

Patient Care Technical workers in health care

F A C T S H E E T

HEU patient care technical workers perform a wide range of complex and highly specialized jobs. It is an occupational area that includes about 60 job classifications, most of which require ongoing training and skills upgrading.

WHAT THEY DO:

- collect blood and specimen samples; perform diagnostic testing and retinal photography; and assist with autopsies
- purchase everything from MRI machines to food inventory and negotiate vendor contracts to ensure cost-efficient purchasing
- support all patient information, lab, pharmacy and telephone systems
- ensure equipment and supplies are sterilized and functional – particularly for surgeries, labour and delivery, and critical care areas
- run renal dialysis machines; provide dental care and respond to drug overdoses
- fill prescriptions, manage and distribute narcotics, perform clinical trial projects, mix IV bags, chemo products, TPN (IV feed) and antibiotics

WHY IT MATTERS:

- every area of patient care relies on the skilled work of these health care technologists and technicians
- optimizing drug therapy for the best possible patient outcomes is pivotal to improving and maintaining a patient's health
- the ability to respond to patients' physical signs and symptoms prior to, during and post-diagnostic testing, and to accurately analyze information needed for diagnoses and treatment, is critical to providing quality health care
- maintaining an integrated computer network makes immediate access to patient information available on line at all hospital sites

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?

- many workers are dealing with a dramatic expansion in the scope and responsibilities of their work as a direct result of an increasing shortage of technologists and other health care specialists
- wages are seriously out of step with industry standards, making it difficult to retain skilled professionals – or compete with private labs, clinics and other industries for new employees
- despite rapid changes in technology health care technicians receive limited opportunities for job advancement, or educational upgrading, and are relied upon to teach other members of the health care team

OUR WORK MATTERS!

More than 11% of HEU's membership works in patient care technical.

dental assistant • certified dental assistant
• ECG assistant • ECG technician • EEG assistant • lab assistant • sterile supply technicians • anaesthetic aide • respiratory aide • orthopaedic technician • OR technician • ophthalmic technician • pathology attendant • pathology attendant supervisor • pathology attendant (tissue bank) • perfusionist • pharmacy technician • physiological laboratory technologist • renal dialysis technician • x-ray assistant • buyer • food service supervisor • information technologist • program systems analyst • data processing supervisor • computer operator • computer technical support •
among others...



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