

Health Administration, Management & Policy

- **Why Pursue a Career in Health Administration?**
 - Make a Difference/Social Mission
 - Decisions made by healthcare executives can help improve life for hundreds, even thousands of people every day. Healthcare executives have a sense of social mission—they deeply care about the people they work with and serve.
 - Career Opportunities
 - Healthcare is the largest industry in the U.S., and the second largest employer, with more than 11 million jobs. Virtually all new private sector jobs over the past 5 years came from healthcare; and the sector continues to grow faster than most other segments[1] Graduates of healthcare management programs can find opportunities in areas ranging from small rural communities to large metropolitan and international regions.
 - Excellent Earning Potential
 - Students of healthcare management have excellent earning potential. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, medical and health services managers earned an average annual salary of \$81,160 in 2006. Senior healthcare executives with more experience and achievements can earn \$200,000 or significantly more.
 - Career Flexibility
 - In addition to more traditional careers in healthcare management, graduates work in many other areas including: pharmaceutical companies, health insurance companies, management consulting, banks and other financial institutions, long-term care facilities, professional societies and state and Federal agencies.
 - Visible and Valued Role in the Community
 - Healthcare executives typically are highly respected members of their communities. Hospitals and other healthcare organizations are among the largest employers in many communities and their organizations positively impact the health of the populations they serve.
- **Careers in Health Administration**
 - Healthcare executives have the opportunity to make a significant contribution to improving the health of the citizens in the communities they serve, and the opportunity to work in literally tens of thousands of health services organizations throughout the U.S. and the world. Career options for healthcare professionals have never been more diverse – or more exciting. For example, in the provider segment, healthcare managers are in leadership roles in hospitals, physician group

practices, nursing homes, and home health agencies. In the insurance segment, insurance companies and HMOs are experiencing tremendous growth.

- Graduates are also offered positions in the supplier segment for companies that make disposable supplies and equipment, pharmaceutical companies, and consulting firms. Finally, the increasing role of government in healthcare translates into more significant and more plentiful policy positions. Graduates may work for state health departments, private foundations, federal programs, or national associations, such as the Red Cross or the American Hospital Association.
- Entry-level jobs vary in terms of the graduate's interest, skills and experience. Upon graduation, many graduates select either line management positions with staff supervision responsibilities - such as the Director of Admitting in a hospital - or staff positions - such as a Managed Care Analyst, Consultant, or Sales.
- *Median annual earnings of health services managers were \$84,270 in 2010. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$51,280, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$144,880. *Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

- **Typical Program of Study**

- The basic curriculum for a healthcare management degree addresses three principal areas:
 - Study of management theory, concepts, and skills. Broadly defined, all programs are expected to teach students leadership, financial management, economics, law, organizational behavior, quantitative methods, and planning.
 - Study of the healthcare industry including epidemiology, health and human behavior, and medical care organization.
 - Demonstration of integration of course material through application of management concepts to the healthcare industry in a major project, paper, or exam.

- **Skills Needed**

- Employers look for the following skills when evaluating candidates for entry-level positions:
 - appropriate education
 - healthcare work experience
 - communication skills
 - general management skills
 - leadership skills
 - business planning skills
 - quantitative skills
 - fit with organizational objectives and mission

- **Related Organizations**
 - ACHE Student Information
 - ACHE Career Services
 - ExploreHealthCareers.org
 - HealthCareers.org
 - HealthManagementCareers.org
 - MGMA Student Information

- **Additional Resources**
 - AUPHA Directory of Programs
 - A resource for faculty, prospective students, parents and advisors on the requirements of AUPHA's member programs.
 - Healthcare Administration, Management & Policy Centralized Application Service
 - The Centralized Application Service (known as HAMPCAS) is dedicated to applicants to graduate programs in health administration, healthcare management and health policy.
 - AUPHA Body of Knowledge
 - The AUPHA Body of Knowledge delineates the content that students can expect to learn in health management programs during the course of their study.

- **Idealist Graduate Degree Fairs**
 - These fairs connect prospective students with graduate schools in fields such as public administration, public policy, nonprofit management, global and public health.

- **Educational Requirements**
 - Degrees in healthcare management/administration are available at baccalaureate, master's and doctoral level. Most baccalaureate programs offer students three options: 1) general management; 2) specialist training in a specific discipline such as financial management or 3) focus on a specific segment of the industry such as ambulatory care or long-term care. AUPHA sponsors a certification process for undergraduate programs in healthcare management.
 - **Undergraduate Degrees**
 - For the student confident in wanting an administrative career in a sector of the healthcare industry, the undergraduate program can provide the basic knowledge, skills and applied studies needed for entry-level positions. It can also be the springboard to a graduate program for those seeking higher-level positions.

- For the clinician, the undergraduate program can provide a course of study in healthcare management and prepare them for leadership positions within their clinical specialty.
 - For the student who wants to be a clinician, the undergraduate program could provide the foundation in learning they need to go on to their chosen area.
- **Graduate Degrees**
 - A B.S. or B.A. degree - in any field of study - is the primary prerequisite for admission to a graduate program. There are a variety of options -- the traditional route of a master's degree in health administration or public health, degrees in business with course concentration in health services management or joint degrees--a master's degree in both business administration and public health, for example.
 - Graduate programs generally last two years and include coursework in healthcare policy and law, marketing, organizational behavior, healthcare financing, human resources, and other healthcare management topics. This program may also include a supervised internship, residency, or fellowship.
 - The Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME) accredits master's level programs that prepare administrators for healthcare organizations according to established criteria.
 - Executive education and continuing education programs in healthcare management are available for those currently employed in the field who want to broaden their knowledge and improve their skill base.
- **Doctoral Degrees**
 - A doctoral degree in healthcare management, administration, research and policy, which is offered by many AUPHA member universities, or a doctoral degree in a related discipline - economics, political science, accounting, etc. - is required to teach at the college level.