



# OCCUPATIONAL PROFILE: REGISTERED NURSES

Health care is one of the largest industries in the country and nurses are important members of the health care team. The occupation of registered nurses is not only one of the ten occupations projected to have the largest numbers of new jobs both nationally and in Connecticut, but also there is currently a nationwide nursing shortage. Although there are nearly 30,000 registered nurses employed in the State, the Nursing Career Center of Connecticut estimated that Connecticut needs 900 to 1,000 new nurses per year but currently only trains about 550 to 600. Recently the Hartford Business Journal reported, "According to a 1999 Connecticut Hospital Association survey, registered nurse vacancy rates for acute-care hospitals in the state have doubled from a low of 3.8 percent in 1997 to a high of 8 percent in 1999."

## What Do They Do?

Registered nurses (RNs) work to promote health, prevent disease, and help patients cope with illness. They are advocates and health educators for patients, families, and communities. When providing direct patient care, they observe, assess, and record symptoms, reactions, and progress; assist physicians during treatment and examinations; administer medications; and assist in convalescence and rehabilitation. Nurses should be caring and sympathetic. They must be able to accept responsibility, direct or supervise others, follow orders precisely, and determine when consultation is required.

Areas of nursing practice include caring for children, adults and the elderly; services to pregnant women and newborn infants; operating room, critical care and emergency department; and women's health and mental health, as well as many sub-specialty nursing practice areas.

## Education and Training

Students must graduate from a nursing program and pass a national licensing exam to obtain a nursing license. There are three major educational paths to nursing: Associate degree, Bachelor of Science, and diploma programs (given in hospitals). Generally, licensed graduates of any of the three program types qualify for entry-level positions as staff nurses while a bachelor's degree is usually necessary for administrative positions. Nursing education includes classroom instruction and supervised clinical experience in hospitals and other health facilities. At the advanced level, requiring one to two years of graduate education, nurse practitioners provide primary health care treating common acute illnesses and injuries and prescribing medications. Other advanced practice nurses include clinical nurse specialists, certified registered nurse anesthetists, and certified nurse-midwives.

## Where Do They Work?

Over 80 percent of the registered nurses in Connecticut work in the health services industry. The greatest number of registered nurses, almost 14,600, work in public and private hospitals. They are also employed in other areas of the health services industries, including home care agencies, personal care facilities, clinics, offices and schools. They are employed in industry settings including research facilities, insurance companies, medical/pharmaceutical sales and government.

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***"To address shortages, hospitals are investing in special recruitment strategies that include men and minorities, offering hiring bonuses, flexible scheduling options, tuition reimbursement, clinical ladders, and mentoring programs."***

*Kim Hostetler,  
The CT Hospital Association*

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## Report on Teen Workers

If you're a high schooler with a job, you're part of a majority. Most people 14 years old and older perform some kind of paid work, although the youngest usually don't work during school months, according to the BLS *Report on the Youth Labor Force*.

The report summarizes the results of several studies. Among the findings:

- ➔ Between 1994 and 1997, more than half of all 14-year-olds and over 60 percent of 15-year-olds worked, most as freelancers.
- ➔ Thirteen percent of high schoolers participated in job shadowing in those years.
- ➔ More than 70 percent of workers between the ages of 15 and 17 made more than the minimum wage in 1998.
- ➔ Teens from low-income families were less likely to work than other teens were from 1994 to 1998.
- ➔ Sixteen- and 17-year-olds who worked fewer than 20 hours during school weeks were more likely to go to college by 1994 than those who didn't work.

Also discussed are types of jobs held, child labor laws, and the condition of young agricultural workers.

For a free copy of the report, mail a request to the Office of Publications and Special Studies, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2 Massachusetts Ave. NE., Room 2850, Washington, D.C., 20212; call (202) 691-5200; or read the report online at <http://stats.bls.gov/opub/rylf/rylfhome.htm>.

