



Workforce  
Development Board  
Contra Costa County

# MEETING THE DEMAND

## HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

### 10 STRATEGIC MEETINGS

With the help of industry and education partners, the Contra Costa Economic Partnership identified opportunities to expand access to specific high demand health care careers in Contra Costa County and identified shared barriers to training and employment in these fields.

### 6 TARGET CAREERS IDENTIFIED



Community Health Workers



Laboratory Technicians



Imaging Technicians



Respiratory Therapists



Behavioral Health



Specialty Nursing

### HEALTH CARE & EDUCATION PARTNERS



KAISER  
PERMANENTE®



Sutter Health

Bay  
Area  
Health  
Workforce  
Partnership



JOHN MUIR  
HEALTH

DVC

DIABLO VALLEY COLLEGE



CONTRA COSTA  
HEALTH SERVICES

# CONVENING WITH A VISION

## INTRODUCTION

The initial concept for the Ad Hoc Task Force on Equitable Employment in Health Care was to convene a body of health care leaders in Contra Costa committed to expanding income mobility and increasing opportunity in health care careers and to develop recommendations about how to align and support progress in the county consistent with the Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County's 2021-24 Local Plan.

Specifically, we kept the vision statement of the plan at the center of this work. To support a network that creates and promotes a dynamic education system, high-performing businesses, and a prosperous local economy with an abundance of high-quality jobs and skilled workers to fill them.

Moreover, this work was designed and executed to develop Contra Costa specificity and capacity consistent with the work of the Bay Area Health Workforce Partnership (BAHWP) being led by Bob Redlo which is an effort that the Contra Costa Economic Partnership helped to start through facilitation and communication support in 2015-16. At every turn in this work for Contra Costa, the Contra Costa Economic Partnership has sought to further the five priorities established by the BAHWP's four work groups:

1. Increase the pool of qualified, diverse health workers.
2. Increase the alignment of health care education and training with employer needs.
3. Increase work-based learning opportunities in health care for K-16 and health profession students.
4. Build a data-driven rationale for systems change, infrastructure development, and sustaining healthcare workforce initiatives.
5. Develop and advocate for policy solutions that eliminate barriers to increasing workforce and education capacity, investment, and sustainability.

# CONVENING WITH VISION

The onset of new waves of COVID-19 cases and the impact on our local health care systems affected the ability to convene a centralized body of leaders and the Contra Costa Economic Partnership responded by changing tactics. We adapted to the needs of our partners by crafting smaller strategic meetings to make progress in accordance with the outlined goals.

## STRATEGIC MEETINGS

Throughout our conversations it was clear that Contra Costa's health care leaders are aware of both the vast workforce opportunities in health care and the unfortunate barriers that limit access to these careers. A common thread throughout our meetings was the need to move beyond awareness and begin to concentrate on solution. For some barriers, the solution will simply require more coordination and collaboration. In other areas, the issues are more deeply rooted in the infrastructure and systems surrounding health care career training and health care delivery. We will discuss this more in-depth in "Learnings" section of this report.

In April, the Contra Costa Economic Partnership successfully connected with our larger health care providers including, John Muir Health, Kaiser Permanente, Contra Costa County Health Services, and Sutter Health.

CCEP asked them to identify areas of ongoing need related to employee recruitment and retention. The majority of these partners joined us for a group discussion where they emphasized the lack of applicants in certain sectors and their desire for more local training. Specifically, the need for nurses, imaging technicians (ultrasound, sonography, radiology), respiratory therapists, community health workers and lab technicians. We also had an initial discussion about the growing needs in the behavioral health field in Contra Costa.



We brought many of these specific career-field needs to our discussions with key, local education partners, including the Contra Costa Community College District and California State University East Bay. The Contra Costa Economic Partnership chose to concentrate on post-secondary education partners in accordance with our contract, but it is worth noting that numerous health care leaders emphasized the likely benefits of exposing high school students to these specific career opportunities in health care.

