

Health Professions

<i>Health Profession</i>	<i>Job Title</i>	<i>Brief Description</i>	<i>Professional Organization</i>	<i>Certificate (Credential)</i>	<i>Certifying Organization</i>	<i>Education</i>
Anesthesiology	Anesthesiologist assistant (AA)	Assists the anesthesiologist in developing and implementing an anesthesia care plan, functioning as physician assistant.	American Academy of Anesthesiologist Assistants; Tallahassee, FL (850) 656-8848; www.anesthetist.org		National Commission for Certification of Anesthesiologist Assistants (NCCAA)	Two years beyond bachelor's degree
Art Therapy	Art therapist	Uses drawings and other art/media forms to assess, treat, and rehabilitate patients with mental, emotional, physical, and/or developmental disorders.	American Art Therapy Association (AATA); Mundelein, IL (888) 290-0878; arttherapy.org	ATR (Registered Art Therapist), ATR-BC (Board-Certified Art Therapist)	Art Therapy Credentials Board (ATCB); (877) 213-ATCB; www.atcb.org	master's degree
Athletic Training	Athletic trainer (AT)	Provides services including injury prevention, recognition, immediate care, treatment, and rehabilitation after physical trauma, with the consultation and supervision of attending and/or consulting physicians, in such health-care settings as secondary schools, colleges, sports medicine clinics, and professional sports programs.	National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA); Dallas, TX (214) 637-6282; www.nata.org	ATC (Athletic Trainer, Certified), LAT (Licensed Athletic Trainer), LATC (Licensed Athletic Trainer, Certified)	NATA Board of Certification; (402) 559-0091; www.bocatc.org	bachelor's degree

Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology	Audiologist	Diagnoses and treats hearing and balance problems, determining whether a patient's problem is medical or non-medical in nature and prescribing a treatment plan that incorporates a hearing aid or other assistive devices.	Academy of Dispensing Audiologists; Columbia, SC (800) 445-8629; audiologist.org	CCC-A (Certificate of Clinical Competence in Audiology)		doctorate in Audiology (Au.D) or a master's degree or doctorate from an accredited university graduate program plus clinical fellowship
Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology	Speech-language pathologist	Assesses, diagnoses, treats, and helps to prevent speech, language, cognitive, communication, voice, swallowing, fluency, and other related disorders. Works with people who cannot make speech sounds, or cannot make them clearly; those with speech rhythm and fluency problems, such as stuttering; people with voice-quality problems; those with problems understanding and producing language; those who wish to modify an accent; and those with cognitive communication impairments, such as attention, memory, and problem-solving disorders.	American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA); Rockville, MD (800) 498-2071; www.asha.org	CCC-SLP (Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology)	ASHA Clinical Certification Board	master's degree

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Blindness and Visual Impairment Professions	Low vision specialist/therapist	Is licensed to examine, diagnose, and treat various ocular conditions and visual impairments not fully treatable by medical or surgical means or by conventional eyewear or contact lenses.	Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AERBVI); Alexandria, VA (703) 671-4500; www.aerbvi.org Low vision gateway; www.lowvision.org			doctorate in optometry or ophthalmology
Blindness and Visual Impairment Professions	Orientation and mobility specialist	Trains individuals to restore orientation and mobility skills to the legally blind and visually impaired; provides appropriate assessments, individualized instruction, family support, professional consultation and collaboration, and community education.	AERBVI	Certification from the Academy for the Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals	National Certification from the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER); (703) 671-4500; www.aerbvi.org	bachelor's or master's degree
Blindness and Visual Impairment Professions	Rehabilitation teacher	Teaches independent living skills, activities of daily living, homemaking skills, and personal management to the blind and visually impaired; also teaches how to communicate using Braille and assistive technology.	Careers in Vocational Rehabilitation; www.rehabjobs.org		Association of Educators and Rehabilitators of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER); (703) 548-1884	