*This article is reprinted as appeared in the Occupational Outlook Quarterly, Winter 2000-01, at <http://stats.bls.gov>.*

## Wage and Workplace Guidelines for Kids in School

The Connecticut Department of Labor's Wage & Workplace Standards Division can answer many questions about workplace regulations. Below is a guideline of rules for minors in the workplace, but it is not all inclusive. For more information, call the Wage & Workplace Standards Division at (860) 263-6791, or visit [www.ctdol.state.ct.us](http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us).

### Permitted Hours of Work for Students 16 & 17 Years Old

#### *In Restaurants/Recreational/Amusement/Theatres* School Weeks

- 6 hours per day on school days
- 8 hours per day on Fri., Sat., Sun.
- 6 days/32 hours per week
- 6am-11pm (midnight if no school the next day)

#### Non-School Weeks

- 8 hours per day
- 6 days/48 hours per week

#### *In Retail/Mercantile/Manufacturing/Mechanical* School Weeks

- 6 hours per day on school days
- 8 hours per day on Fri., Sat., Sun.
- 6 days/32 hours per week
- 6am-10pm (11pm if no school the next day)

#### Non-School Weeks

- 8 hours per day
- 6 days/48 hours per week

#### *In Hairdressing/Bowling Alley/Pool Hall/Photography* School Weeks

- 6 hours per day on school days
- 8 hours per day on Fri., Sat., Sun.
- 6 days/32 hours per week
- 6am-10pm

#### Non-School Weeks

- 8 hours per day
- 6 days/48 hours per week

### Guidelines for Working Students 14 & 15 Years Old

#### *May work in...*

- agriculture
  - hospitals/convalescent homes\*
  - hotels/motels\*
  - banks
  - insurance companies,
  - professional offices (lawyers, CPAs, etc.)
  - municipalities (libraries, park & rec., etc.)
  - licensed summer camps
  - acting
  - street trades (babysitting, newspapers, household chores for homeowners, etc.)
- \*no food service or laundry.

Note: 15 year olds may be employed in retail/mercantile establishments, as baggers, cashiers, or stock clerks during NON-SCHOOL weeks only, and in retail FOOD STORES on Saturdays only in school weeks.

#### *May not work...*

- during school hours
- before 7am or after 7pm (except from July 1st to Labor Day, when hours are extended to 9pm)
- more than 3 hours on school days, 8 hours on non-school days
- more than 18 hours in school weeks, 40 hours in non-school weeks



# Job & Career **ConneCTion**

www.ctjobandcareer.org

... Connect to Your Future in Connecticut

A comprehensive source of information on Connecticut jobs and careers has arrived at [www.ctjobandcareer.org](http://www.ctjobandcareer.org). Created by the Connecticut Department of Labor, the Job & Career ConneCTion guides visitors in a five step process to find appropriate occupations, research the wages and job growth of occupations, find education and training sites, search for jobs and employers, and refine job search skills. Articles of interests cover a wide variety of topics including financial aid, starting a business, legal rights while job searching, and vocational education. The Job and Career ConneCTion will even find day care and transportation services in your area.

The Connecticut Job & Career ConneCTion is unique because its wage information and projected job growth for occupations are specific to Connecticut. The data is taken directly from the Department of Labor Office of Research's surveys of Connecticut businesses. Data is even available for specific areas of the state. Users can easily identify occupations that are the highest paying, fastest growing, or in the highest demand in Connecticut.

## Registered Nurses *(continued from front page)*

### Earnings

In 1999, the national average annual wage for registered nurses was \$44,470. In Connecticut, that average was \$49,480; nurses with the most experience earned an annual wage of \$70,640.

### Employment Outlook

In 1998 there were over 2,079,000 registered nurses employed in the United States. It is projected that by the year 2008 employment in this occupation will grow by 21.7 percent, an increase of 451,000 positions, and 195,000 job openings are expected annually.

In Connecticut, employment of registered nurses is expected to grow faster than the average for all occupations with employment projected to rise by more than 4,500 to 34,500 by 2008. The Capital Region will see the most growth in this occupation with about 340 openings expected to be available each year.

