

Strong Workforce Program
Regional Workforce Advisory Meeting Proceedings
Nursing and Allied Health
October 28th, 2021
Virtual - Zoom

Introduction

The Los Rios Community College District, in partnership with Valley Vision, and in collaboration with Sierra College and Yuba Community College District, invests Strong Workforce funding to organize and convene Regional Advisories. The objectives of the Regional Advisories are to build strong relationships between employers, educators, and workforce that:

- Provide timely information on skills gaps and workforce needs, informing partners on major industry trend information;
- Improve the efficiency of the advisory process for educators and employers;
- Reflect a regional view of workforce needs and assets;
- Provide opportunities for more systemic, ongoing engagement that includes workforce partners in key industry sectors.

Regional Advisory meetings help inform decisions on needed investments, and enhancements for Career Education (CE) programs to help fill the growing demand for middle-skill positions. These meeting proceedings report includes key findings, best practices, and minutes from the Fall 2021 Regional Advisory meeting focused specifically on careers in Healthcare sector.

Valley Vision supports a robust talent pipeline through our multiple 21st Century Workforce initiatives. We prepare our regional workforce for the future by addressing skills gaps, advancing research, aligning efforts, and strengthening systems. Valley Vision's workforce efforts are supported by the Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA), Golden Sierra Workforce Development Board (WDB), North Central Counties Consortium, Yolo WDB, City of Sacramento, local community college districts, and others.

The Strong Workforce Program provides Career Education opportunities to increase social mobility and fuel regional economies with skilled workers.

Key Findings

- Employers and healthcare professionals highlighted recruiting and staffing shortages as one of the biggest current issues in the healthcare industry. Health and safety concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and resulting employee burnout have led to high turnover rates, and turned potential healthcare workers away from the industry. Additionally, COE data shows that nearly 25% of Health sector employees in the Greater Sacramento region are aged 55 years and up, meaning that many of these individuals are preparing to retire. The pandemic has also pushed employees to retire earlier than previously anticipated.
- Innovative approaches to the healthcare industry's faculty shortages could help to grow the healthcare workforce pipeline. Panelists suggested dual employment as a primary solution, allowing nurses with advanced degrees who are generally higher paid in the hospital environment to continue employment at a hospital while working as adjunct college professors or guest speakers training future healthcare workers. The faculty shortage could also be addressed by providing opportunities for the retiring healthcare workforce to transition into teaching in the later years of their career.
- Job shadowing and providing students pursuing healthcare education with real world experience is needed in order to fully prepare individuals entering the workforce in the midst of a pandemic. Employers suggested students be provided with placements in public health nursing, which would allow them to shadow existing nurses, hone their skills and experience, and learn to work beyond the scope of what is taught in the classroom. Additionally, exposing nursing students to extended clinical rotations with increased responsibilities will help them gain exposure to real-life situations and the demands of various healthcare roles.
- Healthcare employers agreed that students should experience working collaboratively with different communities, and learn about their role in the healthcare delivery system in order to address health disparities. Employers emphasized the need for graduates to be open to continuous learning opportunities on cultural competence and humility, ask questions, and get involved in workplace discussions around delivering culturally competent care.