Blood Bank Technology	Blood bank technology specialist; Specialist in blood bank technology (SBB)	Carries out all operations of the blood bank, from routine testing of the blood type compatibility to the management and supervision of the reference lab.	American Society of Clinical Pathologists; Chicago, IL (312) 738-1336; www.ascp.org; American Society for Clinical Pathology; Chicago, IL	SBB (Certified as a Specialist in Blood Banking Technology)	American Association of Blood Banks (AABB); www.aabb.org, American Society of Clinical Pathologists (ASCP) Board of Registry (BOR) in collaboration with the AABB	Successful completion of an accredited SBB Program
Cardiovascular Technology	Cardiovascular Technologist	Assists physicians in diagnosing and treating cardiac and peripheral vascular ailments; administers noninvasive cardiovascular examinations; assists in invasive cardiology studies.	Society for Vascular Ultrasound; Lanham, MD (301) 459-7550; www.svunet.org; American Society of Electrocardiography (919) 787-5181; Society of Invasive Cardiovascular Professionals; Raleigh, NC (919) 861-4546; www.sicp.com		Cardiovascular Credentialing International (CCI); (800) 326-0268; www.cci-online.org	Two- to four-year program
Clinical Laboratory Science	Clinical assistant	Follows standard operating procedures to collect specimens and prepare blood and body fluid specimens for analysis, and performs appropriate tests with a laboratory focus.	American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS); Bethesda, MD (301) 657-2768; www.ascls.org		National Certification Agency for Medical Laboratory Personnel (NCAMLP); (913) 438-5110; www.nca-info.org	Clinical assistant program (post-secondary certificate); high-school diploma or equivalent required

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Clinical Laboratory Science	Cytogenetic technologist	Studies the morphology of chromosomes and their relationship to disease; and evaluates the correct method of collection, transport, and handling of various specimen types for cytogenetic analysis.	ASCLS		NCAMPLP	bachelor's degree plus one year certificate program
Clinical Laboratory Science	Diagnostic molecular scientist	Performs diagnostic assay or testing using a variety of manual techniques and precision instruments; also researches, evaluates, implements, and monitors methods of collection, transport, and handling of various specimen types.	ASCLS			bachelor's degree; programs usually lead to master's degree
Clinical Laboratory Science	Histotechnician/Histotechnologist	Prepares sections of body tissue for examination by a pathologist, including the preparation of tissue specimens of human and animal origin for diagnostic, research, or teaching purposes. Other duties include identifying tissue structures, cell components, and their staining characteristics, and instituting proper procedures to maintain accuracy and precision.	ASCLS; American Society for Clinical Pathology; Chicago, IL (312) 738-1336; www.ascp.org		National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS); (773) 714-8880; www.naacls.org	Twelve-month program; high-school diploma or equivalent required

Clinical Laboratory Science	Medical laboratory technician (MLT); Clinical laboratory technician	Performs general tests in all laboratory areas: blood banking, chemistry, hematology, immunology, and microbiology. Working under a medical technologist, an MLT hunts for clues related to the absence, presence, extent, and causes of diseases.	ASCLS; American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP); Chicago, IL (312) 738-1336; www.ascp.org	NAACLS	associate's degree or 12-month program/certificate
Clinical Laboratory Science	Medical technologist (MT); Clinical laboratory scientist	Performs a full range of laboratory tests to detect such diseases as AIDS, diabetes, and cancer. The MT is also responsible for confirming the accuracy of test results and reporting laboratory findings.	ASCP	NAACLS	bachelor's degree plus clinical education in a medical technology program accredited by the NAACLS
Clinical Laboratory Science	Pathologists' assistant	Participates in autopsies and in the examination, dissection, and processing of tissue specimens.	ASCLS (see above); The American Association of Pathologists' Assistants (AAPA); Roseville, MN (800) 532-AAPA; www.pathologists-assistants.org	National Commission on Certification of Pathologists' Assistants	bachelor's or master's degree
Clinical Laboratory Science	Phlebotomist	Collects, transports, handles, and processes blood specimens for analysis; identifies and selects equipment, supplies, and additives used in blood collection; and understands factors that affect specimen collection procedures and test results.	ASCLS (see above). The Center for Phlebotomy Education; Ramsey, IN (812) 633-4636; www.phlebotomy.com	American Medical Technologists; (847) 823-5169; www.amt1.com , American Society for Clinical Pathology; (312) 738-1336; www.ascp.org	Post-secondary certificate; high-school diploma or equivalent required

