

# Awareness and Perception of Healthcare Occupations

---

**T**he Workforce Boards of Metropolitan Chicago set up two focus groups with two high schools in the city of Chicago public schools. Both took place on May 4, 2004, with Kristin Wolff from CSW facilitating and Chicago Workforce Board staff member Joanna Greene taking notes.

One of the schools is a community high school, where 16 participating students were from technology and law programs. The other high school is an alternative “second-chance” school for youths who have been expelled, released, or otherwise troubled in school. The 12 participants were from a required health class. Both schools were very eager to have organizations and professional people come to the school and speak and provide information to their students about careers in industry sectors. The students in both environments were courteous and engaged as were the teachers and school administrators. At the conclusion of the discussion, all participants were provided with information on specific health care occupations, their education and training requirement, wage levels and size of employment.

Two-thirds of all the students were in their senior year. With the exception of one student, the rest were sophomores. Almost all of them have spent most of their lives in the Chicago area. A third of the students were male.

For one-third of the students, math and English (writing, literature, AP English) were their favorite subjects. Handfuls of students indicated that they enjoyed law, health and history. For the most part, students’ intended career fields seemed to align with their interests. Examples of career choices include computer, creative writing, psychology, education, law, law enforcement, and healthcare.

A large number of the students had fathers who worked in blue-collar manufacturing jobs; a few were unemployed, and others were business owners and managers. A lot of students had mothers who were homemakers; others had mothers who worked in clerical and administrative occupations. There is little connection between the parents’ occupations and the students’ career aspirations. In fact, this is one of the most startling things about the students’ responses. Nearly everyone seemed determined to do something different from their parents. Whether or not this is with encouragement from their parents we do not know.

## Protocol

The facilitator, Kristin Wolff from Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, followed a structured protocol (Attachment A). The protocol included:

- Introducing the project, workforce boards and facilitators;
- Reviewing focus group ground rules;
- Distributing participant data sheets to gather basic demographic information;
- Reviewing career aspirations and access to information;
- Discussing perceptions of healthcare;
- Distributing a list of critical healthcare occupations for students to complete; and
- Discussing what students were doing to prepare for their own careers.

## Focus Group Results

### *Participating Chicago high school students are sophisticated in their thinking about career choices*

**S**tudents in the focus groups overwhelmingly saw careers as long-term and “doing work you love.” One person even went so far as to say “career is something you get paid for but you’d do for free.” Some students thought that a career was likely to require additional schooling and could consist of a series of jobs.

When asked to give some examples of good careers, a surprising majority of the answers from the community high school can be traced to an intuitive understanding of labor market demand. The examples they gave tended to be those with plentiful jobs, such as accountants (“we’ll always need them”), chefs (“people always eat”), police officers (“there will always be crimes”), and teachers (“there’s a high demand”). Security and benefits (medical, life insurance) were also important considerations in determining the quality of a job. Interestingly, when asked about their own career aspirations, the answers were based less on demand than on personal interests. Students wanted careers in theatre, corporate law, computers and technology, and nursing.

Students from the alternative high school clearly understood the importance of labor market demand, though they were less articulate. A more important theme, however, was the ability to help people and doing work that is useful. A common response might be “it’s about helping people and there’s a big demand”, or (firefighters) “saving lives is very rewarding.” In terms of career aspirations, these

students were more driven by their passion (e.g., music, cars, computer graphics) and again, desire to help people (e.g., criminal justice, physical therapist<sup>1</sup>).

**Everyone agreed that health care mattered** and that the most positive aspects of work in healthcare were:

- Helping people and community (“making a difference”).
- Saving lives, and
- “Respect from other people.”

Students at the community high school knew that there were plenty of jobs available for nurses and pharmacists. Students from both focus groups thought that health care jobs offered good benefits (e.g., health insurance) even if they did not always offer great pay. Students from the alternative high school also stressed that being a health care worker would equip them with the skills and knowledge to care for their own families and lead a better, healthier life.