# CONVENING WITH VISION

One goal of this Task Force work was to increase the number of low-income residents in training programs and to increase income mobility. In furtherance of this goal, the Contra Costa Economic Partnership partnered with the East Bay Leadership Council's Opportunity Task Force to host meetings concentrated on current efforts aligned with these goals (to grow opportunity) including larger meetings with Futuro Health and the co-chair of the effort to re-imagine the Cal State East Bay's Concord Campus.

Exposing our broader community to these efforts will hopefully result in more residents enrolled in available or soon-to-be available training programs.

Both meetings can be [viewed online](#).



# PARTNERS WITH PURPOSE

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

### **Tamia Brown**

Executive Director, Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County

### **Joy Hermsen**

Director of Innovative Partnerships, Futuro Health

### **Bob Redlo**

Executive Director, Bay Area Health Workforce Partnership

### **Patience Ofodu**

Business and Economic Development Program Manager, Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County

## EDUCATION PARTNERS

### **Jeffery Newcomb**

Co-Chair, President's Task Force for Re-imagining Concord Campus, Cal State East Bay

### **Tara Sanders**

Program Manager, Workforce & Economic Development, Contra Costa Community College District

### **Joseph Gorga**

Dean of Biological and Physical Sciences, Diablo Valley College

### **Beth Arman**

Senior Dean of Career and Community Partnerships, Diablo Valley College

### **Catherine Franco**

Director of Workforce Development and Community Engagement, Diablo Valley College

## INDUSTRY PARTNERS

### **Dante Green**

Chief Operating Officer Antioch, Kaiser Permanente

### **Sarah Chodakewitz**

Program Director, Government and Community Affairs, John Muir Health

### **Jo-Anne Linares**

Personnel/Payroll Director, Contra Costa County Health Services

### **Shannon Ladner-Beasley**

Equity Manager, Contra Costa County Health Services

# CONVENING LEARNINGS

## FASTEST GROWING OCCUPATIONS IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

Contra Costa County is an excellent place to grow the health care workforce. Health Care and corresponding industries comprise the majority of our county's largest employers and are amongst the fastest growing occupations.

Occupational Title	Base Year Employment Estimate	Projected Year Employment Estimate	Percentage Change	Median Hourly Wage	Median Annual Wage
★ Nurse Practitioners	1,000	1,450	45.0%	\$65.79	\$136,841
Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs	2,110	2,910	37.9%	\$0.00	\$0
Software Developers, Applications	9,870	13,430	36.1%	\$0.00	\$0
★ Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	630	830	31.7%	\$54.54	\$113,430
★ Respiratory Therapists	1,120	1,470	31.3%	\$49.68	\$103,332
Operations Research Analysts	920	1,200	30.4%	\$50.47	\$104,974
Information Security Analysts	600	780	30.0%	\$0.00	\$0
Speech-Language Pathologists	910	1,180	29.7%	\$45.03	\$93,663
★ Medical Assistants	6,590	8,500	29.0%	\$22.18	\$46,139
Industrial Engineers	1,490	1,910	28.2%	\$53.32	\$110,908

Source: <https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/employment-projections.html>

## BARRIERS TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

As mentioned above, our partners agree about the ecosystem of opportunity that exists in our area, but the ability to pursue these careers are more limited. This work sought to identify why, a question of particular relevance to those who need an equitable and affordable education/training option.

To illustrate this locally, an individual interested in pursuing a career in Medical Sonography would find no shortage of local job opening but would have no option to be educated for this career through a public school of any kind in in Contra Costa County (the closest option was Foothill College in Los Altos Hills, but the program is currently on hiatus).

The cost to pursue a degree at a private college is around \$28,000. In 2017, at one of the local private programs, 71 students applied and were interviewed, but only 15 were accepted for an applicant acceptance rate of 21%.

# CONVENING LEARNINGS

The educational opportunities for the other identified target careers were also limited, though each career trajectory has some unique features. For example, there is a program in the East Bay for those interested in studying Respiratory Therapy at Ohlone College in Fremont and a nursing program offered through our own Contra Costa Community College (4CD) system, but both are generally impacted.