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Counseling-related Professions	Community counselor; Mental health counselor; School counselor; Student affairs practitioner	Assists people to become more socially integrated and functionally independent by helping them manage disabilities and occupational and vocational needs.	American Counseling Association (ACA); Alexandria, VA (703) 823-9800; www.counseling.org		National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC); (336) 547-0607; www.nbcc.org	bachelor's or master's degree
Counseling-related Professions	Marriage and family counselor/therapist	Diagnoses and manages behavioral, emotional, and psychological problems that arise in families.	ACA; American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy (AAMFT); Alexandria, VA (703) 838-9808; www.aamft.org		NBCC, state licensing exam, or the national examination for marriage and family therapists conducted by the AAMFT Regulatory Boards	bachelor's degree, master's degree, or doctorate + 2 years clinical experience

Counseling-related Professions	Mental health counselor	Evaluates, treats, and manages interpersonal psychological issues, including interpersonal crises, suicidality, adjustment and mood disorders, alcoholism, and substance abuse.	ACA; American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA); Alexandria, VA (703) 548-6002; www.amhca.org	National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC); (336) 547-0607; www.nbcc.org	
Counseling-related Professions	School counselor	Helps students evaluate their abilities, interests, talents, and personality characteristics in order to develop realistic academic and career goals. Operates career information centers and career education programs. High school counselors help to prepare students for college and trade or technical schools and apprenticeship programs. Elementary school counselors observe younger children during classroom and play activities, confer with their teachers and parents, and carry out evaluations. School counselors at all levels help students deal with social, behavioral, and personal problems.	ACA; American School Counselor Association (ASCA); Alexandria, VA (703) 683-ASCA; www.school-counselor.org	NBCC	The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredited program

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Dental-related Occupations	Dental assistant	Assists the dentist in a wide variety of procedures and functions, including infection control, practice management, preventive dentistry, and radiology.	American Dental Association (ADA); Chicago, IL (312) 440-2500; www.ada.org ; American Dental Assistants Association (ADAA); Chicago, IL (312) 541-1550; www.dental-assistant.org	CDA (Certified Dental Assistant)	Dental Assisting National Board (DANB); (312) 642-3368; www.dental-assisting.com , American Medical Technologists offers a Registered DA certificate — www.amt1.com	Academic programs at community colleges, vocational schools, technical institutes, universities, or dental schools. Graduates of these programs usually receive certificates.
Dental-related Occupations	Dental hygienist	Performs a wide range of professional oral health assessments and treatments. Provides prophylaxis and treatment of dental and gum diseases; makes, develops, and interprets dental x-rays; screens patients for oral cancer; educates patients about dental health.	ADA; American Dental Hygienist Association; Chicago, IL; www.adha.org	RDH (Registered Dental Hygienist) [state licensure]	National Board Dental Hygiene Examination	associate's degree; bachelor's or master's degree
Dental-related Occupations	Dental laboratory technician	Works with dentists to create dental impressions, bridges, crowns, dentures, implants, splints, and other dental appliances.	American Dental Association (ADA); Chicago, IL (312) 440-2500; www.ada.org ;	CDT (Certified Dental Technician)	National Board for Certification in Dental Laboratory Technology (NADL); (800) 950-1150; www.nadl.org	Two-year program certificate; associate's degree