Welcome and Introduction

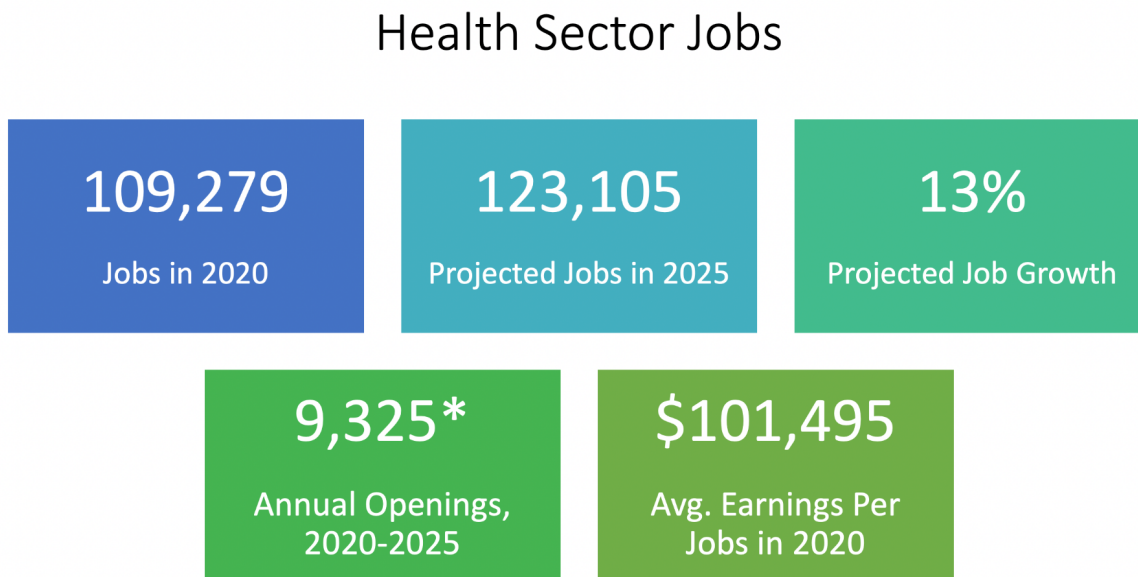
Renee John, Project Leader at Valley Vision, welcomed participants to the advisory and introduced co-host Julie Holt, Regional Director of Employer Engagement over Health Services. Holt emphasized the goal of the advisory: to uncover present and future gaps workforce supply gaps, and strengthen connections between education, employers, and industry partners.

Demographics, Labor and Occupational Information

Aaron Wilcher, Research Director of North/Far North Center of Excellence, provided demographics, labor, and occupational information on the Greater Sacramento Region. The Center of Excellence conducts research on the seven counties of the Greater Sacramento region and supports research on the employment outlook for students, needed skills and credentials, and potential investment programs. The research utilized for this advisory was based on a mixed-method approach, which incorporates interviews, surveys, and data.

The healthcare sector represents 9.1% of total jobs in the regional economy. There were 109,279 jobs in the healthcare sector in from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021, with a projected job growth of 13% over the next five years. The average wage for these positions is significant, at over \$100,000 per year. This includes openings for nurses, doctors, medical assistants and other healthcare occupations. Figure 1 (below) provides a visual of health sector job data in the Greater Sacramento Region.

Figure 1. Health Sector Jobs Data



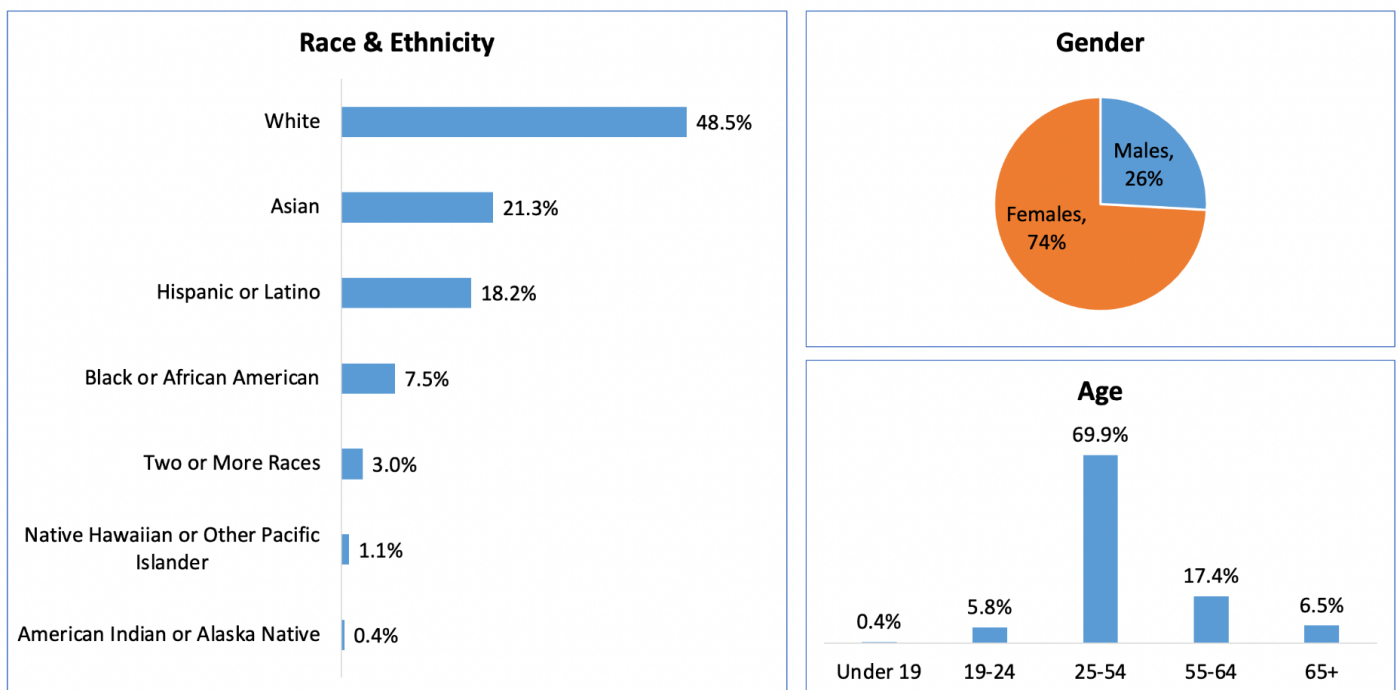
* Includes most health occupations, such as medical assistants, nurses, doctors, etc.

