

Using Local Employment Dynamics Data to

Better Understand the Healthcare Industry

As a data geek, I love to wax rhapsodic about Local Employment Dynamics (LED) data. This melding of statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau provides industry-level demographic information never before available for data-geek consumption. This LED data reveals important insights about Utah's recession-resistant healthcare/social services industry.

Before we get started, let's talk about the inevitable "caveats." Typically, Department of Workforce Services healthcare/social service data includes only privately-owned establishments. However, for the purposes of this article, we'll be looking at the characteristics of all healthcare/social services industry jobs—both private and public. Except... federal data is excluded. The Census Bureau has yet to obtain the pertinent information it needs from the federal government (go figure). Employment numbers are 2008 averages. Other figures represent the most recent four quarters ending with the third quarter of 2008. All figures represent the most current data available.

War of the Sexes

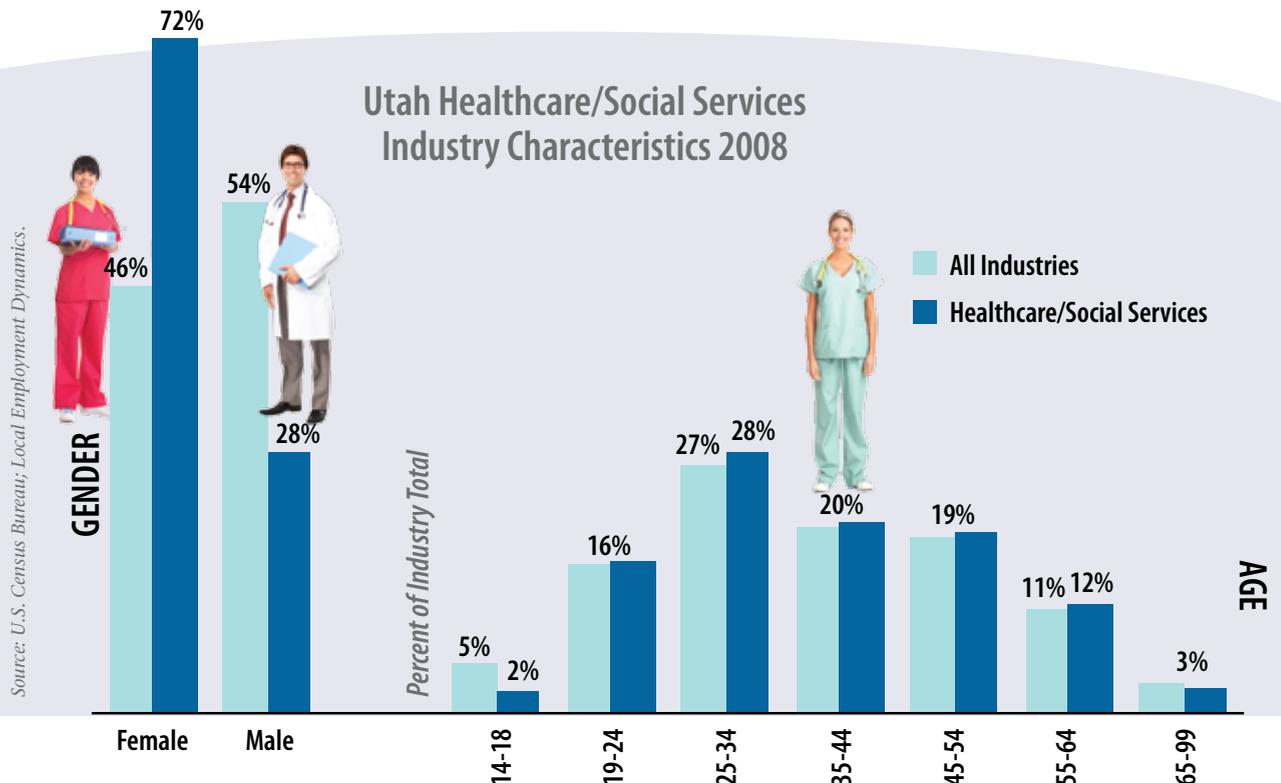
The age distribution of the healthcare/social services industry tracks very closely with the overall age structure in the labor market. The main difference appears in the slightly smaller

share of teenagers working in the healthcare/social services sector. However, perhaps the most striking characteristic of the data occurs in the gender breakdown. Statewide, men account for 54 percent of total employment. However, in the healthcare/social services industries, men account for a minor 28 percent share. Yes, women heavily dominate this industry's employment.

