



FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AUTHORITY

# Health Careers Guidebook

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**Roger Elliot John**, *Counsellor*

**Dr. Charles Perry**, *Plastic Surgeon*

**Karen Riley**, *Registered Nurse*

**Sue Cheechoo**, *Northern St'at'imc Hub Coordinator*

### FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AUTHORITY

**Cody Caruso**, *Health Careers Coordinator*

**Trevor Kehoe**, *Communications Officer*

**Leonard George**, *Elder Advisor*

**Dr. Shannon Tania Waters**, *Director of Health Surveillance and Program Evaluation*

**Jacki McPherson**, *President, First Nations Health Directors Association*

**David Lindley**, *Health Careers Project Coordinator*

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Coast Salish Territory

West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2

[www.fnha.ca](http://www.fnha.ca)

[info@fnha.ca](mailto:info@fnha.ca)



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

## The Rising Of The Spirit



**Leonard George**, Tsleil-Waututh Nation, First Nations Health Authority Elder Advisor

Prior to contact in North America a prophecy was sent out from the Hopi people of the changes that would take place. They did this so that our people could protect their spiritual rituals, customs, and traditions.

The prophecy went like this:

*“A huge wave of white people is going to come and with their coming the Indian spirit will be wiped out to almost nothing. But when it reaches its lowest point, the spirit will begin to rise up again and out of this new spirit there will be not just a red Indian but a white, black, and yellow. The beginning of this new rising will be signified by the Eagle landing on the moon.”*

In 1969, when Neil Armstrong landed on the moon, his first words were, “The Eagle has landed.” The Spirit has been rising ever since.

The First Nations Health Authority’s vision of holistic wellness is a part of that rising, and there is an opportunity for everyone today to play a significant role in the rising of the new spirit.

## Foreword

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**Jacki McPherson**  
*President, Okanagan  
Nation, First Nations  
Health Directors  
Association*



**Dr. Shannon Tania  
Waters, First Nation  
Stz'uminus**  
*Director, Health  
Surveillance and Program  
Evaluation, First Nations  
Health Authority*

### Change Is Possible...

Promoting health careers to the next generation of skilled First Nations students is a responsibility I hold near and dear to my heart.

I remember starting my career in the health field over 30 years ago, almost by chance. It wasn't something I originally planned on undertaking. I had seen my mother supporting our community from when I was a young girl, and I witnessed the impact her kindness and unwavering commitment had on changing the lives of those she served. My mother knew we needed to return to our traditions to take care of our people the right way, and this is a lesson I still carry with me today.

As First Nations people, we know we must have direct control over the programs and services that improve our health. My job as a Community Health Director allows me to be a resource for change and to share my knowledge on how best to improve services and community wellness. This is not an easy task as we continue along our journey of transforming First Nations health in BC, but I take comfort in knowing we are inspiring students to get involved and build an even better health system for the future.

What I have learned over my career is that change is possible if you have a clear picture of where you need to go, combined with the courage to take the first step. Help to keep the momentum going and carefully consider the health careers described in this guidebook. Sharing your skills with your community when you complete your education is a rewarding, wonderful way to honour your people, your family and most importantly, yourself.

### There Are Countless Opportunities...

Today in BC, First Nations have a tremendous opportunity: we can take a lead role in the design and delivery of health services for our communities. We can be part of transforming our health system, creating a holistic approach to health that will keep people well.

I entered medical school at UBC after completing my Bachelor of Science, which meant I was able to have the support of my home community of Stz'uminus on Vancouver Island, and the supports for Aboriginal students at UBC. I completed the First Nations family practice program, and went to Vancouver Island to work near my home community.

It was an honor to work as a family physician with my community but I got frustrated with seeing people most often after they were already sick instead of being able to help people stay well. So I went back to school and completed a residency in Public Health and Preventive medicine. This has enabled me to be very involved in the creation of the First Nations Health Authority. I would have never dreamed about the opportunity to be involved in such transformational work, and we need many more people to help us in this journey!

In the years ahead, there will be countless opportunities for First Nations health professionals to make meaningful contributions to their communities, whether they choose to work in primary care, health promotion, or traditional practices. We are uniquely positioned to develop a blended health model combining western medicine and traditional wisdom.

Restoring health to our communities is everyone's responsibility, and everyone can play an important role in the process. Choosing a career in health helps build a brighter future for all First Nations and Aboriginal people in BC.

