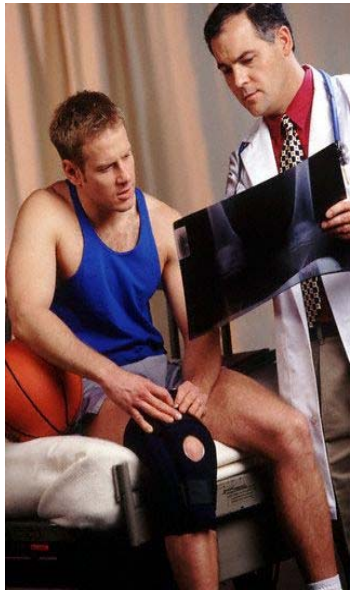
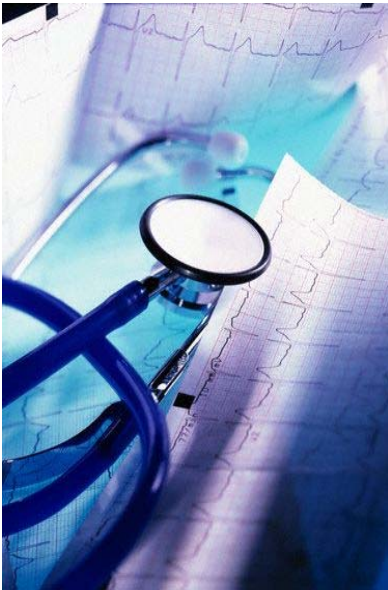
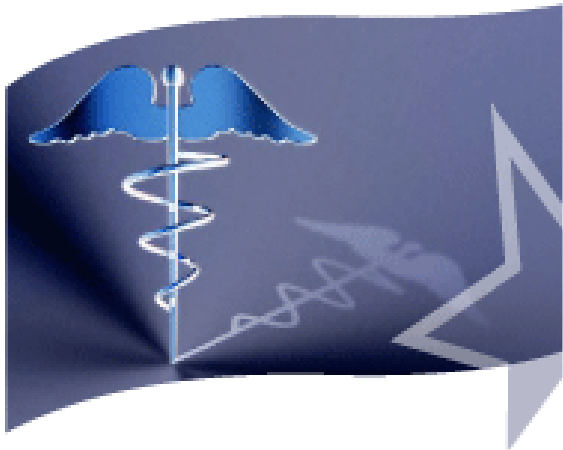


# Connecticut's Health Care Occupations: "A Window of Economic Opportunity"



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Connecticut Department of Labor  
Shaun Cashman, *Commissioner*  
[www.ct.gov/dol](http://www.ct.gov/dol)



## Acknowledgement

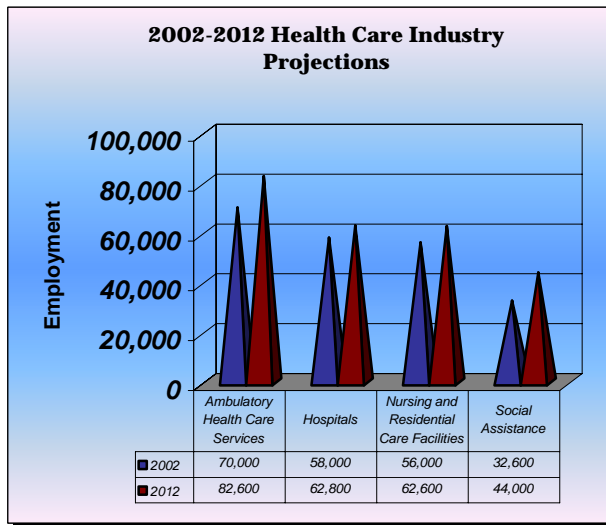
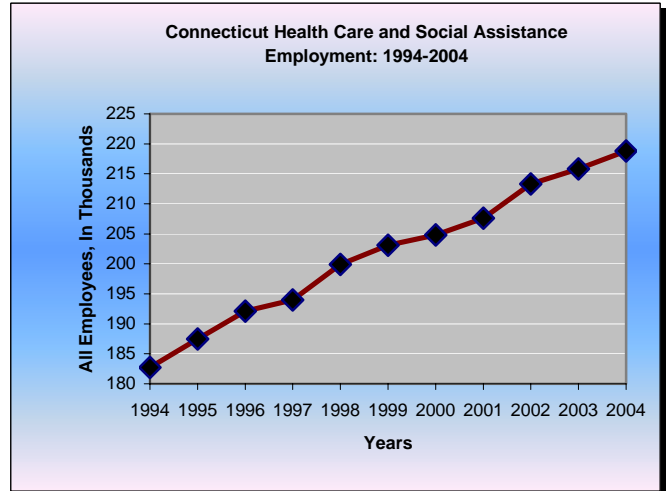
This report was prepared by Brandon T. Hooker, M.P.A., Research Analyst, Connecticut Department of Labor. Long-term projections were developed by John Tirinzonie, State Labor Economist. Occupational data presented in this report were produced by Brandon T. Hooker and John Tirinzonie.

