

Physicians: Alternative Careers

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Physicians: Alternative Careers

In BC, physicians (general practitioners [GPs], family physicians) diagnose and treat people who are injured or ill.

You may find that your international training and experience as a physician are not immediately accepted in B.C. The skills you have acquired (patient care, communication, interpersonal and analytical skills, compassion and understanding) can be used in these alternative careers:

- managers in health care [NOC 2021: 30010]
- health policy researchers / analysts [NOC 2021: 41404]
- public health inspectors [NOC 2021: 21120]
- health care aides [NOC 2021: 33102]
- medical laboratory assistant and technologists [NOC 2021: 33101 & 32120]

Alternative Careers:

Managers in Health Care [NOC 2021: 30010]

You make sure that health service centres operate efficiently and provide proper care to patients. You work in hospitals, outpatient clinics, drug abuse treatment centres, home health care agencies, and long-term care facilities.

Duties include:

- develop policies and procedures and make sure they are followed
- plan and coordinate departmental activities

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- handle budgeting and accounting
- manage staff members
- evaluate patient services and develop medical programs

Requirements:

- usually required to have the education and training of the medical professionals in the department you are managing
- several years of experience in the relevant profession, including supervisory experience, are usually required
- certification in the relevant profession may be required

Skills:

- strong communication, decision making and leadership skills

Wages:

- median hourly wage: \$49.90

Source: WorkBC <https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/managers-health-care>

Health Policy Researchers, Analysts [NOC 2021: 41404]

You conduct research, produce reports and administer health care policies and programs.

Duties include:

- monitor and evaluate health care programs operated by government agencies or private organizations
- compile and analyse statistical information provided by private and public health care institutions and organizations and produce reports
- assist in developing government health policy and providing advice to senior managers and officials on issues such as health promotion, regulation, standards and financing

Requirements:

- post-secondary degree in health science, hospital administration or other relevant discipline

Skills:

- understand health and medical terminology
- research and report writing
- strong planning and leadership skills

Wages:

- median hourly wage: \$40.00

Source: WorkBC <https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/health-policy-researchers-consultants-and-program-officers>

Public and Environmental Health and Safety Professionals [NOC 2021: 21120]

Also referred to as: public health inspector, environmental health officer, occupational health and safety officer, health standards inspector

You evaluate and monitor health and safety hazards and develop strategies to control risks in the workplace. You inspect restaurants, public facilities, industrial sites, and other workplaces to ensure compliance with government regulations regarding sanitation, pollution control, the handling and storage of hazardous substances and workplace safety.

Duties include:

- inspect the sanitary conditions of restaurants, hotels, schools, hospitals and other public facilities or institutions
- conduct surveys and monitor programs of the natural environment to identify sources of pollution
- investigate health and safety related complaints, spills of hazardous chemicals, outbreaks of diseases or poisonings and workplace accidents

Requirements:

- certification with the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI) is required:
<https://ciphi.ca/certification/>
 - Foreign-trained public health professionals seeking a CPHI certification may apply to gain recognition of their academic qualifications by the Board of Certification:
<https://ciphi.ca/certification/foreign-trained-ephp/>
- if you have 2 years relevant post-secondary course work you may apply for a two year program, *Environmental Public Health*, offered through BCIT. Program includes 12 week practicum:
<https://www.bcit.ca/programs/environmental-public-health-bachelor-of-environmental-public-health-full-time-8520benvh/>

Skills:

- strong communication and problem solving skills

Wages:

- median hourly wage: \$38.50

Source: WorkBC <https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/public-and-environmental-health-and-safety-professionals>

Health Care Assistant (HCA) OR Health Care Aides [NOC 2021: 33102]

You assist people, especially older adults, who require basic care. You also help to promote and maintain clients' physical, emotional, and social well-being. HCAs work within a health care team in care facilities or independently within the community.