Additionally, they thought that health care jobs were secure and transferable (“You can work anywhere”).

There was a surprising amount of agreement between the two groups of students on the negative aspects of work in healthcare:

- “Seeing death.”
- Work has “gross factor.”
- Could make mistakes that hurt people.
- “It takes a long time to train/learn.”
- High stress, “busy complicated work”, and
- Work hours (long, being on-call, unpredictable, “you are never done”).

Students from the community high school also considered insurance companies, malpractice lawsuits, and the high cost of schooling as negative aspects of health care. Students from the alternative high school talked more about negative work environment such as “rude patients,” “ignorant people,” “doctors who don’t listen” and “being surrounded by disease and illness.”

Most students understood that health care occupations required high competency in reading, math, science, and language skills (including foreign languages). Necessary attributes that were mentioned included patience, kindness, high tolerance for what is “gross” and ability to focus.

**Few students had significant personal exposure to health care services.** A couple of students from each group had been pregnant and given birth. One or two had been to a hospital to visit relatives. Five students from the community high school could picture themselves working in healthcare and three had real intentions to pursue healthcare careers. Three students in the

---

<sup>1</sup> The student actually said, “Physical instruction because I think it would be cool to help people who’ve been in car accidents heal.”

alternative high school could picture themselves working in healthcare though none had specific plans to do so. The lack of exposure might explain students' lack of awareness of specific occupations.

Students were asked to complete a questionnaire that listed the critical occupations and rate their own knowledge of the job. On a scale of one to five where one meant "I don't know anything", average knowledge level on all occupations was less than three. Students felt the most knowledgeable about what ER technicians, RNs, and CT technicians do. Most students had no idea what a Nuclear Medicine Technician or an MRI technician or CNA was. For most of the occupations, the most common response was one, "I don't know anything."

In addition, students were asked to indicate what they thought were the pay levels and the educational requirements for these occupations. Detailed tables can be found in Attachment B. The interesting observation is that on the whole, students thought most of the occupations had higher education requirements and commanded higher pay than is the reality. The only occupations for which the students underestimated pay levels were audiologists, pharmacists, and physical therapists. It is also clear that many students did not know of the career options that could be available to them through vocational training and associate-degree programs.

**To almost all the students, their parents/guardians and other relatives remained the most common and trusted source for career research.** Some of the students did seek advice from their counselors, teachers, or peers. The kinds of information that students needed include:

- Education requirement.
- Job satisfaction.
- Day-to-day work content.
- Earnings.
- Growth opportunities, and
- How to get started (where to find training, what classes to take now, how to get a job, etc.).

Many students also knew that they could find information about schools and training programs, as well as job openings and job descriptions, in the Internet.

Although sophisticated in their thoughts and savvy in their use of technology, all of the students showed appreciation for words of encouragement from people they trust. Many believe in advice they had been given, such as "Follow your heart," "Be a leader, not a follower," "Make the best decisions for you; don't please others." They did not appreciate advice that was less idealistic, such as "Go for the money," "Take the quick road, less school," or "School is too hard and takes too long. You don't need it."

## Conclusion

---

**I**n the minds of many, healthcare remains a worthy industry in which to work. The students we talked to were not knowledgeable about the specific occupations that face critical shortages of skilled workers, but they understood that health care careers could be personally and professionally rewarding.

The students were aware of the challenges of working in healthcare, from its stressful environment, to its technical requirements, to the macro legal and economic environment issues that surround the industry today. Students want to know more about what it is like to work in healthcare and what possibilities the field can offer them in the future.

Students today feel comfortable accessing the information that is available on the Internet. We can help their research by providing better job descriptions and employment outlook, as well as personal narratives from people in the field. And just as importantly, we should provide information on a variety of careers, especially those that require two to four years of training and are highly technical. Furthermore, we found that parents remain the most important source of career advice for high school students. Educating the parents should be an integral part of the industry outreach.

