

Healthcare Pathways



Using Community College to Get Ahead

Whether you're a student looking for just the right health professions program, a working professional seeking to earn a promotion or higher wage, or someone considering exploring healthcare career options, the California Community College system offers programs and resources to help foster personal and professional growth in this ever-growing industry. Low costs, tremendous flexibility, no entrance requirements, and 112 colleges in 72 districts make community college a viable option for those considering a successful, fulfilling career in healthcare.

When is the Right Time?

For healthcare workers or students considering higher education and looking to expand academic and professional opportunities, "now" is always the best time to get started. Demand for healthcare professionals exists, and community colleges work closely with students of all ages and backgrounds to assist them in reaching career goals. Many offer courses and assistance year-round to accommodate all types of situations. Application and enrollment deadlines, as well as course catalogues, vary and are often posted online. Counselors are available by



Community colleges offer many healthcare education, certificate, and degree options.

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appointment, and sometimes even on a drop-in basis. The enrollment process is usually quite simple and by getting started sooner rather than later, you are one step closer to attaining your long-term goals.

If you have concerns about financing enrollment in a community college, remember there are resources and assistance programs that may be able to help. Check with your local community college about financial aid opportunities (many have financial aid offices), tutorial assistance, transportation, or child care services. Ask a community college counselor about other potentially unknown options and spend some time searching online. A wealth of financial aid information exists on many websites, including the Health Careers Training Program webpage at www.oshpd.ca.gov/hwdd/hctp.html.

It doesn't matter if you just graduated from high school or are looking to build your skills to change careers, community colleges can offer a path to success—starting now!

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Using Community College to Get Ahead

Boost Your Career

There are many avenues for employees to boost their careers by utilizing the programs and resources that can be found in the California Community College system. Community colleges offer courses and resources that can help students and those already in the workforce develop personally and professionally, earn promotions and higher incomes, increase job satisfaction and skill level, and achieve long-term career goals. The variety of nursing, dental, and allied health programs across the state can assist students in obtaining degrees and elevating careers. Often, many who complete community college programs will go on to earn more advanced degrees for a higher level of career success.

Continuing education that results in new skills, knowledge, and hands-on experience can be very important in advancing a career. Community colleges help students acquire these in a variety of ways, including job retraining. Many colleges partner with local employers to create retraining programs that meet companies' needs. These specially designed programs may offer certificates of achievement or associate's degrees, which employers may require when looking to fill open positions with skilled workers.

Many community college districts partner with local employers to design customized workforce education programs tailored to the local job market. Employers often realize the benefits of retraining skilled workers and assist employees with back-to-college incentives or college study programs. Many of California's largest employers offer employees options to boost skills and reach higher levels of employment, including Tenet Healthcare and Kaiser Permanente. The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) United Healthcare Workers (UHW) West & Joint Employer Education Fund is an excellent example of a program promoting education and investing in the future of healthcare workers.

Community college programs can help working professionals reach long-term career goals. With proper planning and assistance from employers and college advisors, healthcare jobs can become even more rewarding.

Which Community College is Best for Me?

Many students find community college healthcare programs to be an excellent step toward careers in diagnostic, therapeutic, and technical allied health professions, including jobs such as home health aides, patient advocates, pharmacy technicians, or emergency medical technicians. Many community colleges offer these programs, along with the flexibility to help students who work full-time create a class schedule that can include evening, weekend, or online courses. Combined with low tuition and custom course tailoring by academic counselors, it's possible to find just the right community college for your specific goals.

“70% of California nurses received their education from community colleges.”

– Fast Facts 2012, Community College League of California

By carefully considering your wants and needs, and using tools and resources available online and at the colleges, you can discern which community college and program are the best fit for you. Since community colleges provide access to higher education and offer learning environments where students can enter and exit at different levels, think about not only your immediate goals, but also your long-term career goals. If you have not yet found a career path that motivates you, community college advisors can help you discover your skills, explore your options, and find the right path. Often, regardless of where you start, you can set yourself up for success.