Diagnostic medical sonography	Diagnostic medical sonographer	Uses ultrasonic technologies to image, study, and reveal internal structures of healthy and diseased patients, in clinical, research, and therapeutic settings.	Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography; Plano, TX (972) 239-7367; www.sdms.org	RDMS (Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographer), RDCS (Registered Diagnostic Cardiac Sonographer), RVT (Registered Vascular Technologist), ROUB (Registered Ophthalmic Ultrasound Biometrist)	American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (ARDMS); (800) 541-9754; www.ardms.org	Programs vary from one to four years depending on the degree or certificate awarded. Prerequisites also vary among programs from high-school diploma or GED to specific qualifications in a related allied health profession.
Dietetics	Dietician/Nutritionist	Assesses, educates, and manages patients with special nutritional needs, managing food operations (including preparation and purchasing), and promoting nutritional health in health care and other institutional settings.	American Dietetic Association (ADA); Chicago, IL (312) 899-0040; www.eatright.org	RD (Registered Dietician) [certifications in specialized areas of practice, such as pediatric or renal nutrition, nutrition support, and diabetes education, are available, but not required]	Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR), (312) 899-0040; www.cdrnet.org	bachelor's degree
Dietetics	Dietetic technician	Helps dietician prepare menus, guarantee food safety, educate patients, and oversee the management of food operations, among many other functions.	ADA	DTR (Dietetics Technician, Registered)	CDR	associate's degree

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Electroneurodiagnostic Technology (END)	Electroneurodiagnostic technologist	Works in collaboration with the electroencephalographer or neurologist to take patient histories, perform and interpret EEGs, EPs, and sleep studies, and educate patients, among other functions.	American Society of Electroneurodiagnostic Technologists (ASET); Kansas City, MO (816) 931-1120; www.aset.org	R EEG T (Radiologic Electroencephalography Technologist)	American Board of Registration of Electroencephalographic and Evoked Potential Technologists (ABRET); (217) 553-3758; www.abret.com	high-school diploma or equivalent to enter an accredited program; The Board of Trustees of ASET, has adopted the position that by 2005, any individual entering the END profession must have earned an associate's degree or higher and have successfully completed a reviewed and accredited program.
Emergency Medical Services	Emergency medical technician-paramedic	Provides emergency care to patients with acute medical, psychological, or surgical illnesses. Transports patients to health care facilities for specialized care.	National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians; Clinton, MS (601) 924-7744; www.naemt.org	EMT-B (Emergency Medical Technician— Basic), EMT-I (Emergency Medical Technician— Intermediate), EMT-P (Emergency Medical Technician— Paramedic)		high-school diploma + EMT program

Genetic Counseling	Genetic counselor	Assesses and diagnoses inherited illnesses. Educates, advocates for, and supports patients and families.	National Society of Genetic Counselors (610) 872-7608; www.nsgc.org		American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC); (301) 634-7316; www.abgc.net	bachelor's degree
Health Information Management	Health information administrator	Collects, interprets, manages, and analyzes patient data. Interacts with all levels of an organization—clinical, financial, administrative;—that employ patient data in decision making and everyday operations.	American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA); Chicago, IL (312) 233-1100; www.ahima.org	RHIA (Registered Health Information Administrator)	American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA); (312) 233-1100, www.ahima.org	associate's or bachelor's degree
Health Information Management	Health information technician	Ensures the quality of medical records by verifying their completeness, accuracy, and proper entry into computer systems. May use computer applications to assemble and analyze patient data. Often specializes in coding diagnoses and procedures in patient records for reimbursement and research.	AHIMA; Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS); Chicago, IL (312) 664-4467; www.himss.org	RHIT (Registered Health Information Technician)	AHIMA	associate's degree
Health Unit Coordination	Health Unit Coordinator	Performs administrative and clerical tasks that keep hospital and medical offices operating efficiently. Maintains integrity of medical records; schedules appointments, tests, and studies; transcribes doctor's orders; uses clinical software; keeps clinical and administrative supplies stocked; communicates with health care professionals.	National Association of Health Unit Coordinators, Inc.; Rockford, IL (888) 22-NAHUC; www.nahuc.org	CHUC (Certified Health Unit Coordinator)	NAHUC Certification Board; (888) 22-NAHUC	high-school diploma or GED