Special thanks to the Office of Research, the Office of Job Development, and Printing Services for their assistance and support in preparing this publication. Complete Industry and Occupational forecast information can be accessed through our Web site at [www.ct.gov/dol](http://www.ct.gov/dol) or by calling the Job Development Unit at (860) 263-6280.

# Connecticut Health Care Industry Analysis

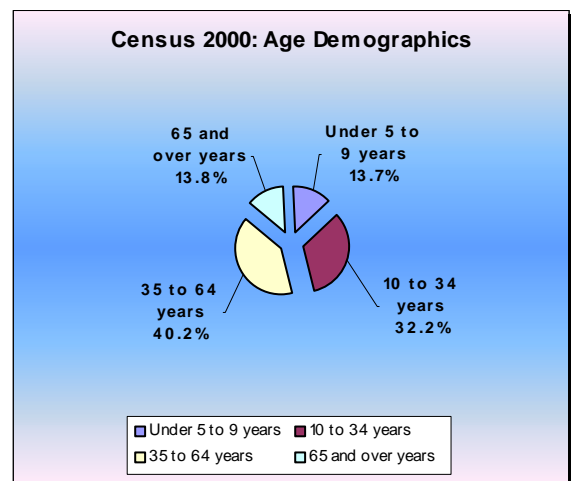


Connecticut's Health Care and Social Assistance industry employed over 218,000 workers in 2004, 15.5% of total private employment within the state. This figure is representative of the ten-year growth the Health Care industry experienced, as the state and the nation continue their shift from a goods producing to a service providing economy. Furthermore, Connecticut's Health Care industry created over 34,000 jobs across its various subsectors (hospitals, nursing and residential care facilities, etc.) from 1994 to 2004.



The Health Care industry was one of the few industries that experienced significant employment growth throughout our most recent statewide recession (July 2000 to September 2003). As the recession came to a close, the industry created over 8,000 new jobs, as the demand for services and the need to replace retirement-age Health Care workers increased. Looking towards the future, the Connecticut Department of Labor's 2002-2012 industry forecast shows that the majority of new growth will stem from the state's Hospitals, Nursing and Residential Care Facilities, and Social Assistance industries.

2000 Census data reports that 13.8% (470,183) of Connecticut's population consists of persons aged 65 years and over. This percentage ranks as the 10<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation and exceeds the national average of 12.4%. This data suggests there is a significant segment of our state that may require extensive medical attention in the years ahead. Furthermore, the Connecticut Hospital Association found 27,140 more patients were admitted in 2003 than in 1994 (*Patient Census Report, Trend Summary 2004*). Opening the "window of opportunity" for recent college graduates and our state's future healthcare professionals.



# Connecticut Health Care Occupation Analysis



Nationwide, states are continually seeking short and long-term solutions to address the pressing need of providing quality Health Care. The occupations garnering the most attention are those associated with nursing (registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, etc.). Despite degrees in nursing (defined as R.N. training) rising from 753 in 2003 to 866 in 2004, these totals fall below the projected number of total annual openings for this occupation (Department of Higher Education, *2005 System Trends*). Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) data suggests that Connecticut will be among states with a 55% gap between available supply and projected demand for nurses by 2020, with the industry being severely affected by as early as 2007.

Initiatives such as the *LPN to RN Bridge program* and the *Nursing Pathways Collaborative* were created to increase nursing enrollment at our state institutions of higher education. The *LPN to RN bridge program* is a state approved articulation plan that requires LPNs, referred by the CT League of Nursing, to take a 4-credit course at Charter Oak State College as a prerequisite to entering a nursing program. The *Nursing Pathways Collaborative* allows Naugatuck Valley Community College graduates to transfer to Western Connecticut State University to earn their bachelor's degree and then advance to the University of Connecticut for their master's degree in nursing.

