2024 Industry Outlook
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Together in Healthcare: Building a Stronger Future

The past few years have impacted our healthcare system dramatically. Now, more than ever, we need to work together to build a stronger, more resilient workforce. This includes everyone from those just starting their journeys to experienced educators and employers and educational technology partners like NHA- we all have a role to play.

Every path to a healthcare career looks a little different. Factors like access to education, personal background, and location can all shape these journeys. They might not be straight lines, but with dedication and support, success can be found.

Today, collaboration is critical. Over 80% of healthcare facilities face shortages in allied healthcare professionals. To address this, we need high-quality education and training, leading to national certification. Think of this certification as a stepping stone, marking the official start of a rewarding career. It demonstrates standardized knowledge and skills, making individuals more attractive to employers.

83%

Employers state they would hire a candidate with nationally recognized certifications over someone without.

Year over year, a greater number of institutions have increased pay when an employee earns professional certification.

Employers were asked to select all methods that apply. These are the top four responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-the-job training</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online training</td>
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<td>Workshops</td>
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<td>Lab/or simulation</td>
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Certification shows educators their work in preparing students is paying off. For employers, it provides confidence in potential hires. And for individuals, certification unlocks doors to advancement. By developing professional skills, gaining clinical expertise, and taking on new challenges, they create their own unique paths to success.

At NHA, we understand that no two career paths are alike. We constantly investigate the factors that shape these journeys. Our 2024 Industry Outlook gives us valuable insights from employers, allowing us to better understand their needs and expectations. We believe this data can empower individuals to navigate their own paths, ultimately contributing to a stronger, more resilient healthcare system.

Let’s work together to build a future where everyone in healthcare can thrive. We each have a unique talent to offer, and together, we can achieve our shared dream of a better healthcare system for everyone.

What percent of the following professions do you require certification within your organization?

- **65% require certification** for billing & coding specialists (down 26% from 2022)
- **78% require certification** for medical assistants
- **51% require certification** for patient care technicians
- **69% require certification** for EKG technicians
- **85% require certification** for pharmacy technicians
- **43% require certification** for medical administrative assistants
- **77% require certification** for phlebotomy technicians

(n=129–237)
Billing & Coding Specialist

Projected growth and salary for the billing & coding specialist profession

- $22.69 per hour
- 16,500 new jobs
- 8% projected growth

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2023

Billing and coding specialists main job responsibilities include:

- 75% Support billing and coding process
- 66% Submit claims for reimbursement
- 57% Prevent fraud and abuse by auditing
- 55% Assign codes for diagnoses and procedures

Institutions that encourage or require certification

- 93% of Institutions have career growth or laddering programs

58% of employers report that newly certified billing & coding specialists are prepared to do their jobs (up 17% from 2022)

Employers report the following skills are lacking in newly certified billing and coding specialists

- 24% Time management
- 22% EHR skills
- 20% Professionalism
- 18% Communication
- 16% Clinical skills

40% of employers said it’s difficult to find qualified billing & coding specialists this year compared to last

75% of employers say their employees are certified within their organization

42% of employers report that billing & coding specialists have more responsibility this year over last

Screening criteria for billing & coding specialist applications

- 58% Knowledge of billing terms
- 58% Years of experience
- 45% High school diploma or equivalent

n=163
Projected growth and salary for the EKG technician profession

- $28.66 per hour
- 3,800 new jobs
- 8% projected growth

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2023

Institutions that encourage or require certification

- 94% in 2023
- 90% in 2022
- 70% in 2021

61% of employers report that newly certified EKG technicians are prepared to do their jobs

Screening criteria for EKG technician applications

- 78% EKG Technician Certification
- 35% Experience with cardiac event monitoring/Holter monitoring (down 15% from 2022)
- 34% Ability to interpret cardiac rhythms and identify life-threatening arrhythmias (down 13% from 2022)

83% of employers report that their EKG technicians are certified

EKG technicians main job responsibilities

- 86% Set up & administer EKGs
- 62% Set up & administer stress tests
- 57% Prepare patients for monitoring
- 56% Perform telemetry testing
- 28% Interpretation of results

25% of employers said it’s difficult to find qualified EKG technicians

Employers report the following skills are lacking in newly certified EKG technicians:

- Proficiency in Clinical Skills (15%)
- Proficiency in Communication (15%)
- Proficiency in EHR Skills (15%)

83% of employers report that their EKG technicians are certified

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2023

Projected growth and salary for the EKG technician profession

- $28.66 per hour
- 3,800 new jobs
- 8% projected growth

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2023
Projected growth and salary for the medical administrative assistant profession

- **$19.84** per hour
- **59,300** new jobs
- **10%** projected growth

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2023

Medical administrative assistant main job responsibilities

- 79% Answer calls
- 74% Schedule appointments
- 68% Operate office computer systems
- 61% Greet patients and maintain files

31% of employers believe that medical administrative assistants have more responsibility this year compared to last

Institutions that encourage or require certification

- 59% of employers report that newly certified medical administrative assistants are prepared to do their jobs (up 18% from 2022)

Employers report the following skills are lacking in newly certified medical administrative assistants