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Kinesiotherapy	Kinesiotherapist	Uses exercise and education to enhance patient mobility, increase endurance, maximize physical flexibility and strength, and optimize patient function.	American Kinesiotherapy Association; Hines IL (800) 296-2582; www.akta.org		Board of Registry for Kinesiotherapy; (419) 530-2731;	bachelor's degree
Massage Therapy	Massage therapist	Manipulates and mobilizes soft tissues to alleviate pain and improve function.	American Massage Therapy Association; Evanston, IL (847) 864-0123; www.amtamassage.org	NCTMB (Nationally Certified in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork)		high-school diploma + training program
Medical Assisting	Medical assistant	Performs a wide variety of clinical and administrative functions under the direction of nurses, physicians, and other health care providers. Clinical functions may include infection control, taking vital signs, and performing diagnostic tests. Administrative functions may include scheduling patients, maintaining medical records, and performing medical transcription.	American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA); Chicago, IL (800) 228-2262; www.aama-ntl.org; American Medical Technologists; Park Ridge, IL (847) 823-5169; www.amt1.com	CMA (Certified Medical Assistant), CMA-A (Certified Medical Assistant—Administrative), CMA-C (Certified Medical Assistant—Clinical), RMA (Registered Medical Assistant)	American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA); (800) 228-2262; www.aama-ntl.org	high-school diploma or equivalent + accredited MA program

Medical Coding	Medical coder	Abstracts medical data from patient records, e.g., to optimize reimbursement, or to obtain information for governmental, research, or administrative purposes.	American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA); www.ahima.org ; Association of Registered Medical Professionals (ARMP); www.medword.com	CCA (Certified Coding Associate — entry-level), CCS (Certified Coding Specialist), CCS-P (certified coding specialist — physician-based)		high-school diploma
Medical Dosimetry	Medical dosimetrist	Works with the medical physicist and radiation oncologist to design treatment plans in radiation oncology by calculating and generating radiation doses. Helps to manage tumor localization and patient immobilization. Manages procedures employed in brachytherapy.	American Association of Medical Dosimetrists; College Park, MD (301) 209-3320; www.medical-dosimetry.org		Medical Dosimetrist Certification Board (MDCB); (866) 813-6322; www.mdcb.org	associate's or bachelor's degree; dosimetry program (18 months)
Medical Illustration	Medical illustrator	Creates visual representations of anatomical, biochemical, cellular, or clinical data to inform readers and disseminate knowledge.	Association of Medical Illustrators; Atlanta, GA (719) 598-8622; www.ami.org	CMI (Certified Medical Illustrator)	The Board of Certification of Medical Illustrators; (719) 598-8622	bachelor's degree; medical illus. programs usually yield a master's degree
Medical Transcription	Medical transcriptionist	Interprets and transcribes dictated medical records so that they may be accurately and faithfully recorded in the patient's chart. Edits dictation for grammar and clarity. May work with a variety of editing tools, including software programs that facilitate word processing or speech recognition.	American Association for Medical Transcription (AAMT); Modesto, CA (800) 982-2182; www.aamt.org	CMT (Certified Medical Transcriptionist)	Medical Transcription Certification Commission at AAMT	high-school diploma