It is true that there are some negative perceptions of the health care industry, just as there are with all industries and occupations. People want careers that are rewarding, useful, and earn a good living. Students are eager to learn about all kinds of occupations. It is up to us to inform the students and their parents of the opportunities that exist in health care, and to help them overcome their fear and biases.

## Attachments

---

- Focus Group Protocol
- Participant Data Sheet
- Healthcare Occupation Questionnaire
- Information on Healthcare Occupation (handed out to participants upon conclusion of focus group)

## CSSI High School Student Focus Group Protocol

(5/4/2004 Metro Chicago)

### *Introduction of Project and Purpose*

Good [morning/afternoon]. On behalf of the Workforce Investment Boards of Metro Chicago, welcome and thank you for being here.

### **I What are workforce boards?**

First I want to take a minute to explain a little about what workforce boards are and what they do. The Workforce Boards are policy organizations comprising leaders people from different parts of a community. Members of the Board represent businesses, educators and the general public. In the current environment where major changes are occurring in our economic structure and demographics, the Workforce Boards try to stay on top of things by understanding the needs and intentions of businesses, as well as current and potential workers such as you. [short term and long term investments in jobs and talent]

### **II. Who is CSW/Me**

My company, CSW, has been asked by the Workforce Boards to conduct a series of focus groups with people looking for work and students in Metro Chicago.

My name is [xxxx] and I will be walking you through our discussion today. With me is my colleague, [xxxx], who will be observing and taking notes.

### **III. Project/what we're doing**

The current project, of which this focus group is a part, came out of the concern that we have a severe shortage of workers for some jobs in some industries. We have two objectives for this project. First, we want to understand where immediate investments can be made to address the short-term needs of the industries. Second, we want to explore ways to address longer-term issues to ensure a supply of qualified candidates to meet industry demands.

One of those industries is health care. We have invited you here today to learn what perceptions you have about occupations in health care. Our discussion will last about an hour. We will not take a formal break. Feel free to get up and stretch or use the bathroom when you need to. I just ask that you do that one at a time so that we could keep the conversation going. [bathroom directions]

Are there any questions about what I just talked about?

We have some ground rules for our discussion. They are: **(Flipchart or board)**

- (1) no interruptions; let others finish.
- (2) there are no wrong answers; all points and experiences are valid.
- (3) be open-minded and respectful of each other.

### ***Getting Engaged***

Now let's make some **name tents** so we can refer to each other by name. By now some of you have completed the background information sheet. If you haven't, please do so now and hold it up so we can collect it from you.

[At each place, a name tent and data sheet will be provided. Questions on the data sheet will include:]

- Age
- Grade
- Gender
- Number of years you have lived in the Chicago area
- Your parents'/guardians' occupations
- Your current career choice
- Your favorite subject in school

### ***Focus Group Question***

We now want to ask you a few questions about your career decision-making process.

#### **TOPIC A. Career Aspirations**

- First, how is a career different from a job?
- What are the top three things you are looking for in a career?
- What do you think would make a good career? You can give examples of good careers.
  - What would be a good career for you? Why?
- What kinds of advice do you get from your parents on career choices?
  - How about your counselors?
  - Do you talk about this with anyone else? Among friends?
- Examples of career interests in the room? What attracted you to these careers?
- Best advice you've received about careers (and from whom?)
- Worst advice?



**TOPIC B. Access to Information**

- If you wanted to look up more information about careers, where can you go? Who can you ask? Who do you talk to? What resources do you use?
- Of all the people you know, who would you say have the most influence on your career decisions?
- In thinking about our own career aspirations, how many have made decisions about what they are interested in? How certain about choices?
- What are some of the things you are doing now to prepare yourself for the future, whether you have decided on an area of interest or not?

**TOPIC C. Industry Perceptions**

- What are some of the things that health care careers can offer?
- What kinds of skills and knowledge do you think are necessary for careers in health care? Why?
- What have you heard anything about the employment situation in health care?
  - What are your sources for this information?
- What kinds of experiences have you had with local employers in health care?
  - As a worker? As a patient only? Related to someone who works there? Friends with someone who works there?
  - What do you learn from those experiences?
- Most positive impressions/Most negative impressions of health care as chosen field for jobs/careers?
- Could you see yourself working for one of them?
- What could you picture yourself doing?
- Where would you find information about health care careers?