It is also important to consider that your college path depends greatly on your lifestyle. If you work full-time or are an adult with children, finding evening or weekend courses may be a better fit than a traditional five-day school week. When choosing a college campus or educational program, consider the support you need from friends, family, or co-workers. When you find a school schedule that fits your needs, consider your commuting options.

With so many options in healthcare curriculum offered through different programs and colleges, it is important to research and learn more about the attributes of the educational program you are interested in. One way is to verify the accreditation status. Community college

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Community College Spotlight

- At **Canada College** in Redwood City, students prepare for careers in nursing, radiologic technology, respiratory therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy by taking prerequisite courses in the health sciences. After completing these required courses, students can choose to obtain an allied health certificate or continue with additional courses needed for transfer to a four-year university. Students can also participate in the Preparation for Advanced Training in Healthcare (PATH) program which allows students to complete all major science requirements for application to allied health programs in less than 18 months. This is made possible by the program's guaranteed registration (no wait lists) and integrated curriculum. For information on Canada College's PATH program to allied health careers, visit www.canadacollege.net/path/index.php.
- **Cuesta College** in San Luis Obispo and Paso Robles offers programs and courses for health careers as an acute care nurse, certified nursing assistant, licensed vocational nurse, psychiatric technician, medical assistant, emergency medical technician, and paramedic. Cuesta College serves more than 13,000 students through its 64 degree programs and 119 certificate programs. For information on Cuesta College's nursing and allied health programs, visit www.academic.cuesta.edu/nursing/.
- In Fresno County, **Reedley College** offers a variety of associate and certificate degrees, transfer-level courses, and skills enhancement programs. Technical education is also provided to help students move directly into a nursing or dental assistant job. The Nursing Assistant Program works closely with local healthcare institutions, such as the Palm Village retirement community, to help students with job placement services. The Dental Assistant Program can provide a certificate of achievement in as little as nine months or an associate's degree for students who wish to become a registered dental assistant (RDA). Other programs train students to become professional health care interpreters, child development specialists, or work in areas of food and nutrition. High school students who demonstrate exceptional academic achievement can apply for the Honors Program, which provides selected students priority registration and guaranteed transfer agreements to top California universities. For information on Reedley College in Fresno County, please visit www.reedleycollege.edu/.
- **Southwestern College** in Chula Vista serves the greater San Diego area. The educational programs offered include dental hygiene, emergency medical technology and paramedics, and medical laboratory technology. In addition, nursing programs for certified nursing assistants, vocational nurses, registered nurses, and operating nurses are offered to prepare students for careers in hospital settings, physician's offices, extended care facilities, and at-home care. A variety of continuing education courses are held during the day, evening, and weekend to give working professionals support for career advancement and personal success. For information on nursing and health occupations programs at Southwestern College in Chula Vista, visit www.swccd.edu.
- Through its **Occupational Training Institute**, The **Foothill-DeAnza Community College District** assists those re-entering the workforce by providing counseling, career education, and job placement services. At DeAnza College in Cupertino, the Biological, Health, Environmental Sciences and Workforce Education Division helps students improve job skills and/or achieve a specific degree through a range of programs and diversified curriculum. Visit them at www.deanza.edu/bhes/.
- **California's Health Workforce Initiative (HWI) Centers** identify workforce needs and provide education and training programs to meet demand. Six Health Workforce Initiative Centers are located throughout the state to serve students who seek to become healthcare professionals. The New Graduate Transition to Practice program, funded by HWI, helps improve the employability of newly licensed nurses through a work experience partnership at community colleges in Los Angeles, Orange County, and the Inland Empire. Read more at www.ca-hwi.org/.

“Students who earn a California community college degree or certificate nearly double their earnings within three years.”

– Fast Facts 2012, Community College League of California

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Which Community College is Best for Me

healthcare programs have various levels of professional accreditation through established federal government standards, depending on the field of study. Some allied health programs may follow voluntary accreditation guidelines based upon the specific disciplines. If you need your units to transfer to a four-year or private university or your program coursework to hold specific accreditation status, confirm with the community college counselor and your potential employers or future university the course transferability and/or program accreditation status. Community college course catalogues also often contain relevant information on these specifics.

