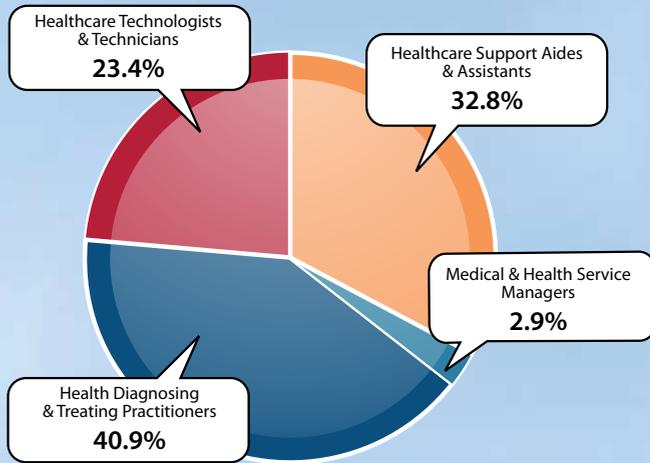
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**Utah Healthcare Industry Sub-Sectors**  
as a Percent of Total Healthcare Employment  
& Number of Firms in 2008



Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services, Workforce Information.

## Utah Healthcare Occupational Employment\*



Total Healthcare Occupational  
Employment = 85,230

*\*2006 employment estimate.  
Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services, Workforce Information.*



| Utah Healthcare Occupations                            | 2008 Median Wages |
|--|-------------------|
| <b>Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners</b>    |                   |
| Audiologists   | \$55,470          |
| Chiropractors  | 52,270            |
| Dentists, General                                      | 101,780           |
| Dietitians and Nutritionists                           | 45,870            |
| Medical and Health Service Managers*                   | 80,880            |
| Occupational Therapists                                | 63,150            |
| Optometrists   | 101,730           |
| Pediatricians, General                                 | 165,480           |
| Pharmacists  | 104,840           |
| Physical Therapists                                    | 65,240            |
| Physician Assistants                                   | 87,300            |
| Psychiatrists  | 131,700           |
| Radiation Therapists                                   | 70,170            |
| Recreational Therapists                                | 34,300            |
| Registered Nurses                                      | 56,640            |
| Respiratory Therapists                                 | 53,580            |
| Speech-Language Pathologists                           | 55,860            |
| Veterinarians  | 71,010            |
| <b>Health Technologists and Technicians</b>            |                   |
| Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians           | \$49,840          |
| Dental Hygienists                                      | 65,860            |
| Diagnostic Medical Sonographers                        | 59,020            |
| Dietetic Technicians                                   | 23,370            |
| Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics           | 28,440            |
| Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses      | 37,290            |
| Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians            | 28,320            |
| Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists          | 50,580            |
| Medical Records and Health Information Technicians     | 27,370            |
| Nuclear Medicine Technologists                         | 62,410            |
| Opticians, Dispensing                                  | 30,530            |
| Pharmacy Technicians                                   | 30,230            |
| Radiologic Technologists and Technicians               | 43,760            |
| Respiratory Therapy Technicians                        | 36,910            |
| Surgical Technologists                                 | 33,370            |
| Veterinary Technologists and Technicians               | 23,670            |
| <b>Healthcare Support Occupations</b>                  |                   |
| Dental Assistants                                      | \$26,610          |
| Home Health Aides                                      | 20,490            |
| Massage Therapists                                     | 27,850            |
| Medical Assistants                                     | 25,430            |
| Medical Transcriptionists                              | 30,750            |
| Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants               | 21,590            |
| Occupational Therapist Aides                           | 21,140            |
| Occupational Therapist Assistants                      | 43,240            |
| Physical Therapist Aides                               | 18,510            |
| Physical Therapist Assistants                          | 38,320            |
| Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers | 19,060            |

\*Managers are classified in another category but included with the professional for convenience.

continued from page 14

The next group of healthcare occupations includes the technologists and technicians. These job titles reported median wages from \$23,000 to about \$65,000. There is a mix of training requirements for the technologists and technicians that assist the practitioners. Some require very little training and some must have a bachelor's degree and be licensed. These 15 occupations include cardiovascular technologists and technicians, LPNs, lab technologists and technicians, nuclear medicine technologists, opticians, radiologic technologists and technicians, and others.

Healthcare workers that support the above two groups are the aides and assistants. They work in the following healthcare areas: dental, home health, medical (assistants), transcriptionists, nurse aides, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and others. Typically, assistants earn more than aides. Wages in these support titles typically earn \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year, but some, like the occupational assistants and physical therapy assistants, make around \$40,000.

### Industry With a Future

Healthcare will become an even more important industry as America's population ages and needs more health-related attention. People are not only working longer but living longer. This industry will provide great career opportunities for that segment of the workforce interested in serving in healthcare. 

For more information on the healthcare industry in Utah see the industry fact sheet on line: <http://jobs.utah.gov/openencms/wi/statewide/ifsheets/healthcare.pdf>