**Hand out career awareness survey, provide instructions for collecting hand-outs, Target gift cards.**



## Participant Background Information (High School)

---

1. How many years have you have lived in Metro Chicago?

\_\_\_\_\_ YEARS

2. What are your parents' or guardians' occupations?

PARENT/ GUARDIAN 1  
\_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/ GUARDIAN 2  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What industries do your parents or guardian(s) work in?

FATHER or MALE GUARDIAN:  
\_\_\_\_\_

MOTHER or FEMALE GUARDIAN:  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What are your current career choices?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What are your favorite subjects at school?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Your Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Your Gender:  FEMALE  MALE

8. Year of Birth: 19 \_\_\_\_

**Questionnaire for Healthcare Occupations**

Please circle just one answer.

<b>Position Titles</b>	<b>Knowledge</b> (1=I know nothing; 5= Could do it myself)	<b>Hourly Pay</b>					<b>Education &amp; Training Requirement</b>			
Activity Aide / Assistant	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Audiologist	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Billing / Insurance Clerk	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Cardiac Cath. Technician	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
CNA / PCT	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Computer Tomography (CT) Tech.	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Emergency Room Tech.	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Food Service Worker / Dietary Assistant	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN II)	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Medical Assistant	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Medical Laboratory Technician	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Medical Secretary	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Medical Technologist	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Medical Transcriptionist	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Mental Health Counselor	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
MRI Tech.	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Nuclear Med. Tech.	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Occupational Therapist (AOTA)	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+

## Questionnaire for Healthcare Occupations

Please circle just one answer.

<b>Position Titles</b>	<b>Knowledge</b> (1=I know nothing; 5= Could do it myself)	<b>Hourly Pay</b>					<b>Education &amp; Training Requirement</b>			
Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA)	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Pharmacist (Staff / R.PH)	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Pharmacy Tech.	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Physical Therapist (ARPT)	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Physical Therapy Assistant (2 yr. / PTA)	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Physician Assistant	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Radiologic Technologist (ARRT)	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Registered Health Information Tech. / Coder	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Registered Nurse (RN)	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Respiratory Therapist (RRT)	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Social Worker	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Speech Therapist / Pathologist	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Substance Abuse Counselor	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Surgical / O.R. Technician (Certified)	1 2 3 4 5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30+	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+

## Information Handout to Participants



## Healthcare Occupations by Education and Pay

Job #	Position Titles	Average Annual Job Openings in IL (2000-2010)	Median Hourly Pay in 2002
<b>Positions requiring short-term on-the-job training</b>			
1	Food Service Worker / Dietary Assistant	70	\$8.37
2	Certified Nursing Assistant/Patient Care Technician **	1,640	\$9.34
<b>Positions requiring moderate on-the-job training</b>			
3	Pharmacy Technician **	540	\$10.10
4	Medical Assistant	680	\$11.77
<b>Positions requiring post-secondary vocational training</b>			
5	Emergency Room Technician	310	\$12.00
6	Medical Transcriptionist	220	\$12.77
7	Medical Secretary	280	\$13.36
8	Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) **	930	\$15.00
9	Surgical Technician	140	\$15.49
<b>Positions requiring an associate degree</b>			
10	Registered Health Information Technician / Coder	410	\$11.00
11	Medical Laboratory Technician	250	\$14.48
12	Physical Therapy Assistant **	180	\$16.63
13	Occupational Therapy Assistant **	40	\$17.32
14	Cardiac Technician	110	\$17.47
15	Radiologic Technologist	240	\$18.00
16	Respiratory Therapist **	190	\$18.53
17	Registered Nurse (RN) **	4,150	\$22.19
18	Nuclear Medicine Technician **	30	\$24.72
<b>Positions requiring a bachelor degree</b>			
19	Social Worker	490	\$18.69
20	Physician Assistant **	40	\$19.10
21	Medical Technologist	230	\$19.58
22	Occupational Therapist **	230	\$23.70
<b>Positions requiring masters degree</b>			
23	Substance Abuse Counselor	120	\$12.93
24	Mental Health Counselor	90	\$14.77
25	Speech Therapist / Pathologist **	310	\$23.52
26	Audiologist **	40	\$24.00
27	Physical Therapist **	270	\$27.33
<b>Position requiring a professional degree</b>			
28	Pharmacist **	500	\$37.41