Health Sector Demographics

Figure 2 shows a breakdown of demographic information in the healthcare sector. Women make up a majority of the healthcare sector, with 74% of the workforce being female. The majority of the workforce is White, at 48.5%, followed by Asian workers at 21.3%. The data also shows that nearly 18% of the workforce is between the ages of 55-64 years, meaning they are nearing retirement age, which may contribute to a significant workforce shortage in the near future.

Figure 2. Healthcare Sector Demographics

Health Sector Demographics (2020)



Wilcher noted that job posting volumes have risen significantly in 2020, with the number of job posts being 50-70% higher on a month-to-month basis compared to January 2019. This data reinforces the need for a growing workforce in the healthcare sector.

Figure 3 (below) shows the top employers, occupations, and certifications within healthcare job postings in the Greater Sacramento region from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021.

Figure 3. Top Employers, Occupations, and Certifications

Top 10s

29,970 Job Postings in the Health sector
Oct 1, 2020 – Sept 30, 2021

Employers	Occupations	Certifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dignity Health • Sutter Health • Kaiser Permanente • Adventist Health • Oakmont Senior Living • Atria Senior Living • Quest Diagnostics • UC Davis Health • Universal Health Services, Inc. • Telecare Corp. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Nurses • Medical and Health Services Managers • Personal Care Aides • Medical Assistants • Dental Assistants • Medical Secretaries • Nursing Assistants • Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other • Customer Service Reps • Licensed Vocational Nurses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Nurse • First Aid/CPR/AED • Basic Cardiac Life Support • Advanced Cardiac Life Support • AHA Certification • Licensed Vocational Nurse • Certified Medical Assistant • Phlebotomy • Certified Nurse Practitioner • Home Health Aide

Keynote Speaker: Carter Todd - Research, Barbershop Talk, and Opportunities and Initiatives

Carter Todd, MS, MBA, RN, CCRN, is an Assistant Nurse Manager and the President of Capital City Black Nurses Association, which focuses on introducing diversity among students into the nursing profession pipeline. Some of the organization’s initiatives include the implementation of a nurse academy that is aimed towards students in 3rd to 6th grade, in order to exposed students to career opportunities in nursing. The Capital City Black Nurses Association has also partnered with the Hispanic Nurses Organization to promote diversity in the profession by helping students with resume writing, career coaching, and other professional development support. The organization also offers scholarships to nursing students at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

Todd’s presentation stated the need for diversity in attraction to healthcare and particularly nursing careers. He highlighted information that shows large numbers of workers from the baby boomer generation are retiring or preparing to retire, and the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed people to retire earlier, contributing to the increased demand for nurses. Todd also noted that nursing is a challenging profession and students need to be taught to be realistic about their expectations.

Within the presentation, Todd shared some of his own research on the perception Black men have about the nursing profession, in which he conducted interviews with individuals in Black-owned barbershops. Carter’s research showed ongoing stigma, as most interviewees regarded nursing as a gendered profession. The keynote speaker also shared a [video](#) from UC

Davis Health that highlights intervention and conversations in gendered spaces, such as barbershops, to attract young men and boys to the nursing profession. However, barber shops can be a proven intervention to increase diversity in nursing, as these businesses are hubs for cultural influence. His research showed that mentorship programs and positive role models can present opportunities to help diversify the nursing profession.

