

MEDIA RELEASE
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**REPORT FINDS SIGNIFICANT JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR
CALIFORNIANS IN ALLIED HEALTH;
QUESTIONS STATE'S EDUCATION CAPACITY TO TRAIN WORKERS**

***NEW ECONOMIC FORECAST VALUES ALLIED HEALTH WORKFORCE
EARNING POWER AT \$116 BILLION BY 2030***

SAN FRANCISCO — New workforce projections show that California's allied health industry will be a key driver of economic growth in the state over the next two decades. By 2030, the allied health sector will comprise almost 1 million workers with a collective earning power of more than \$116 billion in wages. At the same time, the study casts doubt on whether California's education system will be able to provide enough health workers to meet the growing demand.

The study — conducted by Beacon Economics and funded by a grant to Fenton Communications from The California Wellness Foundation — is the first to analyze long-term workforce projections for approximately 50 positions within the allied health field. These workers, often called the “backbone” of health care, make up 60 percent of all health jobs and include positions such as laboratory and x-ray technicians, nursing aides, respiratory therapists and medical secretaries.

The report, *Help Wanted: Will California Miss Out on a Billion-Dollar Growth Industry?*, forecasts changes in the state's population through 2030 to project the demand for allied health workers, who will be critical in caring for California's growing and graying population: In the next 20 years, the number of Californians over 65 will more than double, and the state will grow by 10.2 million people — an increase equivalent to adding the state of Michigan.

“This study leaves no doubt that allied health workers will be in high demand,” said Virginia Hamilton, executive director of the California Workforce Association. “And with the enormous value this workforce sector provides to the state's economy, making sure that Californians get the training they need to fill these good-paying jobs is an opportunity we can't afford to miss.”

To meet the healthcare needs of the population in 2030, the report finds that California must grow and maintain an allied health workforce of approximately 988,000. This requires training up to 1 million allied health workers, who will be filling new jobs created through growth and positions opening up as workers exit the industry from death, retirement, and other reasons.

However, the report finds that California's education system is only on track to train and certify 634,000 allied health workers. This gap would leave providers to fill one out of every three allied health positions with out-of-state workers or force Californians to leave the state for training.

“These numbers demonstrate a growing gap between the number of allied health workers needed to meet the state's healthcare demand and what California's training providers will be able to supply,” said Brad Kemp, lead researcher for the report. “The data shows ample opportunity in the allied health industry — and makes a strong case for expanding the capacity of California's education system to train allied health workers.”

The allied health sector in California already employs more than 600,000 workers earning \$23.3 billion in wages. By 2030 the state's allied health workers will have a collective earning power of more than \$116 billion, generating \$9.6 billion in payroll taxes for the state.

According to Gary L. Yates, president and CEO of The California Wellness Foundation, growing the allied health workforce also improves patient care. Benefits include reducing wait times for appointments or lab test results, and the opportunity to create a more culturally competent workforce.

"California's patients are as diverse as its population, but the same is not true for the health workers providing their care," said Yates. "To truly provide the best care for all Californians, we must grow a health workforce that speaks the languages of its patients and understands their cultural practices and concerns."

For more information and the full report, visit: www.CalHealthJobs.org.

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