Through our strategic meetings, the Contra Costa Economic Partnership identified the barriers for our education institutions in building these programs locally. These barriers include cost and availability of faculty, facilities and machinery access, and regulatory and bureaucratic challenges. Recruiting community members with the required credentials to teach these needed programs is very challenging because they are highly compensated and so in-demand.

Developing a program at the community college level has a bit of a “chicken and egg problem.”



Colleges need funding to develop a new program before they can pay someone to teach it.



It's very difficult to get this exploratory work funded.



The health care training programs needed in Contra Costa require specific machinery and laboratories which are in very short supply at our local colleges.



It's very difficult to expand access when facilities are insufficient to support existing programs.

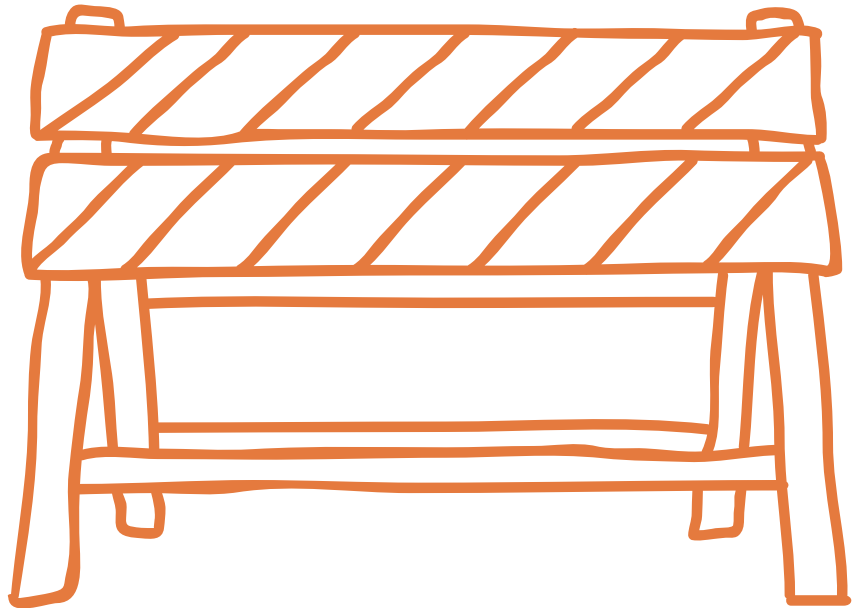


# CONVENING LEARNINGS

Making progress on these interconnected barriers and solutions will take further coordination and creative thinking. Health Care providers want to be viewed as partners, but the requests may need to be clearly outlined. It is clear that some organization or institution needs to continue to develop these relationships in order to make progress. Our meetings emphasized the importance of bridging our education providers and others offering training opportunities with our communities through efforts such as the Bay Area Health Workforce Partnership which continues to play an important role.

The Contra Costa Economic Partnership also repeatedly heard about the importance of the behavioral health and mental health workforce. Our region urgently needs to grow this sector. This urgency has resulted from significant access expansions that have not been accompanied by commensurate numbers of health care professionals in behavioral health to adequately meet the need. Specifically, the recent change to designate peer-support specialists and community health workers as Medi-Cal reimbursable makes these careers ripe entry points for this career space.

The recommendations put forward below are a response to the feedback provided during our strategic meetings. The Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County (WDBCCC) is invested in equitable economic growth in our County and is uniquely placed to facilitate the needed conversations to develop enhanced training and education opportunities for in-demand health care careers.





# RECOMMENDATIONS

## UNDERSTAND AND LEVERAGE STATE BUDGET DOLLARS

The State of California is making substantial investments in the Health Care Workforce through the Department of Health Care Access and Information. The WDBCCC can work with local partners to identify the availability of these funds for local disbursement.

**See page 10** for an overview of this year's budget investments.

## MASSIVELY DEVELOP THE LOCAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE

There is potential (and need) in the behavioral health workforce space and the WDBCCC can act as an advocate for the development of these programs. Contra Costa Community College (via Contra Costa College) does offer a program in Peer Support Services, but more attention and education could be drawn to this program. Contra Costa County Behavioral Health also offers a loan repayment program that may include Peer Support Specialists. **See page 11** for an overview of potential career development.

