

Dept. of Public Health: Healthcare Administration Program

Careers in Healthcare Administration

This is an exciting time for taking Healthcare Administration Degree at WKU. Healthcare is changing more rapidly than almost any other field. Future medical and health services managers must be prepared to deal with the integration of health care delivery systems, technological innovations, an increasingly complex regulatory environment, restructuring of work and an increased focus on preventive care. With growing diversity in the healthcare system, executives are needed in many settings, including:

- Clinics
- Consulting firms
- Health insurance organizations
- Healthcare associations
- Hospitals
- Medical Supplies
- Long-term care facilities
- Physician practices
- Mental health organizations
- Public health departments
- Rehabilitation centers
- Skilled nursing facilities
- Universities and research institutions

If you choose a career in healthcare management, your first job might be an entry- to mid-level management position in a specialized area, such as:

- Finance
- Government relations
- Human resources
- Information systems
- Health services research
- Health policy
- Marketing and public affairs
- Material management (purchasing of equipment and supplies)
- Medical staff relations
- Nursing administration
- Patient care services
- Planning and development

Growth and Salaries

- Healthcare management is a huge, complex, and ever-changing field. In fact, healthcare service as an industry is projected to grow by over 30 percent between 1996 and now, and will account for over 3.1 million new jobs, the largest increase among all industries.

Bachelor's Degree

A bachelor's degree is enough for some entry-level positions in health administration, a few senior-level positions in smaller operations, and for some middle management jobs in larger organizations. Entry-level Healthcare Administration jobs include assistant administrative positions such as operating assistants, marketing assistants, insurance company representatives, and accountants. Healthcare Administrators at this level can expect to earn average annual salaries of around \$30,000 to \$40,000, although applicants with related work experience may command higher salaries. Location may influence the starting salary level. Your ability to relocate can start you at a higher level.

Typical Appointments after the Completion of BSc in Healthcare Administration:

- Operating assistants
- Administrative assistants
- Accounts Receivables Supervisors
- Marketing assistants
- Business office Managers
- Compliance Specialists
- Insurance company representatives
- Accountants

Master's Degree (MHA)

A master's degree is required for almost every position in the healthcare management field. Healthcare Administration jobs at the middle management level include department managers, case managers, marketing directors, and contract negotiators. The average annual salary for positions at this level typically ranges from \$50,000 to \$80,000.

Typical Appointments after the Completion of Master of Health Administration:

- Department Managers
- Marketing Directors
- Case Managers
- Marketing Directors
- Contract negotiators
- Business Analysts

Executive MHA

It is the highly recommended program to professionals in health care who want to take their abilities to the next level. EMHA which is specifically designed for employed executives, physicians, and healthcare professionals seeking to advance their management and leadership capabilities and helps in promoting themselves into higher positions. Positions at this level include department vice presidents, senior vice presidents, chief financial officers, chief operating officers, and chief executive officers. Annual salaries at this level range from \$100,000 to \$200,000 or more, and often include bonuses and stock options.

Typical Promotions/Appointments after the Completion of Executive MHA:

- Vice presidents
- Medical directors
- Head of patient care
- Head of nursing
- Head of human resources
- Chief financial officers
- Head of corporate development
- Chief operating officers
- Chief executive officers

Health Care Career and Job Search Resources

America's Healthcare Source: <http://www.healthcaresource.com>

This service for careers and resources in the healthcare industry is provided by Healthcare Source, Inc., the internet products division of Call24, Inc., a worldwide leader in health care recruiting. The site features a Career Search listing over 2500 career opportunities in the healthcare industry; a database of resumes for job seekers to post and employers to review; notices of educational seminars and events; information on licensure bodies, professional associations, and educational institutions, and links to health care related sites on the internet.

AUPHA Online: <http://www.aupha.org/>

The Association of University Programs in Health Administration site provides general news and information about health administration education and management, as well as a job listings page, and links to other helpful sites.

Career Mosaic - Health Opps: <http://www.healthcare.careerbuilder.com>

This website features a searchable job database, employer profiles, and a health resources guide providing links to professional associations, industry and trade publications, conventions, career tips and more.

Health Career Web: <http://www.healthcareerweb.com>

This excellent website features a job database for healthcare professionals and allows individuals to post resumes, review company profiles, and conduct job searches by city, state, job category, and/or keyword.