## Introduction



**Cody Caruso**, Health Careers Coordinator, First Nations Health Authority

*Today, health is everywhere you look. You'll find it on your grocery shelves, on TV, and in magazines and newspapers. It's a hot topic all over the internet, in your school, in your community, and everywhere we work and play. The focus on health has never been more significant.*

And for many of us, health no longer means simply a state of physical well-being. We are looking at health more holistically — acknowledging and valuing that it encompasses mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects as well. More and more, health care providers are starting to work together as teams to help people to maintain and improve their overall well-being. As the field of health continues to grow and change, now is an exciting time to begin your career in this dynamic and innovative area. It also happens to be the perfect opportunity for young, passionate, and educated BC First Nations and Aboriginal youth.

Here are five great reasons to consider starting your career in health:

### **1. You'll Change Lives**

Working in the health field gives you the unique opportunity to make positive changes in the lives of others. There's no other career path that can give you the ability to save, change, and improve lives from birth to death (and everywhere in between). No matter what area of health you choose to focus in, whether it's dental care, vision care, information technology, public health, or policy and administration, you'll know that you're making a real contribution to people's wellbeing. And you'll work with others who share your passion to help people.

### **2. You'll Find Diversity, Variety and Opportunity**

Want to pursue a PhD? Or are you looking for a job that you can start right out of high school? Hundreds of different jobs in the health field means that there are opportunities for everyone, regardless of their level of education, or their particular skills and interests. Do you enjoy working with the public? Or maybe you'd be more interested working in a laboratory setting, or with computers? Whether your ideal job involves working with children, using technology,

spending time outdoors, or crunching numbers, there's a career in health to match your expectations. The field of health is so diverse, and there are lots of opportunities for growth and change throughout your career. You may choose to stay in the same job for three months, three years or for three decades — the choice is yours!

### **3. It's Growing... and Fast**

Here in BC, as in the rest of Canada, the population is aging. Baby boomers are starting to retire — creating job openings — and they're also needing and using more health services — creating increased demand. And as people are living longer than ever before, that demand will only continue to grow. Meanwhile, we have a baby boom of our own happening! Our Aboriginal and First Nations population is the fastest growing demographic in the province, and with an average age in the mid-20s, our communities are growing by leaps and bounds. It all means there's no better time than right now for Aboriginal and BC First Nations youth to find their way into a meaningful career within the health field. We need you!

### **4. You'll Enjoy Competitive Pay and Benefits**

Many of the opportunities within the health field in our province offer excellent pay along with medical, dental and extended health care benefits. These employers may also offer opportunities for professional development and progressive pay scales for continued service, as well as attractive pension plans. Health professionals who decide to enter private practice or who find employment with businesses or non-profit organizations will have more variable earnings, but with the high demand for many types of health professionals, wages are expected to remain very competitive across the field.

### **5. Your Community Needs You**

If you're not already convinced that health is the right path for you, consider this: you can make a real, lasting contribution to the well-being of the people in your local community through your health career. For many First Nations and Aboriginal youth who come from rural or remote communities, health care is a great way to give back to their home community. There's a shortage of health care workers in many areas of the province, and there's a shortage of First Nations and Aboriginal health providers. You can change that.

As our understanding of the holistic nature of health increases, we're realizing the importance of culture, language, and traditional foods and medicines. Aboriginal health providers bring a cultural understanding to their work in their communities that can't be duplicated. Aboriginal youth bring gifts, skills, and abilities that are in high demand in our communities, Nations, and the province. Of course there are other incentives for working in rural and remote communities, including BC Student Loan Forgiveness programs and other financial benefits. Not to mention there is also a tremendous amount of value in working in close-knit communities and building lasting relationships with the people you work with and for.

### **Choose a Health Career Today**

As a First Nations or Aboriginal person, you've got a tremendous opportunity to build an exciting career in the health field. Your skills and education are highly sought after. So take the time to consider your options and choose a career path that fits your abilities and interests. As you read about the careers profiled in this guide, remember that the field of health is constantly changing: new jobs are emerging, new skills are always needed. Health is filled with OPPORTUNITY.

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## How To Use This Guide

In this guidebook you'll find profiles of a wide variety of health careers. These profiles are meant to give you an idea of the diversity of careers available to you in the health field — everything from Doula to Doctor. Some of the careers will be familiar to you, while others may be quite new. Consider this guide a starting point for your research — there are many more careers and much more information out there than it was possible to include in these pages.

Each job description in this guide follows the same format.

### Fast Facts

#### Earnings

The dollar signs represent the approximate range of earnings for each career.