- 23% Communication
- 19% Professionalism
- 18% Clinical Skills
- 17% EHR Skills

65% of employers report that their medical administrative assistants are certified

31% of employers find it difficult to find qualified medical administrative assistants

Screening criteria for medical administrative assistant applications

- 65% Medical administrative assistant certification
- 58% HS diploma or equivalent
- 50% Years of experience
- 43% Customer service experience
- 30% Data entry skills
**Medical Assistant**

**Projected growth and salary for the medical assistant profession**

- $18.40 per hour
- 105,900 new jobs
- 14% projected growth

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2023

**Institutions that have career growth or laddering programs**

- 52%
- 59%

**Employers that report newly certified medical assistants are prepared for their job duties**

- 60%

31% of employers said that it’s difficult to find qualified medical assistants, (down 11% compared to last year)

**Institutions report medical assistants are responsible for performing advanced skills**

- Medical scribing: 36%
- Phone screening/triage: 63%
- Translating: 28%
- Health coaching: 27%
- EHR super user: 17%
- Navigating: 25%

60% of employers say their medical assistants have the same level of responsibility as last year

**Institutions that require or encourage certification**

- Years of experience: 51%
- Medical assistant training: 57%
- Medical assistant certification: 73%
- Experience in administering injections/immunizations: 30%

**Screening criteria for medical assistant applications**

- 73% Medical assistant certification
- 57% Medical assistant training
- 51% Years of experience

n=187
Patient Care Technician

Projected growth and salary for the patient care technician profession

- $15.12 per hour
- 116,900 new jobs
- 9% projected growth

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2023

Institutions that have career growth or laddering programs

53%

Employers that report newly certified patient care technicians are prepared for their job duties

54%

Patient care technicians main job responsibilities

- 63% Provide basic patient care
- 47% Monitor vital signs
- 58% Perform safety checks
- 52% Ensure cleanliness of patient rooms
- 43% Acquire/administer patient care supplies

Institutions that require or encourage certification

- 25% of employers said it’s difficult to find qualified patient care technicians (down 13% from last year)
- 72% of employers say their employees are certified within their organization
- 32% of employers believe that patient care technicians have more responsibility this year compared to last

Screening criteria for patient care technician applications

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2022</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patient care technician certification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNA certification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HS diploma or equivalent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic life support/CPR certification</td>
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Source: n=118
Pharmacy Technician

Projected growth and salary for the pharmacy technician profession

- $18.17 per hour
- 25,900 new jobs
- 6% projected growth

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2023

Institutions that require or encourage certification

- 50% Institutions that have career growth or laddering programs
- 64% Employers that report newly certified pharmacy technicians are prepared for their job duties

Screening criteria for pharmacy technician applications

- 51% State licensure
- 76% Certification (CPhT)
- 44% HS diploma or GED
- 35% Years of experience
- 55% Completed program

Pharmacy technicians have a number of responsibilities, often requiring advanced skills

- 64% Prescription processing
- 59% Prescription dispensing
- 51% Management of inventory (down 18% from previous year)
- 52% Technician product verification (down 12% from previous year)

42% of employers said it’s difficult to find qualified pharmacy technicians

58% of employers say their pharmacy technicians have the same level of responsibility as last year

Institutions that have career growth or laddering programs

- 97%

Employers that report newly certified pharmacy technicians are prepared for their job duties

- 97%
Phlebotomy Technician

Projected growth and salary for the phlebotomy technician profession

- $18.53 per hour
- 10,800 new jobs
- 8% projected growth

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2023

Institutions that have career growth or laddering programs

- 40%
- 62%

Employers that report newly certified phlebotomy technicians are prepared for their job duties

3 years, 10 months

Employers report the average tenure for phlebotomy technicians at their organization

Employers report the following skills new phlebotomy technicians lack

- 24% Clinical Skills
- 24% Professionalism
- 22% Communication
- 6% EHR Skills

Institutions that encourage or require certification

- 96%

Employers rate the level of responsibility for their phlebotomy technicians compared to last year

- 80%
- 17%

85% of employers report that their phlebotomy technicians are certified

Screening criteria for phlebotomy technician applications

- 75% Phlebotomy certification
- 50% Years of experience
- 46% HS diploma or equivalent
- 40% Completion of accredited phlebotomy training

Institutions that have career growth or laddering programs

n=126
Research Methodology

A third-party research firm conducted the research for the 2024 Industry Outlook. The survey was structured to assess the opinions of employers concerning the professional outlook for billing and coding specialists, EKG technicians, medical administrative assistants, medical assistants, patient care technicians, pharmacy technicians and phlebotomists. This survey was in the market from November 9, 2023, through November 14, 2023, with 323 responses completed.

References


About NHA

NHA is building the next generation of allied health professionals. Since 1989, we have helped over 1.25 million people access a better future in healthcare. From innovative learning solutions to certification and career development, we partner with individuals, educators, and employers to elevate the learning experience, ensure practice, and career readiness and drive positive outcomes for the industry, allied health professionals, and ultimately patients. For more information, visit www.nhanow.com.

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