



## Employment Outlook • March 2011

# Most Allied Health Fields are Growing in South Carolina

Every two years, the South Carolina Department of Commerce and the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics collaborate to estimate future employment levels for a wide variety of healthcare occupations. Their most recent report covers the period from 2008 to 2018. Summarized below are their estimates of how demand for different allied health occupations is expected to change in South Carolina over the next decade. The number of anticipated annual openings include those due to growth (new jobs) and those created when people leave the workforce through retirement, career change, or for other reasons (replacements).

Allied Health Occupations	Employment			Total % Change	Average Annual Openings
	Actual 2008	Estimated 2018	Total Change		
Medical Assistants	7,099	9,484	2,385	34%	318
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	4,101	4,412	311	8%	115
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	3,257	3,908	651	20%	112
Surgical Technologists	1,712	2,236	524	31%	95
Medical Records / Health Information Technicians	2,080	2,559	479	23%	90
Respiratory Therapists	1,833	2,322	489	27%	82
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists	2,238	2,521	283	13%	71
Massage Therapists	1,125	1,318	193	17%	34
Medical Transcriptionists	1,274	1,417	143	11%	28
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	623	749	126	20%	22
Dietetic Technicians	561	643	82	15%	22
Medical Equipment Preparers	637	746	109	17%	18
Respiratory Therapy Technicians	468	498	30	6%	15
Recreational Therapists	288	323	35	12%	14
Nuclear Medicine Technologists	352	415	63	18%	11
Psychiatric Technicians	183	193	10	5%	6

Note: This table has been organized according to the total number of anticipated annual openings.

The allied health professions and occupations, as a group, make up one of the largest segments of the healthcare workforce in South Carolina. The anticipated annual openings associated with the groups listed in the table above sum to a total of 1,053 openings each year. The rate at which these individual occupations are growing varies widely, and may change over time as medical treatments and technologies advance. Note that there is no direct relationship between the total percentage change expected in employment demand for a particular group and the average number of openings expected. Some very large groups (i.e. EMTs and Paramedics) are expected

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to have only a small growth rate from 2008 to 2018 - 8% - but are expected to have a relatively large number of jobs open each year. In the case of EMTs and Paramedics, most of those annual job openings will be due to the need to replace those expected to leave the workforce, rather than from new job growth. On the other hand, most (75%) of the growth anticipated for medical assistants is expected to come from new job growth.

Occupational Title	Graduates in 2008-09 Academic Year
Medical Assistants	278
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	63
Surgical Technicians	186
Medical Records / Health Information Technicians	97
Respiratory Therapists	115
Medical Technicians	173
Medical Transcriptionists	1
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	16
Nuclear Medicine Technologists	14

South Carolina currently has education and training programs available for nine of the sixteen allied health groups listed in the previous table. The table above reports the number of graduates from these nine programs during the 2008-2009 academic year.

*Data Source: Unpublished tables provided by the South Carolina Department of Commerce "2008 - 2018 Healthcare Workforce in South Carolina by Occupational Title." National occupational projections can be found at: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.toc.htm>. Graduation figures are from the Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Statistics "Program Major Completions 2008-2009 Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences" downloaded August, 2010.*