Panel Discussion

The panel discussion featured representatives from Common Spirit Health, Kaiser Hospital, UC Davis Health, Sacramento County Office of Public Health and Covenant Care Resource Center as follows:

- **Sofia Andrade**, Workforce Development Program Manager, Dignity Health/Common Spirit
- **Rachel Wyatt, DNP(c), MHA, RN, NEA-BC**, Chief Nurse Executive, Kaiser Permanente, South Sacramento
- **Lynnan Svensson, MSN, RN, PHN**, Public Health Division Manager, Director of Nursing, Sacramento County Department of Health Services
- **Jacqueline Turner, R.N., CHP, CHC, CCSA**, Director of Education & Regulatory Affairs, Covenant Care Privacy Officer, Covenant Care Resource Center
- **Lyndon Huling**, Manager, Leadership Recruitment & Diversity Services, UC Davis



Dignity Health/Common Spirit

Common Spirit Health is a National Health System with facilities in 21 states with about 150,000 employees spread across the country. This health system was formed by the merger of Dignity Health and Catholic Health Initiative, and in California they represent the Dignity Health Systems. They are looking for seeking healthcare professionals with a broad array of diversity, skills, and education to fill roles as nurses, physicians, administrative positions, and many other roles.

Kaiser Permanente South Sacramento

Kaiser Permanente South Sacramento is one of 120 Kaiser Permanente (KP) facilities locally and regionally. KP South Sacramento has about 5,000 employees, with 1,300 of these employees being nurses. KP'S nursing staff has grown larger since the pandemic, and continues to grow. Though they are open to hiring anyone, their hiring practices depend on timing and candidates' relevant qualifications. Additionally, Kaiser hires newly graduating nurses.

Sacramento County Department of Healthcare Services

Sacramento County Department of Healthcare Services has several prevention programs under its umbrella, including tobacco education, obesity prevention, a chest clinic, a sexual health unit and clinic, epidemiology, vital records, environmental records and many more. The department has also been deeply involved in the COVID-19 response and with government mandates, they have faced many challenges. The department currently has around 200 employees, and open opportunities for public health nurses and registered nurses.

Covenant Care Resource Center

The Covenant Care Resource Center has three hospitals that provide sub-acute care. Covenant Care provides home healthcare through their Focus Health and Elevate Health facilities. Half of the facilities are located in Northern California and the Central Valley, and currently employ around 8,000 healthcare professionals. The resource center hires middle-skill level registered nurses, certified nurses and physical therapists, and has a need for professionals with higher skill sets for leadership and specialized prevention positions.

UC Davis Health

UC Davis (UCD) Health is a world-class designated magnet institution, employing between 13,000 to 15,000 employees within its medical center, and running clinics around the region. The institution hires nurse managers, nurse supervisors, licensed vocational nurses and various additional administrative roles, and currently has a robust nursing program. Vacancies tend to ebb and flow, but UCD Health has also experienced an uptick in employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. UC Davis Health is growing and expanding, and anticipates additional workforce needs as the institution builds new facilities.

Cultural Competence and Humility

Panelists stressed the need for students to understand their role in the healthcare delivery system and their responsibility in addressing health disparities. Nursing students should be open to continuous learning opportunities on cultural competence and humility. New graduates need to be courageous enough to ask questions and get involved in staff discussions around delivering culturally competent care. Many health organizations are currently focusing on working with neighborhoods and community-based organizations to engage the community on

COVID-19 responses, and having a diverse, culturally competent and informed workforce is essential to the success of this work.

Supporting a Diverse Workforce Pipeline

Nursing healthcare systems also find challenges in finding individuals that represent the communities that they serve, specifically nurses of color that work with communities. To mitigate this, Kaiser Permanente has partnered with community organizations to increase employment opportunities, and introduced different layers in the hiring process to provide a better overview of candidates, rather than simply reviewing a resume. Kaiser Permanente also conducts training for leaders and staff members on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace, in order to enable staff to identify and mitigate unconscious biases. Other opportunities to support diversity in the healthcare workforce include the [Sacramento County Black Midwife Scholarship Program](#), which provides \$25,000 of financial assistance to Black or African American senior high school students or students with high school diplomas seeking to become midwives.