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Music Therapy	Music therapist	Uses music to assess, manage, and treat emotional, medical, psychological and social problems of individuals and groups; assesses and stimulates communication and creativity through composition, improvisation, listening, and performance. Integrates music into interdisciplinary care plans.	American Music Therapy Association; Silver Spring, MD (301) 589-3300; www.music-therapy.org	RMT (Registered Music Therapist), CMT (Certified Music Therapist), ACMT (Advanced Certified Music Therapist)	Certification Board for Music Therapists (CBMT); (800) 765-CBMT; www.cbmt.org	bachelor's degree
Nuclear Medicine Technology	Nuclear medical technologist	Works with nuclear medicine physicians to prepare and administer radioactive chemical compounds. Performs imaging procedures in clinical and research settings using sophisticated image processing equipment. Analyzes imaging data used in diagnostic studies.	Society of Nuclear Medicine — Technologist Section; Reston, VA (703) 708-9000; www.snm.org		Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board, (404) 315-1739; www.nmtcb.org	high-school diploma required; programs yield associate's or bachelor's degree

Occupational Therapy	Occupational therapist (OT)	Helps people live independent, fulfilling, and socially productive lives by improving their ability to function at home, in the community, and on the job. Assesses functional deficits (medical, psychological, traumatic, etc.) and devises treatment plans to help people uncover, recover, develop, or optimize skills needed to make work and daily living accessible, efficient, enriching, and satisfying.	American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA); Bethesda, MD (301) 652-2682; www.aota.org	OTR (Registered Occupational Therapist)	National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT); (301) 990-7979; www.nbcot.org	bachelor's or master's degree; doctorate
Occupational Therapy	Occupational therapy assistant; Occupational therapy aide	Works as supervised by occupational therapists to help rehabilitate people with cognitive, developmental, physical, and psychological needs.	AOTA	COTA (Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant)	OTA	associate's degree or 1 year certificate program

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Ophthalmic Dispensing Opticianry	Ophthalmic dispensing optician	Fits eyeglasses and contact lenses, following prescriptions written by ophthalmologists or optometrists. Examines written prescriptions to determine lens specifications. Recommends eyeglass frames, lenses, and lens coatings after considering the prescription and the customer's occupation, habits, and facial features. Dispensing opticians measure customer's eyes, including the distance between the centers of the pupil. For customers without prescriptions, dispensing opticians may use a lensometer to record the present eyeglass prescription. They also may obtain a customer's previous record, or verify a prescription with the examining optometrist or ophthalmologist.	American Board of Opticians (703) 719-5800; American Board of Opticianry/ National Contact Lens Examiners; Springfield, VA (703) 719-5800; www.abo-ncle.org; Opticians Association of America (OAA); Reston, VA (800) 443-8997; www.oaa.org	ABOC, (ABO Certification), ABOC-AC (ABO-Advanced Certification), NCLC (NCLC Certification), NCLE-AC (NCLC-Advanced Certification), ABOM (ABO-Master)	The American Board of Opticianry (ABO)/National Contact Lens Examiners (NCLE); (703) 719-5800; www.abo-ncle.org	high-school diploma or equivalent
Ophthalmic Laboratory Technology	Ophthalmic laboratory technician	Cuts, grinds, edges, and finishes lenses and fabricates eyewear. Duties include transposing prescriptions, selecting appropriate lens forms, and processing materials to meet the prescription.	OAA			high-school diploma

