Middle-Skills Pathways in Chicago: Health Sciences Sector Analysis
HS Middle-Skills Pathways in Chicago Overview

- Good occupations in this sector require or involve going through a community college and AAS program, but there exist many occupations for entry-level industry credentials and college certificate programs.

- Key AAS programs are offered at most community colleges in the Chicagoland area, creating competition for City Colleges of Chicago.

- Nursing is technically a middle-skills role, but most registered nurses now have or enter the profession with a bachelor’s degree.
### HS Priority Occupation and Promising Credential Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle Skill Credential Area</th>
<th>Occupations</th>
<th>Typical Entry Education</th>
<th>Chicagoland Wage $/hr</th>
<th>Chicagoland Projected Growth (10 yr.)</th>
<th>Annual Chicagoland Job Openings</th>
<th>Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>Nursing Assistant</td>
<td>Postsecondary Certificate</td>
<td>$13.90</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3,072</td>
<td>Gateway Occupation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practical Nurse</td>
<td>Postsecondary Certificate</td>
<td>$27.62</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>High Priority Occupation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Registered Nurse</td>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
<td>$36.95</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4,046</td>
<td>High Priority Occupation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hygienists, Therapists and Therapy Assistants</td>
<td>Respiratory Therapists</td>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>$29.50</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>High Priority Occupation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Therapy Assistants</td>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>$30.45</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>High Priority Occupation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Occupational Therapy Assistants</td>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>$31.97</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>High Priority Occupation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dental Hygienists</td>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>$36.18</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>High Priority Occupation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Science Assistants and Records Managers</td>
<td>Medical Records &amp; Health Information Tech</td>
<td>Postsecondary Certificate</td>
<td>$21.74</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>240</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medical Assistant</td>
<td>Postsecondary Certificate</td>
<td>$17.67</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1,068</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Technologists &amp; Technicians</td>
<td>Radiologic Technologist</td>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>$31.54</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>Gateway Occupation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pharmacy Technician</td>
<td>High School + On-the-Job Training</td>
<td>$15.81</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>Gateway Occupation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patient Care Tech (Phlebotomist)</td>
<td>Postsecondary Certificate</td>
<td>$17.39</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>Gateway Occupation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EKG Technician (Phlebotomist)</td>
<td>Postsecondary Certificate</td>
<td>$17.39</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>Gateway Occupation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phlebotomist</td>
<td>Postsecondary Certificate</td>
<td>$17.39</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>Gateway Occupation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Private Training Landscape

Based on Chicagoland CareerPathways, the private training landscape features a vast majority of training and private programs that place people into “Gateway Occupations” of MA, PCT, etc.

• All meet in-demand criterion for High Priority Occupations, but not Living Wage

• For individuals in these positions to improve their salary potential, they typically need to return to school and seek out higher-earning nursing qualifications or pivot to the administrative side and seek roles such as Medical and Health Services Managers:
  • 63% of employees in these roles have at least a bachelor’s degree or higher
  • Bachelor’s degree becoming the entry-level requirement
CCC Programs

Pre-College Landscape

Guided Transfer

Nursing

Hygienists, Therapists and Therapy Assistants

Health Science Assistants and Records Managers

Health Technologists and Technicians

Associate of Science

BNA

Practical Nursing

Registered Nurse AAS

Dental Hygiene AAS

OTA, AAS

PTA, AAS

Respiratory Therapy, AAS

Medical Assistant

HIT, AAS

Radiography, AAS

PCT

Phlebotomy

Pharmacy Tech

Bachelor of Science

Bachelor of Science, Nursing

Model Pathways

Bridge Programs

Non-Credit Articulation

Private/Non-profit Providers
Recommended Improvement Strategies for HS

A. Expand program offerings leading to more middle-skills Technologists or high-end technicians, e.g., Medical Laboratory or Cardiovascular Technologist.

B. Create the structures to move other typically non-stackable roles with industry certifications or licenses (e.g., Pharmacy Technician, Phlebotomist, Medical Assistant) into more advanced administrative roles and clinical functions.
   ■ Working with employers, create apprenticeship/”earn and learn” opportunities for these employees to move into more advanced non-nursing administrative or clinical roles.

C. Ensure entry-level assistants (CNA’s, Medical Assistants) aren’t “stopping out” at these roles.
   ■ Build capacity of partner nonprofits to provide “alumni career pathway” supports to individuals employed in these occupations. Pilot these programs through philanthropy but ultimately integrate them into WIOA structures.
   ■ Consider replicating early childhood’s “Gateways to Opportunity Registry” model (including registration, transcript reviews, access to informational sessions and training, access to scholarships) in Health Sciences.