While a majority of Connecticut's Health Care demands are in the nursing profession, job seekers will find the state's marketplace accommodating to most Health Care professionals. The Connecticut Department of Labor's 2002-2012 occupational forecast data suggests a strong, long-term demand for professionals in the dental, pharmaceutical, and therapy professions, just to name a few. The following occupations are forecasted to provide the most total annual openings, due to industry growth and the need to replace retirement-age Health Care workers.

## Health Care Occupations with the Most Total Annual Openings

Occupational Title	Employment		Total Annual Openings	Change (+/-)	Wages
	2002*	2012*			
Registered Nurses	31,400	36,600	1,181	5,200	\$57,283
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	7,400	7,900	208	500	\$45,594
Pharmacists	2,700	3,200	105	500	\$80,392
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	2,900	3,400	100	500	\$47,278
Dental Hygienists	3,100	3,700	88	600	\$58,760
Physical Therapists	3,100	3,600	84	500	\$66,269
Pharmacy Technicians	2,500	3,000	84	500	\$26,416
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	2,800	3,200	68	400	\$30,826
Dentists	3,000	3,200	65	200	\$131,810

\*Employment figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred.

# Health Care Occupations in Demand

## Registered Nurses

These nurses assess health problems and needs, develop and implement nursing care plans, and maintain medical records. They also administer nursing care to ill, injured, convalescent, or disabled patients and advise patients on health maintenance. Registered nurses are required to graduate from an accredited nursing program and obtain a license before they can be hired to work for most state employers. The largest employers of registered nurses within the state are general medical and surgical hospitals, nursing care facilities, and home health care service providers, offering average annual salaries over \$57,000. The Department of Labor's 2002-2012 forecast projects over 1,000 *total annual openings* for this particular occupation by the close of 2012.



## Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN)

LPNs care for ill, injured, convalescent, or disabled persons in hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, private homes, group homes, and similar institutions. Throughout a typical workday, these nurses may work under the supervision of a registered nurse. Those interested in this career must receive an Associate degree in nursing before they can obtain employment within the state. The largest employers of licensed practical nurses within the state are nursing care facilities, physicians offices, and employment service providers, offering average annual salaries over \$45,000. This occupation is forecasted to provide over 200 *total annual openings* for job seekers by 2012.

## Physical Therapists

This type of therapist is responsible for assessing, planning, and participating in rehabilitative programs that improve mobility, relieve pain, increase strength, and decrease or prevent deformity of patients suffering from disease or injury. A master's degree in physical therapy is the primary educational requirement for employment within this segment of healthcare. The largest employers of physical therapists within the state are general medical and surgical hospitals and nursing care facilities, offering average annual salaries over \$66,000. The 2002-2012 occupational forecast projects an *employment change* of over 500 new jobs over the ten-year period.



## Health Care Occupations in Demand continued

### Dentists

Dentists diagnose and treat diseases, injuries, and malformations of teeth and gums and related oral structures. They may also treat diseases of nerve, pulp, and other dental tissues affecting vitality of teeth. Dentists are required to complete a professional degree program before practicing dentistry in the state. The largest employers of dentists are colleges, universities, and professional schools, dentist offices, and outpatient care centers, offering average annual salaries of over \$130,000. This occupation is forecasted to produce over 60 *total annual openings* throughout the ten-year period.



### Dental Hygienists

Dental hygienists clean teeth and examine oral areas, head, and neck for signs of oral disease under the supervision of a dentist. They may also educate patients on oral hygiene, take and develop X-rays, or apply fluoride or sealants. For employment in Connecticut, most employers require job seekers to attain an Associate degree. The largest employers of dental hygienists within the state are dental offices, employment service providers, and outpatient care centers, offering average annual salaries of over \$58,000. The 2002-2012 occupational forecast projects an *employment change* of over 600 new jobs.