\*\* denotes positions that require state licensing in Illinois.

## Brief Descriptions of Select Health Care Occupations

(by job number)

2. **Certified Nursing Assistants:** Provide basic patient care under direction of nursing staff. Perform duties such as feed, bathe, dress, groom, or move patients, or change linens.
3. **Pharmacy Technicians:** Prepare medications under the direction of a pharmacist. May measure, mix, count out, label, and record amounts and dosages of medications.
4. **Medical Assistants:** Perform administrative and certain clinical duties under the direction of physician. Administrative duties may include scheduling appointments, maintaining medical record, billing, and coding for insurance purposes. Clinical duties may include taking and recording vital signs and medical histories, preparing patients for examination, drawing blood, and administering medications as directed by physician.
5. **Emergency Medical Technicians:** Assess injuries and administer emergency medical care.
6. **Medical Transcriptionists:** Use transcribing machines with headset and foot pedal to listen to recordings by physicians and other healthcare professionals dictating a variety of medical reports, such as emergency room visits, diagnostic imaging studies, operations, chart reviews, and final summaries. Transcribe dictated reports and translate medical jargon and abbreviations into their expanded forms. Edit as necessary and return reports in either printed or electronic form to the dictator for review and signature, or correction.
7. **Medical Secretaries:** Perform secretarial duties utilizing specific knowledge of medical terminology and hospital, clinic, or laboratory procedure. Duties include scheduling appointments, billing patients, and compiling and recording medical charts, reports, and correspondence.
8. **Licensed Practical Nurses:** Care for ill, injured, convalescent, or disabled persons in hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, private homes, group homes, and similar institutions. May work under the supervision of a registered nurse.
9. **Surgical Technicians:** Assist in operations, under the supervision of surgeons, registered nurses, or other surgical personnel. May help set up operating room, prepare and transport patients for surgery, adjust lights and equipment, pass instruments and other supplies to surgeons and surgeon's assistants, hold retractors, cut sutures, and help count sponges, needles, supplies and instruments.
10. **Health Information Technicians:** Compile, process, and maintain medical records of hospital and clinic patients in a manner consistent with medical, administrative, ethical, legal, and regulatory requirements of the healthcare system. Process, maintain, compile, and report patient information for health requirements and standards.
11. **Medical laboratory Technicians:** Perform routine medical laboratory tests for the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease. May work under the supervision of a medical technologist.
12. & 13. **Occupational & Physical Therapy Assistants:** Assist occupational or physical therapists in providing therapy treatments and procedures. May, in accordance with state laws, assist in development of treatment plan, carry out routine functions, direct activity programs and document the progress of treatments.

