



West Florida Area Health Education Center

Building Partnerships for Healthy Communities



- Area Health Education Centers were established to inspire, train, recruit, and sustain a diverse and broad range of health professionals to practice in communities where the need is greatest.

- West Florida AHEC, WFAHEC, prepares youth, just like you, for a career in the health professions.

- The pursuit of a health career is a challenging but rewarding process. This brochure contains useful suggestions and guidelines to help you take the first steps.

9th Grade

- Speak to a guidance counselor or teacher about your career ambitions. Some health careers such as an MD, RN, or ARNP will require college preparatory courses. Other careers such as CNA, LPN, or EMT may be completed while still in high school. Students should plan on completing the following recommended high school schedule:
 - 4 years of English
 - 4 years of Math
 - 2 years of Foreign Language
 - 4 years of Science
 - 3 years of History/Social Science
- Begin taking AP courses
- Build a resume based on your activities thus far and update it throughout high school.



10th Grade

- Continue to meet with your guidance counselor and/or teachers regarding your course schedule, planning for college, and your career path.
- Start thinking about colleges or vocational programs.
- Apply for dual enrollment or vocational programs.
- Begin preparing for the ACT or SAT by taking a test prep course in the Fall. Take the PSAT in October to prepare for the PSAT in your Junior year. Continue studying for the SAT or ACT.
- Get the exam schedule for the ACT/SAT. Select a date to take the ACT/SAT in the Spring.

11th Grade

- Take the PSAT in October as good scores allow students to qualify for the National Merit Scholars Program. Take the ACT or SAT again in the fall and spring if possible.
- Gather a list of colleges and their admission information. Visit them if you can.
- Start looking for people who can write recommendations for you.
- Continue with extracurricular activities, including community service and volunteer opportunities.
- Start researching scholarships - ask your guidance counselor.

12th Grade

- Take the ACT or SAT in the fall again if necessary.
- Complete and send college applications by October.
- Fill out the FAFSA in January, applying for free federal student aid for college.
- Complete and send all scholarship applications as soon as possible.

Below is a listing of some health careers you might explore!

Clinical Laboratory Sciences

Cytotechnologist 4yrs BS
Medical Laboratory Tech. 2yrs AS
Phlebotomist 150-230hrs Certificate

Dental Careers

Dental Assistant 1-2yrs Certificate
Dental Hygienist 2yrs AS
Dental Lab. Tech. 1-2yrs Certificate, AS
Dentist 8yrs DMD

Dietetics and Nutrition

Dietary Manager 270hrs Certificate
Dietetic Tech. 2yrs AS
Dietitian 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Nutritionist 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD

Health Information and Communication

Health Information Administrator 4yrs BS
Health Information Tech. 2yrs AS
Health Sciences Librarian 6-8yrs MS, PhD
Medical Record Coder 1-2yrs Certificate
Medical Record Transcriptionist 1-2yrs Certificate, AS

Health Services Administration and Clerical Staff

Health Care Administrator 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Health Unit Coordinator 1yr Certificate

Medical Careers

Allopathic Physician 8yrs MD
Chiropractic Physician 6-7yrs DC
Osteopathic Physician 8yrs DO
Physicians Assistant 6yrs MS
Podiatric Physician 8yrs DPM

Medical Office Personnel

Medical Assistant 1-2yrs Certificate, AS
Medical Secretary 1-2yrs Certificate, AS

Mental Health Professions

Marriage and Family Therapist 6-8yrs MS, PhD
Mental Health Counselor 6-8yrs MS, PhD
Psychiatric Tech/Aide 1yr Certificate
Psychologist 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Social Worker 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Substance Abuse Counselor 2-6yrs AS, BS, MS

Nursing

Home Health Aide 1yr Certificate
Licensed Practical Nurse 1-2yrs Certificate
Nurse Practitioner 6-8yrs MS, PhD
Nursing Assistant/Patient Care Assistant 1-2yrs (Cert.)
Registered Nurse 2-4yrs AS, BS

Pharmacy

Pharmacist 6yrs PharmD
Pharmacologist 6-8yrs MS, PhD
Pharmacy Technician 1-2yrs Certificate, AS

Public Health

Biostatistician 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Environmental Specialist 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Health Educator 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD

Radiology

Diagnostic Medical Sonographer 1-4yrs Cert, AS, BS
Dosimetrist 4yrs Certificate, BS
Radiologic Technologist 2-4yrs AS, BS
Nuclear Medicine Technologist 2-4yrs AS, BS
Radiation Therapy Tech. 2-4 yrs AS, BS

Engineering and Special Technology Services

Biomedical Engineer 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Biomedical Equipment Tech. 2yrs AS
Health Physicist 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Radiation Protection Technician 2yrs-4yrs AS, BS
Cardiopulmonary Tech. 2yrs AS
Cardiovascular Tech. 2yrs AS
EKG Technicians 1yr Certificate
Electroneurodiagnostic Tech. 1-2yrs Certificate
EMT/Paramedic 1-2yrs Certificate, AS
Perfusionist 4yrs BS
Prosthetist/Orthotist 4-6yrs BS, MS
Surgical Technologist 1-2yrs Certificate

Therapy

Athletic Trainer 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Audiologist 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Exercise Physiologist 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Massage Therapist 1-2yrs Certificate
Occupation Therapist 4-6yrs BS, MS
Occupational Therapy Assistant 2yrs AS
Physical Therapist 6-8yrs MS, DPT
Physical Therapy Assistant 2yrs AS
Recreational Therapist 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD
Respiratory Therapist 2-4yrs AS, BS
Speech Language Pathologist 4-8yrs BS, MS, PhD

Vision Care

Optician 2yrs AS
Optometric Tech. 2yrs AS
Optometrist 5-7yrs OD

*All health careers years of trainings listed above are averages
Certificate = Vocational/Community College Programs
AS Degrees = Community Colleges
BS, MS, PhD Degrees = Universities

For More Information:
www.flahec.org/hlthcareers/

The Florida Health Careers Guide is designed to help people explore career possibilities in a wide array of health care fields. Each career page contains information on job descriptions, areas of specialization, work environments, job outlooks, advancement, length of training/requirements, licensure/certifications, salaries, educational programs, and professional associations.



Preparing for a Health Career

a guide for high school and middle school students



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