Finally, be sure to consider the following when deciding between various community college programs:

- [Remedial Courses](#) – Not the strongest reader or need more confidence in your academic skills? Take courses to strengthen basic skills, develop career goals, and become more comfortable in adult learning situations. A large part of any college experience is exploring careers, making your own decisions, and recognizing your ability to learn and grow.
- [Transfer Programs](#) - Are there guaranteed transfer programs to four-year or private universities available? Many community colleges have close relationships with nearby universities or have fast-track programs to help students reach their educational goals. You can work with a counselor to help determine your options.
- [Career Connections](#) – Does the school work closely with health employers? What type of employment assistance is offered? Health professions students can benefit from school programs that partner with local hospitals or clinics for clinical training or hands-on instruction. Internships look great on resumes!

If you ask the right questions and make the right considerations, your community college experience can be a success and lead to great things.

What Comes After?

By having focused your community college plan from the beginning on both your short- and long-term goals, and successfully completing your program, it may be possible to find work right out of college, transfer on to a four-year university to pursue higher education, or pause to consider and plan out your next set of goals. Because certain health industry jobs remain in high demand and may come with higher pay or loan repayment options, tailoring job searches to certain organizations or locations, or continuing on with relevant education, may be the next step.



“Community college has been a life-saver in my pursuit of a nursing degree. First of all, the cost is much more affordable, and second, there are more options available for schooling.”

Kristy Snyder is a first-year nursing student at Sacramento City College. She completed all of the required program prerequisites and earned her associate's degree at Sierra College in Rocklin before transferring. She will graduate in May 2014.

For students seeking to transfer to a four-year institution, there are many options available. The California State Universities depend on community college transfers for a large portion of their upper division enrollment. According to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, more than 50% of their bachelor's degrees are awarded to community college transfer students. Guaranteed transfer agreements exist for many community college programs. Take advantage of the close partnerships between local community colleges and advanced college programs at top California universities.

Whichever route you choose to follow after community college, remember that once you've earned that education, it's yours to be proud of forever. The skills, knowledge, and growth attained will help you not only in your own personal advancement, but also to better serve the healthcare industry.

Frequently Asked Questions

Common Questions from High School Students

—California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

Q. How important are my high school grades for admission to a California community college?

A. Your high school grades are not used to determine your eligibility to be admitted to a California community college. However, your high school grades are very important to your future success in college level courses. In addition, community college counselors and advisors will use them, along with results from their own assessment of your academic skills, to recommend appropriate courses for you.

Q. Do California community colleges require SAT or ACT tests for admission?

A. No. SAT and ACT scores are not required to determine your eligibility to be admitted to a California community college, nor may they be used in lieu of community college assessment tests.

Q. Does having an associate's degree make me eligible to transfer to a UC/CSU?

A. No. While many students earn associate's degrees and, at the same time, successfully transfer to four-year universities, it does take some planning. Associate's degrees are not required for transfer to CSUs or UCs. But, since there can be overlap in the requirements for an associate's degree and with the requirements for transfer, many students choose to take courses that will satisfy both requirements. With careful planning and the help of a counselor or adviser, you can do both without taking extra classes.

Questions to Ask Yourself When Choosing a Community College

- What do I want to do? If I don't know, does the community college have resources to help me figure it out?
- What do I need to do to become the most successful I can be in my chosen field?
- How long do I want to attend?
- What costs will I need to budget for?

- What are my financial aid options?
- What degree/certificate/classes do I need?
- What kind of practical work experience may be required to get a job, and does the community college offer job or internship placement assistance?
- Will all of my classes transfer to four-year or private universities?
- Will I need further education when I finish the community college program?
- What kinds of support services/resources does the community college offer?
- Does it fit well with how I live and study?
- Is it close to where I will live? Can I afford to live nearby?
- Will I take public transportation, carpool, or park near the campus?
- What are the parking facilities and costs?