Duties:

- assist clients with the tasks of daily living
- help deliver care and rehabilitation programs to people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions

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- provide for the comfort, safety and well-being of clients
- assist with recreational activities

Requirements:

- 6-9 month post-secondary certificate program, criminal record check
- registration with the BC Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry is required to work for publicly funded employers in BC - includes acute care, assisted living care, long-term care, and home and community care
<https://www.cachwr.bc.ca/>

Skills:

- good understanding of the conditions that lead to disability
- demonstrate sensitivity and respect for clients' individuality and culture
- communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing
- ability to work as a member of a team
- physical ability to carry out the duties of the position
- ability to organize work and manage time
- ability to safely operate lifts and other equipment

Wages:

- median hourly wage: \$25.00

Source: WorkBC <https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/nurse-aides-orderlies-and-patient-service-associates>

Medical Laboratory Technologists [NOC 2021: 32120] or Medical Laboratory Assistants [NOC 2021: 33101]

You may also wish to investigate working as a medical laboratory technologist or medical laboratory assistant.

Certification is not mandatory, but many employers prefer you to be certified by the BC Society for Medical Laboratory Science (for *medical laboratory technicians*) or

Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (for *medical laboratory technologists*).

To learn about certification see:

British Columbia Society for Medical Laboratory Science

<https://www.bcsls.net/certification>

Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS)

<https://www.csmls.org/>

CSMLS Internationally Educated Technologist Certification Process

<https://www.csmls.org/Certification/How-To-Become-Certified/Internationally-Educated-Medical-Laboratory-Techno.aspx>

BC Health Careers

<https://www.bchealthcareers.ca/>

A free health professional recruitment service for *publicly funded health care facilities*

For details on working in BC see **WorkBC**:

- **Medical laboratory technologist (MLT)**
<https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/medical-laboratory-technologists>
- **Medical laboratory assistant (MLA)**
<https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/medical-laboratory-technicians-and-pathologists-assistants>

More opportunities to Consider:

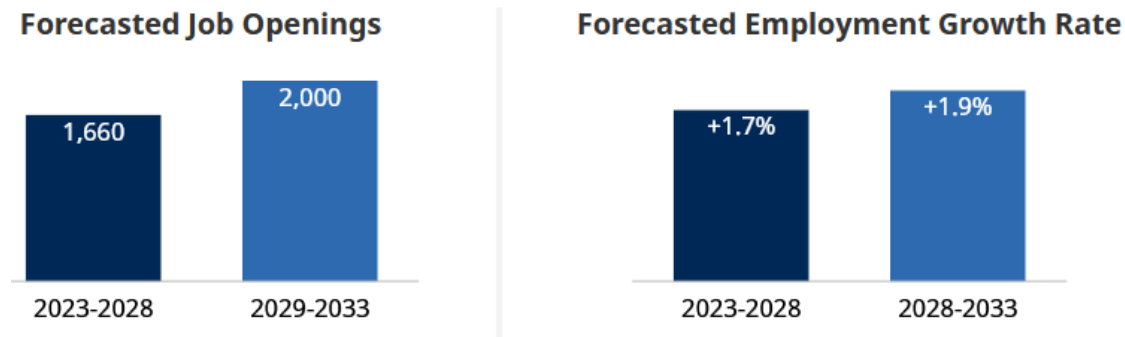
- Medical research
- Occupational medicine
- Medical and health care product sales
- Medical advisors or counselling
- Medical communications
- Health and /or mental Health patient advocate
- Government Department of Health (example: health planner or policy analyst)

2. Employment Outlook

The health care sector is one of BC's largest employers. Changes in the economy have little impact on the health care industry, as occupations in this industry group provide essential services. The health care industry is mainly affected by demographics and government policy.