### Radiologic Technologists and Technicians

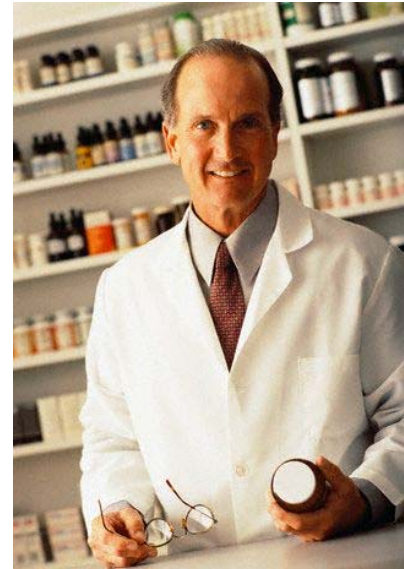
This type of technician takes X-rays and CAT scans or administers nonradioactive materials into patient's blood stream for diagnostic purposes. They may also be responsible for displaying portions of the human body on X-ray film or fluoroscopic screen. The minimum education requirement for this position is an Associate degree. The largest employers of radiologic technologists and technicians within the state are general medical and surgical hospitals, medical and diagnostic laboratories, and physician offices, offering average annual salaries of over \$47,000. This occupation is forecasted to produce over 60 *total annual openings* throughout the ten-year period.



## Health Care Occupations in Demand continued

### Pharmacists

A pharmacist's major responsibility is to dispense drugs prescribed by physicians and other health practitioners and provide information to patients about medications and their use. They may also advise physicians and other health practitioners on the selection, dosage, interactions, and side effects of medications. Pharmacists are required to acquire a professional degree and become licensed in this profession in order to practice in Connecticut. The largest employers of pharmacists within the state are health and personal care stores, general medical and surgical hospitals, and grocery stores, offering average annual salaries of over \$80,000. Over 100 *total annual openings* are forecasted for this occupation throughout the ten-year period.



### Pharmacy Technician

This type of technician prepares medications under the direction of a pharmacist and may measure, mix, count out, label, and record amounts and dosages of medications. This occupation requires moderate-term on-the-job training, but employers favor those who have completed formal training and certification. The largest employers of pharmacy technicians within the state are general medical and surgical hospitals and health and personal care stores, offering average annual salaries over \$26,000. According to the ten-year forecasts, the state's economy is forecasted to produce over 80 *total annual openings* from 2002-2012.

### Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics

These healthcare professionals assess injuries, administer emergency medical care, and extricate trapped individuals. They are also responsible for transporting injured or sick persons to medical facilities. This position requires postsecondary vocational training and the successful completion of the state approved certification program. The largest employers of emergency medical technicians and paramedics are ambulatory health care services and general medical and surgical hospitals, offering average annual salaries over \$30,000. The 2002-2012 occupational forecast projects an *employment change* of nearly 400 new jobs over the ten-year period.



## Career Advisement and Employment Services

**The Connecticut Department of Labor** offices, located in 14 *CTWorks* One-Stop Centers throughout the state, serve job seekers, students, businesses, and individuals who are underemployed, as well as those who want to change jobs or continue to move in their careers. At these facilities, assessment, testing, workshops and career guidance are available to everyone. Current labor market information enables individuals to plan for the jobs of tomorrow, as well as today. Visit us at [www.ct.gov/dol](http://www.ct.gov/dol).

**Connecticut Department of Labor Job Fairs:** Why are we Connecticut's #1 Choice? It's simple. We offer employers and job seekers a more effective and economical way to solve their employment needs. Unlike other fairs that are profit-driven, our main concern is connecting the right person with the right employer. For the latest information please check [www.ctjobfairs.com](http://www.ctjobfairs.com).

The **Connecticut Job & Career ConneCTion** is intended for use by students, teachers, counselors, job developers, job seekers, and anyone else in need of information on jobs and careers. It will guide you with a step-by-step process to explore the world of work – choosing an occupation, finding the appropriate education and training, and finding the right job. You can find it at [www.ctjobandcareer.org](http://www.ctjobandcareer.org).

**America's Job Bank (AJB)** is the biggest and busiest job market in cyberspace. Job seekers can post their resume where thousands of employers search every day, search for job openings automatically, and find their dream job fast. Businesses can post job listings in the nation's largest online labor exchange, create customized job orders, and search resumes automatically to find the right people, right now. To access this information go to [www.ajb.org](http://www.ajb.org).

**America's Labor Market Information System (ALMIS)** is a normalized relational database structure developed for the storage and maintenance of employment statistics, labor market information, employer listings and related economic and demographic data. The database development project originated from the need for a single, multi-purpose database structure to drive analytical and data display systems. To research the database go to [www.almisdb.org](http://www.almisdb.org).