Ophthalmic Medical Technology	Ophthalmic medical technician/technologist	Collects patient information, and performs eye examinations as ordered by ophthalmologists. Performs the duties of the ophthalmic laboratory technician, with greater expertise, more educational and supervisory responsibilities, and more independent judgment. In some settings may also participate in or perform clinical photography and a variety of tests.	Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO); St. Paul, MN (651) 731-2944; www.jcahpo.org ; Association of Technical Personnel in Ophthalmology (ATPO); St. Paul, MN (651) 731-7239; www.apto.org	COMT (Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technologist)	Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO); (651) 731-2944; www.jcahpo.org	high-school diploma or equivalent for technicians and 2 years of undergraduate study for technologists
Orthoptics	Orthoptist	Uses diagnostic tests and precise ophthalmic measurements to correct binocular visual disorders, including lazy eye, strabismus (misaligned eyes), and double vision. Educates patients about binocular visual disorders and their management.	American Orthoptic Council (608) 233-5383; American Association of Certified Orthoptists; www.orthoptics.org			bachelor's degree + 2 year program
Orthotics and Prosthetics	Orthotist/Prosthetist	Designs, fabricates, maintains, and fits braces, orthoses, prostheses, surgical shoes and supports, and other devices that help patients with amputations, congenital limb anomalies, missing body parts (e.g. limbs), and musculoskeletal injuries achieve optimal use of their limbs.	American Academy of Orthotics and Prosthetics; Alexandria, VA (703) 836-0788; www.oandp.org		American Board for Certification in Orthotics and Prosthetics (ABCOP); (703) 836-7114; www.abcop.org	Certificate, bachelor's or master's degree

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Perfusion	Perfusionist/clinical perfusion scientist	Manages the circulation of blood from the body through an extracorporeal oxygenation device and back to the body whenever temporary support of circulatory and lung function is needed. Works primarily but not exclusively in open heart surgery.	American Academy of Cardiovascular Perfusion; Allentown, PA (610) 395-4853; www.users.aol.com/OfficeAACP/home.html		American Board of Cardiovascular Perfusion; (601) 582-2227; www.abcp.org	Most programs require college-level science and math
Pharmacy	Pharmacy technician	Works under the supervision of pharmacists to prepare and dispense medications and other prescribed health care products.	American Association of Pharmacy Technicians (AAPT); Greensboro, NC (877) 368-4771; www.pharmacy-technician.com ; National Pharmacy Technician Association (NPTA); Houston, TX (281) 866-7900; www.npta.org	CPhT (Certified Pharmacy Technician)	Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB); (202) 429-7576; www.ptcb.org	high-school diploma

Physical Therapy	Physical therapist (PT)	Helps people to regain or maximize balance, body movement, endurance, and strength, esp. for those individuals who have birth defects or those who have suffered physical injuries, strokes, or the many bone, joint, muscle, traumatic, or neurological illnesses that limit physical functioning.	American Physical Therapy Association (APTA); Alexandria, VA (703) 684-APTA (2782); www.apta.org		State administered national exam; Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)	post-bachelor's degree. [The majority of programs offer a master's degree, but a growing number of programs offer the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree.]
Physical Therapy	Physical therapist assistant (PTA)	Assists the physical therapist to manage diseases and conditions such as arthritis, back pain, fractures, spinal and sports injuries.	APTA		CAPTE	associate's degree
Physician Assistant	Physician assistant (PA)	Practices medicine under the supervision of a doctor of medicine or osteopathy. Takes medical histories, performs examinations, makes diagnoses, provides treatment, and performs surgical and other procedures as indicated by specialty.	American Academy of Physician Assistants; Alexandria, VA (703) 836-2272; www.aapa.org	PA-C (Physician Assistant- Certified)	Certification exam given by National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA); (678) 417-8100; www.nccpa.net	Most programs require bachelor's degree or medical experience, e.g., nurse, EMT
Polysomnographic Technology (Polysomnography)	Polysomnographic technologist (Sleep technologist)	Monitors nighttime sleep patterns in a formal sleep test (polysomnogram) and makes audiovisual recordings, as well as noninvasive records of the patient's breathing, oxygenation, EEG, heart rate, and muscle movement.	Association of Polysomnographic Technologists; Westchester, IL (708) 492-0796; www.aptweb.org	RPSGT (Registered Polysomnographic Technologist)	The Board of Registered Polysomnographic Technologists; (703) 610-9020; www.brpt.org	Clinical experience and CPR certification required

Health Professions (Continued)