Recruitment Challenges

The panelists noted recruitment challenges for specific positions in their facilities, with COVID-19 heightening employee turnover. Employers noted that many healthcare workers were driven away from the industry due to the pressures of the pandemic, subsequent health and safety risks for workers and their families, and increased workload. As a result, it has become difficult for healthcare providers to add to their workforce. Employers agreed that it was essential to have nurse managers on staff with technical expertise, who can demonstrate a strong ability to lead teams that are under pandemic pressure, and also possess administrative experience.

Preparing to Provide Pandemic Healthcare

Further, the employer panel provided insight on how students could be prepared to join the healthcare workforce amid the demands and challenges of the pandemic. Job shadowing within public health nursing was suggested as a key tool which would provide students to gain experience and learn to work beyond their scope of practice. Additionally, exposing students to extended clinical rotations with increased responsibility was suggested as a way to help them gain exposure to the real-life job situations and demands of various healthcare roles. Students were also encouraged to work collaboratively with community organizations to understand the communities where they work.

Panelists also stressed the importance of encouraging nursing students to have a work-life balance. They noted how new nurses are often eager to pick up extra shifts, as they are eager to learn and grow into their positions. Ensuring burgeoning nurses have appropriate balance between work and their personal lives will help to prevent burnout, especially during the pandemic.

UC Davis Health also offers a [virtual job talks series](#) with students to provide them with resources and skills to start career paths in the healthcare system. These videos advise community college students, and educate them on how to pursue their chosen career pathway through UC Davis Health.

Addressing the Faculty Shortage

The panel discussed innovative approaches to partner with community colleges in order to address the healthcare faculty shortage, and ensure pipeline development goals are met in the next five to ten years. A myriad of solutions were discussed around involving public and private partnerships with healthcare employers to address this critical issue.

Panelists suggested the faculty shortage could be addressed by providing opportunities for the retiring healthcare workforce to **transition into teaching** in the later years of their career. **Dual employment** is another possible solution to this challenge. Bedside nursing traditionally offers a much higher salary compared to a faculty salary, leading nurses with advanced degrees to choose hospital positions instead of faculty positions. With dual employment, healthcare workers could continue to be employed within the hospital and maintain their benefits while working as adjunct professors in college. Along similar lines, employees of healthcare organizations could also **guest lecture**, teaching short stints on college campuses in an adjunct capacity, and utilizing their expertise and experience to train new healthcare workers

Moreover, a possible **hospital and community college partnership** was suggested to solve both the faculty shortage, as well as address issues within acute/post-acute care. Post-acute facilities are a training ground for nurses who want to work in acute care hospitals. The pandemic brought about a high demand for nurses, leading post-acute nursing facilities to compete with acute care hospitals for new graduate nurses. Post-acute facilities aren't able to offer the competitive wages that hospitals provide, leading to staffing shortages as graduates opt for acute care placements.

A partnership between hospitals and community colleges would allow post-acute nurse trainers to teach classes that are mutually beneficial to both parties. Trainers at the facilities could also supervise student nursing clinical rotations, while community colleges could share clinical instructors to help train nursing students in specific areas.

Conclusion

Julie Holt, Regional Director of Employer Engagement over Health Services, was the final speaker at the advisory, and discussed 30 distinct healthcare programs available through Los Rios Community Colleges, which offer certifications and transfer pathways to four-year colleges. One successful partnership is a co-enrollment nursing program developed through a partnership with California State University at Sacramento, which allows for three-quarters of nursing education to be completed at a community college. Students can then obtain a bachelor's degree in nursing from CSU Sacramento six months after graduating from a community college.

Holt concluded the advisory with the acknowledgment and deep appreciation for everyone involved. She emphasized the importance of preparation for resiliency, being culturally equipped to connect with communities, peers, and patients, especially amid the pandemic. Contact information for Julie Holt and Renee John, Project Leader over 21st Century Workforce at Valley Vision was also provided to registrants, and is listed below:

- Julie Holt, Regional Director of Employer Engagement for Health - HoltJ@scc.losrios.edu
- Renee John, 21st Century Workforce Project Leader, Valley Vision - Renee.John@valleyvision.org