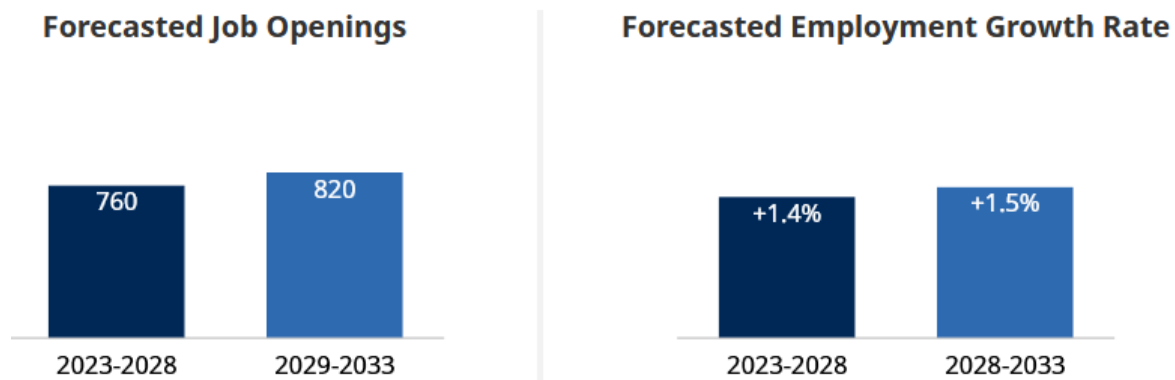
Employment growth in hospital services will be the slowest within the health services industry, due to controlling hospital costs and increasing use of outpatient clinics and other alternative care facilities.

Managers in Health Care - Job Openings Outlook in BC 2023-2033



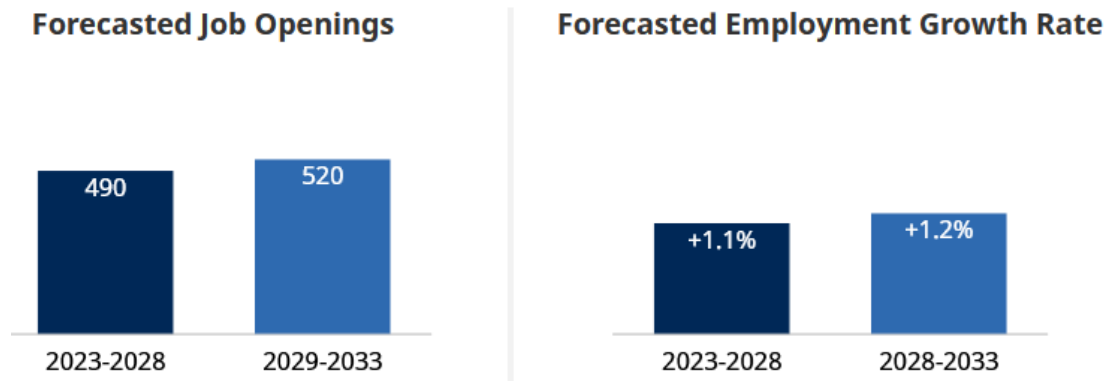
Source: WorkBC <https://www.workbc.ca/>

Health Policy Researchers, Consultants and Program Officers - Job Openings Outlook in BC 2023-2033