Wage Gap

In addition, the difference between male and female wages is huge. For men, the average monthly wage measures almost \$5,300. Women post an average monthly wage of just more than \$2,400. In other words, on average women make 45 percent of men's wages in the healthcare/social services industry. The comparable statewide figure measures 56 percent. Part of the difference in wages may be due to the fact that women typically work fewer hours than do men. However, most of the gap undoubtedly reflects the clustering of women in lower-paid occupations and the clustering of men in higher-paid occupations. In general, healthcare/social services workers make slightly less than workers in all industries combined.

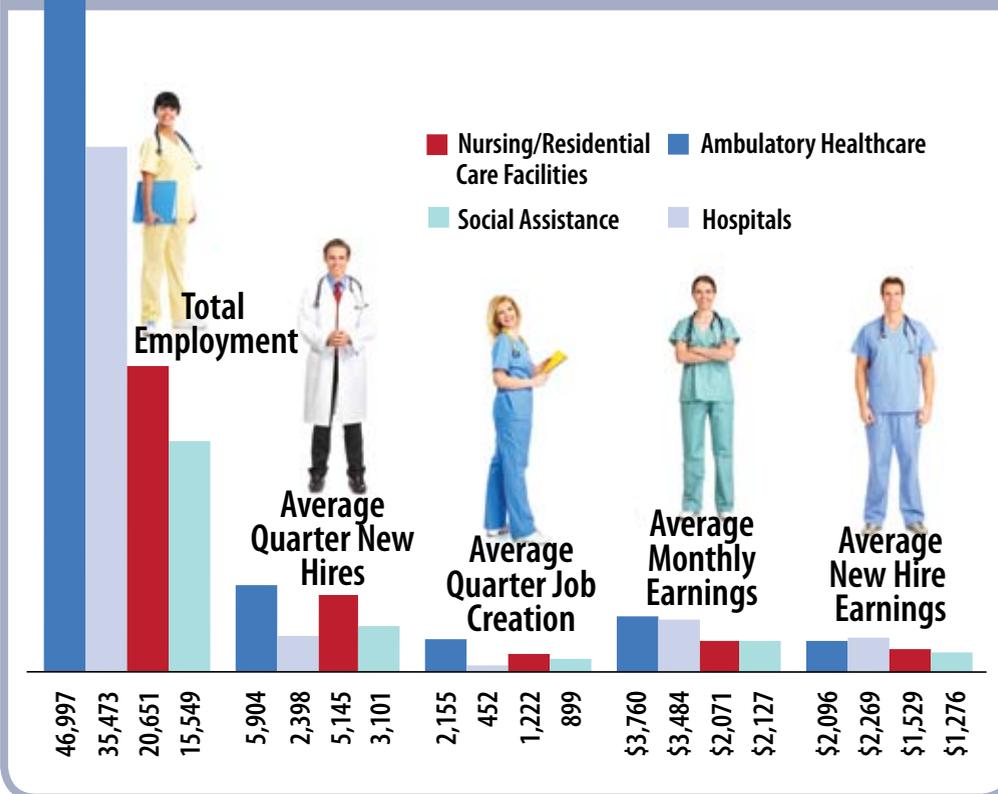
To learn more about the healthcare/social services industry: <http://lehd.did.census.gov/led/datatools/qwiapp.html>





Utah Healthcare/Social Services Industry Employment

Four-Quarter Average ending Third Quarter 2008



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Local Employment Dynamics.

- Workers in ambulatory healthcare services (doctors/dentists offices, clinics, etc.) show the highest average wages, while hospitals display the highest new-hire wages.
- Ambulatory healthcare services created the most new jobs and generated the most new 2008 hires of any healthcare/social services subsector. This subsector also showed the largest total employment.
- Nursing/residential care facilities showed the highest turnover rate while hospitals showed the lowest turnover.