Did you know California's community colleges have the lowest annual tuition in the country?

National average of community colleges..... \$2,721

California's community college tuition.....\$624 to \$814

—U.S. Department of Education's College Affordability and Transparency Center, 2010-11

Community College Resources

- Information on California's Community Colleges, including an interactive directory of all campuses, is available from the Foundation for California Community Colleges at www.foundationccc.org/AbouttheColleges/CollegesHome/tabid/635/Default.aspx.
- For answers to common questions about attending college, including general admissions policies and requirements, transferring, or to research campuses that match your needs, visit www.CaliforniaColleges.edu. Additional tools are also available, including a student-campus matching assistant, high school planners, etc. You can also explore colleges and research financial options.
- For assistance with California community college admission requirements, financial assistance, or to compare colleges, visit www.CCCapply.org. Information is available in both English and Spanish.
- For more information on community colleges offering job retraining programs through Health Workforce Initiative Centers, visit www.ccewd.net/initiative_hwi.cfm.
- For more information on the SEIU Education Fund, scholarship programs, and a listing of participating employers, visit www.seiu-uhweduc.org/ and www.seiu.org/a/members/fulfill-your-college-goals-with-an-seiu-scholarship.php.
- The website for the Biological, Health, Environmental Sciences and Workforce Education Division at DeAnza College in Cupertino can be found at www.deanza.edu/bhes/.
- The Foothill-DeAnza Community College District's Occupational Training Institute website is at www.oti.fhda.edu/.
- Find scholarship and loan repayment resources on the Health Careers Training Program website at www.oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/scholarships.html.
- The Health Professions Education Foundation improves access to healthcare in underserved areas of California by providing scholarships, loan repayments, and programs to health professional students and graduates who are dedicated to providing direct patient care in those areas. In return for this support, recipients agree to provide direct patient care in a medically underserved area (MUA) of California for a period of one to four years. Learn more at www.oshpd.ca.gov/HPEF/.
- The U.S. Department of Education's College Affordability and Transparency Center offers information on college costs across the country. Estimate the cost of college, navigate and search for educational programs, or generate lists which highlight the highest and lowest rates of college tuition and fees. Visit them at www.collegecost.ed.gov/.
- At the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office explore colleges, research financial aid opportunities, and complete an application. Visit www.cccapply.org.
- OSHPD's Health Professions Education Program Search Tool is a powerful application that allows users to identify colleges and universities that offer health education and training programs. This free service can help you locate educational programs based on specific careers (such as medical assistant or nurse), various degree offered (associate's to master's degrees programs), and geographic areas of California. Visit www.oshpd.ca.gov/healtheducationprogram/.

Time Management for Health Professions Students

If you are a health professions student, or have plans to be, then you have a pretty good idea of how important time management skills are. If you need assistance or would like to acquire more skills with time management, then take a few moments and invest some time in yourself by checking out what the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) has to offer. OSHPD has developed the Time Management for Health Professions Students tool. This is a resource that every health professions student can appreciate, because effective time management skills are needed for success in a health career.

“Prioritizing sleep, exercise, and time for healthy meals is essential to surviving as a medical student or resident. After all, you can’t take care of others unless you first take care of yourself,” said Leslie Lane, a first-year family medicine resident at San Francisco General Hospital.

This tool can help you obtain optimum results that benefit your future and the future communities you intend to serve. Whether you need information on how to effectively balance your time between work, school, extra-curricular activities, family, friends etc., or you need a little assistance on how to properly take quick and effective notes during lecture hours, this is the tool for you.

Take the time to complete the Time Management Assessment Questionnaire to rate yourself on how well you manage your time. Utilize sample calendars to help effectively plan/coordinate your busy schedule. These calendars are easy to use and will give you visual displays of your schedule so you can remember your tasks and properly designate study time for upcoming school projects, work, and of course extra-curricular activities.