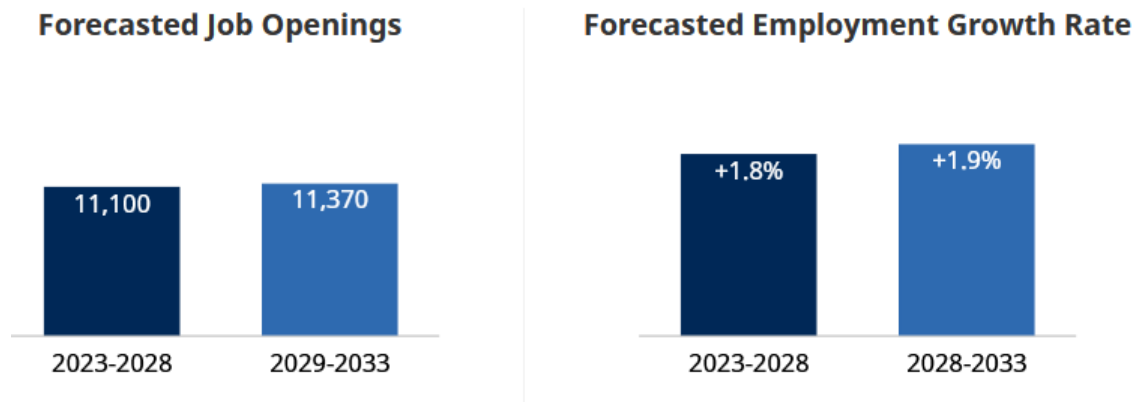
Source: WorkBC

Public and Environmental Health and Safety Professionals - Job Openings Outlook in BC 2023-2033



Source: WorkBC

Health Care Assistant - Job Openings Outlook in BC 2023-2033



Source: WorkBC

3. Retraining

You may want to consider upgrading your skills to increase your employment options in this field. The following courses may improve your current skills:

Health Leadership, Advanced Certificate BCIT School of Health Sciences, 2 year, part-time program offered through distance/online learning. This highly specialized program is focused on developing emerging health leaders.

<https://www.bcit.ca/programs/health-leadership-advanced-certificate-part-time-6860adcert/>

Thompson Rivers University (TRU) Open Learning: *Medical English*

Develop and strengthen your understanding of medical terminology as it is used in a Canadian health care context. Thirty week program, *web-based instruction*.

<https://www.tru.ca/distance/courses/hlth1061.html>

4. Searching for Jobs

B.C. Health Authorities

Regional services including publicly funded hospitals and residential care facilities
[BC Regional Health Authorities](#) (select link for your community and then go to 'Careers')

B.C. Provincial Health Services Authority Job Postings

Lists jobs available in specialty institutions such as BC Transplant, Women's Hospital, BC Children's Hospital

<https://jobs.phsa.ca/>

Providence Health Care

<https://www.providencehealthcare.org/careers>

First Nations Health Authority

<https://www.fnha.ca/about/work-with-us>

BC Health Careers

A free health professional recruitment service funded by the Government of British Columbia

<https://www.bchealthcareers.ca/>

Indeed.ca

<https://ca.indeed.com/>

5. Volunteering in the Field

Volunteering in health care facilities can help you to explore a new career and learn more about the health care system in BC. You will meet new people and build a network of contacts that can lead to information on job openings and inside connections with potential employers.

The following organizations accept volunteers in hospitals, residential care facilities, palliative care and other community settings.

Canadian Red Cross

<https://www.redcross.ca/volunteer>

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

<https://www.vch.ca/en/about-us/get-involved/volunteer>

Fraser Health Authority

<https://www.fraserhealth.ca/about-us/volunteer-opportunities>

Providence Health Care

<https://www.providencehealthcare.org/volunteers>

Volunteer BC

<https://volunteerbc.bc.ca/>

Canadian Mental Health Association

<https://cmha.bc.ca/get-involved/volunteer/>

Registry of Assisted Living Residences, BC Ministry of Health

Other volunteer opportunities may be available from individual assisted living care facilities across BC:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/assisted-living-in-bc/finding-an-assisted-living-residence>

6. Helpful Resources

College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia

<https://www.cpsbc.ca/>

Doctors of BC

<https://www.doctorsofbc.ca/>

BC Health Careers

<https://www.bchealthcareers.ca/>

Health Care CAN

<https://www.healthcarecan.ca/>

Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors

<https://ciphi.ca/>

Canadian Home Care Association

<https://cdnhomecare.ca/>

Click on 'Job Search Resources' at <https://www.vpl.ca/siic> for help on:

- resumes & cover letters
- getting Canadian work experience
- networking for employment
- online social networks
- Canadian workplace culture

***Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library,
Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.***

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <https://www.vpl.ca/siic>.