There will always be a need for traditional hospital nurses, but a large number of new nurses will be employed in home health, long-term, and ambulatory care. Faster than average growth will be driven by technological advances in patient care, the rapid growth in the number of older people needing medical care, and the need to replace experienced nurses who leave the occupation.

*Written by Wanda Izdebski, Research Assistant, Connecticut Department of Labor. Originally printed in The Connecticut Economic Digest, June 2001.*



## Hartford Hospital Training Programs

Hartford Hospital has been serving the public since 1855 and now ranks among the fifteen largest employers in the state. In its role as a teaching hospital, Hartford Hospital affords students the exposure to people, procedures, and equipment that can only be found in a large health care facility. Individual attention is received in small class sizes of six to twelve students, with the phlebotomy program having the largest class size of 30 students.

Prerequisites are unique for each program, but applicants should generally have taken classes in biology, chemistry, and mathematics. An ability to complete college level courses must be demonstrated. Candidates must pass a pre-admission substance abuse test.

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# Hartford Hospital

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Hartford Hospital programs are described below. For more information, visit the Hartford Hospital's School of Allied Health at [www.hartfordhospital.com](http://www.hartfordhospital.com) or call (860) 545-2611.

**Histologic Technician** - use skill, patience, and understanding to prepare delicate tissue samples for examination by a pathologist.

Length of program: 12 months

Average Earnings = \$18 an hour

**Medical Laboratory Technician** - perform routine but critically important lab tests to provide physicians with diagnostic information.

Two year program in affiliation with Manchester Community College (MCC)

Average Earnings = \$17 an hour

**Medical Technologist** - laboratory professionals that analyze body fluids, cells and tissues, assuring quality of test performance and perhaps supervising or instructing others.

Four year program, the first three years completed at an affiliated college or university.

Average Earnings = \$23 an hour

**Phlebotomist** - make an incision into a vein to collect a blood specimen for the lab.

Length of program: 15 weeks

Average Earnings = \$10-\$16 an hour

**Radiation Therapist** - plan, administer, and document radiation treatment prescribed.

Length of program: 24 months

Average Earnings = \$26 an hour

**Radiographer** - perform X-ray procedures including preparation of equipment and room, positioning patients, evaluating radiographs, and assisting physicians.

Length of program: 24 months

Average Earnings = \$19 an hour

**Respiratory Therapist** - diagnose and treat pulmonary disorders in patients ranging in age from premature infants to older adults.

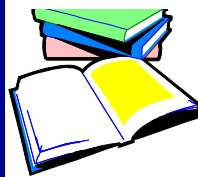
Two year program in affiliation with MCC

Average Earnings = \$20 an hour

**Surgical Technologist** - work in operating rooms to greet and identify patients, maintain a sterile environment, and pass equipment.

Two year program in affiliation with MCC

Average Earnings = \$17 an hour



## Reference Shelf

### No One is Unemployable

by Debra L. Angel & Elisabeth E. Harney

*No One is Unemployable*: a statement that can be difficult to believe when faced with a job seeker who also happens to be a recovering addict, an ex-offender, habitually fired, or life-time welfare recipient. However, there are techniques that can ease the road for both counselor and job seeker to employment.

The solutions in *No One is Unemployable* are given with clear examples and concentrate on developing job seekers' self sufficiency and respect. For example, a person with severe facial burns is encouraged to conduct a phone interview first, focusing the conversation on his skills and desire for the job. After securing a face-to-face interview, he mentions the facial burns. In this way, the employer's first impression are the job seeker's skills, not his disfigurement.

A wide spectrum of issues are addressed, including ways to politely challenge a person's prejudices, when not to refer a job seeker to an employer, and where to elicit help, making this book especially helpful to counselors.

*No One is Unemployable: Creative Solutions for Overcoming Barriers to Employment* has a list price of \$29.95.

"Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

- Thomas Alva Edison

### CCRN Update

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