Let’s face it, with the demands of health careers steadily increasing, it’s a good idea to give yourself a head start by becoming successful in managing your time. Give yourself the opportunities you deserve by taking full advantage of the time management resources that OSHPD is offering.

To access OSHPD’s Time Management for Health Professions Students tool, please visit the Health Careers Training Program resources webpage at www.OSPHD.ca.gov/HWDD/HCTP.html.

Sample Semester Calendar							
Week of	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Jan. 24							
Jan. 31	BIO 215 Paper 1						
Feb. 7		Math 251 Assignment				Uncle Joe Wedding	
Feb. 14							
Feb. 21				Chem 200 Exam			Med School Application
Feb. 28		Pre-med Club Mtng					
March 7							
March 14			Bio 215 Midterm				Pre-med Club Event
March 21			Chem 200 Midterm			Mothers Birthday	
March 28	Spring Break						
April 4				Math 251 Assignment			Soccer Game
April 11	Bio 215 Paper 2						
April 18		Pre-med Club Mtng				Alex Party	
April 25							Brothers Birthday
May 2		Chem 200 paper due					
May 9				Math 251 Assignment2			
May 16		Math 251 Final	Bio 215 Final	Chem 200 Final			

“If I had not learned early into my career the importance of work-life balance, I fear I could become jaded, lose interest, and make mistakes.”

–Paul Deramo, third-year medical student, University of California, Davis

Locate health-related scholarships, government grants, and student financial aid programs using OSHPD's Health Careers Scholarship List. Find scholarships and financial resources for students in nursing, medical school, dentistry, radiology, physical therapy, psychology, pharmacy, and other biomedical and social service research areas.

Many scholarships listed are designed for specific healthcare careers such as public health or healthcare management. Other scholarship programs benefit students from underrepresented or minority populations including African-Americans, Latinos, American Indians, Alaska Native populations, or students with disabilities. The amount of financial aid available ranges from \$500 to \$50,000.

The California State Loan Repayment Program and the National Health Service Corps offer repayment of educational loans for primary health professionals who provide healthcare services for underrepresented populations or in medically underserved areas. The Health Professions Education Foundation also provides scholarship, loan repayment, and programs to students and graduates who agree to practice in California's medically underserved communities.

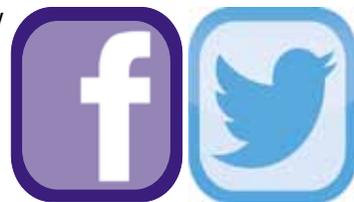
OSHPD's Health Careers Scholarship List is the place to start exploring college finance options. You can find links to over 95 state, federal, and private financial aid programs, including the Health Resources and Services Administration, the National Institute of Health, and the Latino Medical Student Association. Additional links direct you to web portals and comprehensive databases for additional academic or professional scholarships.

OSHPD's Health Careers Scholarship List can be found at www.OSHPD.ca.gov/HWDD/HCTP.html.

Learn more about Health Professions Education Foundation opportunities at www.oshpd.ca.gov/HPEF/.

CallHealth Workforce now provides information on Facebook and Twitter

to encourage health careers, increase participation in financial incentive programs, and share information and resources with students and professionals. CallHealth Workforce is a joint effort of the Health Professions Education Foundation and Healthcare Workforce Development Division (HWDD). Through social networking, CallHealth Workforce engages individuals and organizations to increase the number of health professionals working in California. "Like" us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/calhealthworkforce. Follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/healthprofca.gov.



CalHealth Workforce Scholarship for High School Seniors

The Health Professions Education Foundation and HWDD are pleased to announce the CalHealth Workforce Scholarship for California high school seniors who intend to study and pursue nursing upon graduation. Ten \$1,000 grants will be awarded to those students who meet the scholarship criteria and submit a winning essay. "Like" us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, and visit us at www.oshpd.ca.gov/hwdd/hctp.html for application details! Download and distribute the flyer at http://oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/HCTP_CalHealth_Workforce_Scholarship.html.



Healthcare Pathways

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