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Radiologic Technology	Radiation therapist	Administers targeted doses of radiation to a patient's body to treat cancer and other diseases.	American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT); Albuquerque, NM (505) 298-4500; www.asrt.org	RT(R) (Technologist in Diagnostic Radiology), RT(T) (Radiation Therapy Technologist)	American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT); (651) 687-0048; www.arrt.org	One, 2, or 4 years, depending on objectives
Radiologic Technology	Radiographer	Uses radiation (x-rays) to produce black-and-white images of body parts. The images are captured on film, computer, or videotape. X-rays may be used, e.g., to detect bone fractures, find foreign objects in the body, identify masses or infections, and demonstrate the relationship between bone and soft tissue.		RT(R)(Technologist in Diagnostic Radiology)		Two-to-four years, depending on objectives

Rehabilitation Counseling	Rehabilitation counselor	Helps individuals to overcome barriers that might otherwise prevent their optimal independent participation in society. See: Community counselor, under Counseling-related Professions, above.	National Rehabilitation Counseling Association; Manassas, VA (703) 361-2077; http://nrca-net.org ; American Rehabilitation Counseling Association; Alexandria, VA (703) 823-9800; www.nchrtm-okstate.edu/arca	CRC (Certified Rehabilitation Counselor), CCRC (Canadian Certified Rehabilitation Counselor)	Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC); (847) 394-2104; www.crcrcertification.com	master's degree
Respiratory Therapy (Respiratory Care)	Respiratory therapist (advanced)	Participates in the management of heart and lung disorders, including illnesses such as acute lung injury, chronic obstructive lung disease, cystic fibrosis, pulmonary fibrosis, reactive airways disease, and respiratory arrest or distress. Performs blood gas analysis, and tracheal intubation. Participates in advanced life support, cardiac care units, and critical care units (e.g. in managing mechanical ventilation).	American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC); Irving, TX (972) 243-2272; www.aarc.org	RRT (Registered Respiratory Therapist); RPFT (Registered Pulmonary Function Technologist)	National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC); (913) 599-4200; www.nbrc.org , Committee on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC); (817) 283-2835 www.coarc.com	associate's degree
Respiratory Therapy (Respiratory Care)	Respiratory therapist (entry level)	Administers general respiratory care, assuming clinical responsibility for specific modalities.	AARC	CRT (Certified Respiratory Therapist)	NBRC	associate's degree

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Surgical Technology	Surgical technologist (ST)	Prepares the operating room and surgical patient for the anticipated surgery. Tests operating room equipment. Intraoperatively maintains operative sterility; supplies the surgeon with needed instruments and equipment, and assists the anesthesiologists, nursing staff, or surgeons in their roles in the surgical theatre.	Association of Surgical Technologists; Centennial, CO (303) 694-9130; www.ast.org	CST (Certified Surgical Technologist)	Liaison Council on Certification for the Surgical Technologist (LCC-ST); (719) 328-0800; www.lcc-st.org	Nine- to 24-month program, leading to certification
Therapeutic Recreation	Therapeutic recreation specialist/recreational therapist	Uses leisure activities, such as the arts, games, music, or sports, to help individuals with functional limitations to build or rebuild confidence, and play fuller roles in their communities, families, and society at large. Often works as a member of an interdisciplinary team that includes psychiatrists, nurses, therapists, and counselors.	National Therapeutic Recreation Society; Ashburn, VA (703) 858-2153, www.nrpa.org ; American Therapeutic Recreation Association; Alexandria, VA (703) 683-9420; www.atra-tr.org	CTRS (Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist)	National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC); (845) 639-1439; www.nctrc.org	bachelor's degree

Note: For “Low vision specialist,” see under “Blindness and Visual Impairment Professions.” For “Medical laboratory technician” and “Medical technologist,” see under “Clinical Laboratory Science.” For “Prosthetist,” see under “Orthotics and Prosthetics.” For “Speech-language pathologist,” see under “Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology.”