## CONVENE LOCAL EDUCATION PARTNERS

The Contra Costa Community College district and Cal State East Bay – Concord Campus may be able to partner in the exploration of target career offerings. There is some precedent for this in nursing. The WDBCCC would be an excellent convener for these conversations and could provide best practices and examples throughout the state – specifically looking at models for shared space and degree transfers. As part of this effort, the WDBCCC should consider identifying a single source of information for the development of preceptors, clinical rotations and internship opportunities related to the specific programs offered in the County.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## EXPLORE MODELS FOR HOSPITAL-BASED EDUCATION

Recognizing the challenges and barriers our educational institutions face, the WFDBCCC could be an excellent partner in exploring models for apprenticeship and hospital-based educations, such as the [sonography programs at Community Regional Medical Center](#).

## SUPPORT CONNECTORS

While there is a strong desire to deepen links between our academic partners and our industry leaders, the need for that identified connector is still critical. Continuing to support efforts that convene these partners and push for more regional coordination is essential.



# HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE FUNDING

## 2022 STATE BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

### \$296.5 MILLION

There is \$296.5 million allocated in California's 2022-23 budget alone (\$281.7 million in local assistance) to administer and support the Workforce for a Healthy California for All Program. This includes the following core components:

- **Community Health Workers** to recruit, train and certify 25,000 new community health workers by 2025, with specialized training to work with varying populations, such as justice-involved, people who are unhoused, older adults or people with disabilities. Training would align with requirements for the MediCal Community Health Worker benefit.
- **Comprehensive Nursing** Initiative to increase the number of registered nurses, licensed vocational nurses, certified nursing assistants, certified nurse midwives, certified medical assistants, family nurse practitioners, and other health professions.
- **Expanding Social Workers** to increase the number of social workers trained in the state by supporting social work training programs and providing stipends and scholarships for working people to create a new pipeline for diverse social workers who cannot otherwise afford the financial or time investment required to complete full-time training programs.
- **Psychiatric Resident Program** to increase the number of behavioral health providers, such as psychiatrists, psychiatric nurse practitioners, and psychologists.
- **Multilingual Health Initiatives** to increase the linguistic and cultural competencies in the workforce by expanding scholarships and loan repayment for multilingual applicants.
- **Workforce Council for Health Care Training** to leverage HCAI's Health Workforce Education and Training Council to research healthcare shortages and support research on best practices and strategies to build a diverse, culturally competent workforce to build the health care workforce.
- **Opioid Response** for substance abuse disorder provider training related to opioid use with \$22 million one-time Opioid Settlement Funds.

# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PATHWAYS

EDUCATION	DEGREE / CERTIFICATE	CAREER
<b>4 YEARS COLLEGE</b>	BA Music Therapy BA Psychology BA Social Work BA Sociology Pre-Med	Assistant Behavioral Analyst Behavioral Health Specialist Care Coordinator Case Manager Child Welfare Worker Music Therapist Outreach Specialist Vocational Rehabilitation Worker
<b>2 YEARS COLLEGE</b>	AA Human Services AA Social & Behavioral Sciences AA-T Psychology AA-T Social Work & Human Services AA-T Sociology AS Addiction Studies	Alcohol and Drug Counselor Eligibility Worker Housing Coordinator Mental Health Worker Outreach Specialist Social Service Assistant
<b>1 YEAR COLLEGE</b>	Alcohol & Drug Studies Community Health Worker Gerontology Mental Health Worker Peer Support Specialist Psychiatric Technician Registered Behavior/Autism Technician Social Work & Human Services	Advocate (Peer, Family, Housing) Alcohol and Drug Counselor Case Manager Community Health Worker Mental Health Worker Parent Partner Peer Support Specialist Psychiatric Technician Registered Behavior/Autism Technician Social Services Worker
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b>	High School Diploma/GED Exploring Health Careers Other Related High School Course	Office Support Staff Social Services Volunteer Student Worker

Source: <https://ca-hwi.org/resources/mental-behavioral-health-career-pathways/>



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