

Oregon Healthcare Workforce Index

UNDERSTANDING NURSING
WITHIN THE LABOR MARKET



The Healthcare Workforce Works as One System

When one profession faces staffing or retention challenges, the whole system feels it. Nurses—Oregon's largest healthcare workforce segment—often carry the impact. The Oregon Center for Nursing (OCN) created the Oregon Healthcare Workforce Index to compare 35 healthcare occupations using four key measures: growth, shortage, turnover, and wages.

What the Index Measures

Dimension	Definition
Growth	Projected job change from 2023-2032
Shortage	Ratio of job openings to current jobs
Turnover	Share of openings due to attrition
Wages	Median annual wage

Why It Matters

Nursing challenges mirror broader system pressures. When other roles experience instability, nurses absorb the strain. Strengthening the workforce means investing in all healthcare roles.

Key Findings

Top performers: Nurse anesthetists, nurse practitioners, and physician associates rank highest for growth and stability.

Mid-Range: RNs have high demand and strong wages, but also high turnover

Support Roles: Allied health positions like certified nurse assistants face high turnover, high shortages and lower wages.

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Occupation	Growth	Shortage	Turnover	Wages	Overall Score
Nurse Anesthetist	5	11	3	1	1
Physical Therapist	7	7	4	16	2
Physician Assistant	3	24	2	6	3
Nurse Practitioner	2	27	1	5	3
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	1	17	6	13	5
Optometrist	20	3	8	7	6
Pharmacist	23	2	11	3	7
Clinical & Counseling Psychologist	10	15	9	8	8
Dentists, General	32	1	7	2	8
Respiratory Therapist	8	12	5	18	10
Nurse Midwife	21	6	12	4	10
Paramedic	12	9	10	23	12
Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologist	14	14	13	14	13
Occupational Therapist	16	13	14	15	14
Dental Hygienist	15	19	15	12	15
Registered Nurse	26	8	18	10	16
Radiation Therapist	33	4	19	9	17
Radiological Technologist & Technician	25	10	16	17	18
Nuclear Medicine Technologist	34	5	27	11	19
Physical Therapy Assistant	4	35	17	25	20
Cardiovascular Technologist & Technician	29	16	21	19	21
Occupational Therapy Assistant	9	29	24	24	22
Community Health Worker	11	28	22	29	23
Mental Health & Substance Abuse Social Worker	22	21	23	27	24
Emergency Medical Technician	19	22	20	33	25
Medical Assistant	6	33	25	31	26
Clinical Laboratory Technologist & Technician	31	18	26	21	27
Healthcare Social Worker	27	25	29	20	28
Licensed Practical Nurse	28	23	28	22	28
Dental Assistant	18	31	33	28	30
Phlebotomist	17	30	31	32	30
Home Health and Personal Care Aide	13	34	32	35	32
Child, Family, School Social Worker	35	20	35	26	33
Pharmacy Technician	30	26	30	30	33
Certified Nursing Assistant	24	32	34	34	35