Federal Resources for Careers in Health Care

Agency for Health Care Policy and Research
<http://www.ahrp.gov>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov>

National Institute of Environmental
Health Sciences
<http://www.niehs.nih.gov>

National Institutes of Health (NIH)
<http://www.nih.gov>

Office of Disease Prevention and Health
Promotion
<http://odphp.osophs.dhhs.gov>

Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
<http://www.fda.gov>

National Health Information Center
<http://www.health.gov/nhic/>

Peace Corps
<http://www.peacecorps.gov>

U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services
<http://www.hhs.gov/>

U.S. Public Health Service, Office of the
Surgeon General <http://phs.os.dhhs.gov/>

Other resources based on the information collected by the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE)

1. **[American Association of Health Plans](#)**
1129 20th St. N.W., Ste. 600
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 778-3200
2. **[American Association of Healthcare Consultants](#)**
11208 Waples Mill Rd., Ste. 109
Fairfax, VA 22030
(703) 691-2242
3. **[American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging](#)**
901 E St., N.W., Ste. 500
Washington, DC 20004-2037
(202) 783-2242
4. **[American College of Healthcare Executives](#)**
1 N. Franklin St., Ste. 1700
Chicago, IL 60606-3529
(312) 424-2800
5. **[American College of Medical Practice Executives](#)**
104 Inverness Terrace, E.
Englewood, CO 80112-5306
(303) 799-1111

6. [**American College of Physician Executives**](#)
4890 W. Kennedy Blvd., Ste. 200
Tampa, FL 33609-2575
(813) 287-2000
7. [**American Hospital Association**](#)
1 N. Franklin St., Ste. 2700
Chicago, IL 60606
(312) 422-3000
8. [**American Organization of Nurse Executives**](#)
1 N. Franklin St., Ste. 3400
Chicago, IL 60606
(312) 422-2800
9. [**American Public Health Association**](#)
1015 15th St., N.W., Ste. 300
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 789-5600
10. **Association of Behavioral Healthcare Managers**
60 Revere Dr., Ste. 500
Northbrook, IL 60062
(847) 480-9626
11. [**Association of University Programs in Health Administration**](#)
2000 N. 14th St., Ste. 780
Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 894-0940
12. [**Canadian College of Health Leaders**](#)
350 Sparks St., Ste. 402
Ottawa, ON K1R 7S8 Canada
(613) 235-7218
13. **Canadian Hospital Association**
17 York St., Ste. 100
Ottawa, ON K1N 9J6 Canada
(613) 241-8005
14. [**Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education**](#)
730 Eleventh Street, NW, Ste. 410
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 638-5131
15. [**Healthcare Financial Management Association**](#)
Two Westbrook Corporate Center, Ste. 700
Westchester, IL 60154
(708) 531-9600

ACHE: How to Make Your Career Happen in Health Services

Here are some general guidelines to help you begin to set and achieve your career goals:

Investigate many educational programs—both graduate and undergraduate—before you make a commitment of time and money. (A list of links to CAHME-accredited graduate programs follows.) Programs vary widely from location to location.

Some offer a broad summary of the field, while others provide training in managing specific kinds of organizations.

Develop your people skills. Your success as a healthcare executive will depend on your ability to get along with diverse groups of people: employees, physicians, vendors, governing boards, and the public. Learn how to motivate, negotiate, and manage.

Develop strong quantitative skills. Healthcare executives must understand financial strategies and accounting principles, and they must be able to interpret data.

Stay current on healthcare trends. Be aware of shifting opportunities resulting from changing demographics and reimbursement trends to developments in healthcare policy

Read about healthcare. You can find interesting articles in local newspapers, national magazines such as *Newsweek* and *Time*, and trade publications such as [*Healthcare Executive*](#), [*Frontiers of Health Services Management*](#), [*Journal of Healthcare Management*](#), and *Modern Healthcare*. Visit university libraries.

Learn about healthcare providers. Nearby hospitals, HMOs, and mental health facilities may offer free publications, health fairs, or community health education programs. If possible, tour a facility or participate in a volunteer program.

Be patient and flexible. You may have to relocate to another part of the country to take advantage of a specific educational program or job opportunity.

Identify your career goals and take steps to attain them. Determine your weaknesses and then develop a plan to correct them. Build on your strengths.

Use ACHE resources. The American College of Healthcare Executives provides access to the [*Directory of Postgraduate Administrative Fellowships*](#), directories of [*local chapters*](#), and [*participants in the ACHE Higher Education Network*](#), and many other tools to help you network and develop your career.