14. **Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians:** Conduct tests on pulmonary or cardiovascular systems of patients for diagnostic purposes. May conduct or assist in electrocardiograms, cardiac catheterizations, pulmonary-functions, lung capacity, and similar tests.
15. **Radiologic Technologists and Technicians:** Take X-rays and CAT scans or administer nonradioactive materials into patient's blood stream for diagnostic purposes. Include technologists who specialize in other modalities, such as CT and MRI. Include workers whose primary duties are to demonstrate portions of the human body on X-ray film or fluoroscopic screen.
16. **Respiratory Therapists:** Assess, treat, and care for patients with breathing disorders. Assume primary responsibility for all respiratory care modalities, including the supervision of respiratory therapy technicians. Initiate and conduct therapeutic procedures; maintain patient records; and select, assemble, check and operate equipment.
17. **Registered Nurses:** Assess patient health problems and needs, develop and implement nursing care plans, and maintain medical records. Administer nursing care to ill, injured, convalescent, or disabled patients. May advise patients on health maintenance and disease prevention or provide case management.
18. **Nuclear Medicine Technicians:** Prepare, administer, and measure radioactive isotopes in therapeutic, diagnostic, and tracer studies utilizing a variety of radioisotope equipment. Prepare stock solutions of radioactive materials and calculate doses to be administered by radiologists. Subject patients to radiation. Execute blood volume, red cell survival, and fat absorption studies following standard laboratory techniques.
20. **Physician Assistants:** Provide healthcare services typically performed by a physician, under the supervision of a physician. Conduct complete physical, provide treatment, and counsel patients. May, in some cases, prescribe medication. Must graduate from an accredited educational program for physician assistants.
21. **Medical technologists:** Perform complex medical laboratory tests for diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease. May train or supervise staff.
22. **Occupational Therapists:** Assess, plan, organize, and participate in rehabilitative programs that help restore vocational, homemaking, and daily living skills, as well as general independence, to disabled persons.
25. **Speech-Language Pathologists:** Assess and treat persons with speech, language, voice, and fluency disorders. May select alternative communication systems and teach their use. May perform research related to speech and language problems.
26. **Audiologists:** Assess and treat persons with hearing and related disorders. May fit hearing aids and provide auditory training. May perform research related to hearing problems.
27. **Physical Therapists:** Assess, plan, organize and participate in rehabilitative programs that improve mobility, relieve pain, increase strength, and decrease or prevent deformity of patients suffering from disease or injury.

**Attachment B:**

- Participants' perception of hourly wages for critical occupations
- Participants' perception of education requirements for critical occupations



**How much did the high school focus group participants know about health care occupations?**

CSW asked them to complete a quick questionnaire. On the question of hourly pay, students were asked to circle the closest answer. Their responses have been tabulated below. The correct answers have been underlined as a point of reference. (For example, the actual hourly pay for an Activity Aides/Assistant is just under \$10 in Illinois but 43% of students thought it was \$15.)

<u>Perceived Hourly Pay</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$15</u>	<u>\$20</u>	<u>\$25</u>	<u>\$30+</u>
Activity Aide / Assistant	24%	<u>43%</u>	19%	5%	10%
Audiologist	5%	24%	<u>43%</u>	19%	10%
Billing / Insurance Clerk	10%	19%	<u>48%</u>	19%	5%
Cardiac Cath. Technician	10%	5%	5%	<u>60%</u>	20%
CNA / PCT	5%	15%	<u>35%</u>	20%	25%
Computer Tomography Tech.	0%	0%	29%	<u>48%</u>	24%
Emergency Room Tech.	5%	5%	19%	29%	<u>43%</u>
Food Service Worker / Dietary Assistant	10%	<u>38%</u>	<u>38%</u>	10%	5%
Licensed Practical Nurse	0%	10%	24%	29%	<u>38%</u>
Medical Assistant	5%	14%	<u>38%</u>	<u>38%</u>	5%
Medical Laboratory Technician	0%	14%	24%	<u>38%</u>	24%
Medical Secretary	10%	29%	<u>33%</u>	14%	14%
Medical Technologist	0%	14%	<u>29%</u>	<u>29%</u>	<u>29%</u>
Medical Transcriptionist	10%	24%	<u>33%</u>	24%	10%
Mental Health Counselor	5%	0%	35%	15%	<u>45%</u>
MRI Tech.	0%	10%	15%	<u>55%</u>	20%
Nuclear Med. Tech.	5%	5%	10%	5%	<u>75%</u>
Occupational Therapist	5%	14%	10%	19%	<u>52%</u>
Occupational Therapy Assistant	0%	30%	<u>35%</u>	20%	15%
Pharmacist	20%	<u>25%</u>	20%	20%	15%
Pharmacy Tech.	0%	<u>32%</u>	26%	26%	<u>16%</u>
Physical Therapist	0%	10%	<u>35%</u>	30%	25%
Physical Therapy Assistant	0%	15%	<u>45%</u>	30%	10%
Physician Assistant	10%	25%	25%	<u>35%</u>	5%
Radiologic Technologist	5%	10%	<u>30%</u>	25%	<u>30%</u>
Registered Health Information Tech. / Coder	10%	20%	<u>30%</u>	<u>30%</u>	10%
Registered Nurse	5%	5%	30%	<u>35%</u>	25%
Respiratory Therapist	0%	10%	25%	<u>45%</u>	20%
Social Worker	15%	5%	<u>40%</u>	25%	15%
Speech Therapist / Pathologist	0%	10%	<u>45%</u>	10%	35%
Substance Abuse Counselor	5%	20%	30%	<u>35%</u>	10%
Surgical / O.R. Technician	0%	10%	5%	10%	<u>75%</u>

## How much did the high school focus group participants know about health care occupations?

CSW asked them to complete a quick questionnaire. On the question of education requirement, students were asked to circle the closest answer. Their responses have been tabulated below. The correct answers have been underlined as a point of reference. (For example, education requirement for Activity Aides/Assistant may be as high as high school graduate. But 80% of students thought it required post-secondary training.)

Perceived Education Requirement	HS	CC	4yr	4yr+
Activity Aide / Assistant	20%	<u>70%</u>	0%	10%
Audiologist	5%	26%	<u>58%</u>	11%
Billing / Insurance Clerk	14%	<u>48%</u>	33%	5%
Cardiac Cath. Technician	5%	19%	<u>43%</u>	33%
CNA / PCT	10%	20%	<u>40%</u>	30%
Computer Tomography (CT) Tech.	5%	19%	<u>48%</u>	29%
Emergency Room Tech.	10%	24%	24%	<u>43%</u>
Food Service Worker / Dietary Assistant	5%	<u>48%</u>	43%	5%
Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN II)	0%	33%	29%	<u>38%</u>
Medical Assistant	14%	24%	<u>38%</u>	24%
Medical Laboratory Technician	0%	35%	15%	<u>50%</u>
Medical Secretary	15%	<u>35%</u>	30%	20%
Medical Technologist	0%	15%	<u>55%</u>	30%
Medical Transcriptionist	10%	20%	<u>50%</u>	20%
Mental Health Counselor	10%	5%	30%	<u>55%</u>
MRI Tech.	5%	25%	<u>45%</u>	25%
Nuclear Med. Tech.	0%	10%	24%	<u>67%</u>
Occupational Therapist (AOTA)	5%	14%	29%	<u>52%</u>
Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA)	0%	29%	<u>48%</u>	24%
Pharmacist (Staff / R.PH)	19%	24%	24%	<u>33%</u>
Pharmacy Tech.	5%	14%	<u>43%</u>	38%
Physical Therapist (ARPT)	0%	24%	33%	<u>43%</u>
Physical Therapy Assistant (2 yr. / PTA)	5%	25%	<u>50%</u>	20%
Physician Assistant	15%	20%	<u>45%</u>	20%
Radiologic Technologist (ARRT)	5%	25%	<u>35%</u>	<u>35%</u>
Registered Health Information Tech. / Coder	5%	<u>35%</u>	30%	30%
Registered Nurse (RN)	0%	<u>35%</u>	<u>35%</u>	30%
Respiratory Therapist (RRT)	0%	15%	<u>55%</u>	30%
Social Worker	19%	19%	<u>38%</u>	24%
Speech Therapist / Pathologist	0%	25%	20%	<u>55%</u>
Substance Abuse Counselor	5%	29%	<u>33%</u>	<u>33%</u>
Surgical / O.R. Technician (Certified)	5%	10%	10%	<u>76%</u>