**\$** = \$25,000 or less per year

**\$\$** = \$25,001 to \$50,000 per year

**\$\$\$** = \$50,001 to \$75,000 per year

**\$\$\$\$** = \$75,001 to \$100,000 per year

**\$\$\$\$\$** = \$100,001 or more per year

#### Job Outlook

Are there many future career opportunities projected for this field? In general, careers in the health field in BC are growing rapidly. The job outlook figures indicate the level of annual growth predicted for different occupations.

 = **High Job Growth** (2.0%+ expected annual growth in employment demand 2010–2020)

 = **Job Growth** (1.1 – 2.0% expected annual growth in employment demand 2010–2020)

 = **Limited Job Growth** (0.1 – 1.0% expected annual growth in employment demand 2010–2020)

 = **Stable** (0% expected annual growth in employment demand 2010–2020)

*Figures based on data from WorkBC Labour Market Navigator.*

#### Years in School

Almost every career listed in this guidebook requires some post-secondary training or education. Some careers may require an undergraduate university degree followed by a professional or graduate program. Years in School indicates the length of time in post-secondary programs required to qualify for each career. Check the Education & Training section in each job description for more details on the program of study required.

Projections for British Columbia's labour market show that, over the next decade, there will be approximately 1 million job openings in the province. Of those, 78 percent will require post-secondary education, 35 percent will call for a university degree, 28 percent will require a two-year college credential, and 15 percent a trades credential.

— *Business Council of BC*

## Choosing A Health Career That's Right For You

Your skills and abilities are in demand! That's right — businesses, organizations, and communities all across BC are looking for young people just like you who can bring new energy, ideas and innovations into the health field. Here's what you have, that they want:

*An aptitude for technology:* As smart phones keep getting smarter, organizations need individuals who understand and can keep up with rapidly evolving technologies — and who can drive the evolution.

*The ability to adapt quickly:* Today's work environment is changing rapidly, and within the health field new roles and responsibilities are constantly emerging as our knowledge continues to grow.

*Creativity:* You've got ideas that can drive innovation, that can change the way health services are delivered or developed. Organizations want to hear those ideas.

*Cultural Competency and Awareness:* Many First Nations and Aboriginal people have grown up with cultural values as an important part of everyday life. An understanding and respect for the culture of the patients you are serving plays an important part in providing the best level of care possible.

These skills, and others that you may not even have thought of yet, can help you to succeed in the health careers outlined in this guide.

Every health career demands a slightly different set of skills, abilities, and personality traits. To succeed in almost all health careers you'll need empathy, good communications skills, some level of technical or mathematical ability, and a willingness to work hard and to continue learning throughout your career. The field of health is always changing as new technologies and treatments are developed. Some of the jobs profiled in this guide didn't exist ten or even five years ago.

Keep in mind that some careers in the health field don't require a health education background! For example, if you have training and experience in science, business, communications, technology, sociology, or education, your skills and knowledge can translate easily into various important roles under the health umbrella. Planners, administrators, policy analysts, researchers, web developers, media relations experts, educators and leaders are all needed in order to ensure that the health field continues to grow. Your unique skills and background can make a huge contribution to the health of First Nations and Aboriginal communities in BC.

### Moving On Up

Choosing the career that is right for you is an important decision. Training for many of the careers you'll read about in this guide will require a significant investment of your time and effort, so you should think carefully about the type of career that best suits you. But keep in mind that the skills and abilities required for a career in health can easily translate into many other career options. There will be many opportunities for you move into new positions and to change career paths in the years ahead. Here are some tips and things to think about as you make your decision:

#### *Step 1: Identify Your Skills and Interests*

There are some people who seem to have been born knowing what they were meant to do in this world — people who have always intended to be doctors, or actors, or fire fighters, and who pursue their dreams with a passion. And for some of us, deciding what we want to “be” isn't so easy.

Thinking about your skills and interests is a great first step towards choosing the career that will suit you best. Check out the following list of skills needed for a number of health careers, and read about the selected career examples. Do they sound like a good fit for you?

**Manual Strength and Dexterity** Massage Therapist, Dentist, Occupational Therapist  
**Operating Instruments with Precision** Optometrist, Dental Assistant  
**Teaching Others** Pharmacist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Pathologist  
**Working as Part of a Team** Medical Office Assistant, Registered Nurse, Dental Hygienist  
**Solving Problems** Health Administrator, Chiropractor, Paramedic  
**Following Procedures** Nuclear Medicine Technologist, Medical Transcriptionist  
**Creativity** Therapists (Music, Dance, Art and Movement)  
**Working with the Public** Physical Therapist, Community Health Nurse, Patient Advocate

### *Step 2: Define Your Career Expectations*

How much time are you willing to spend training for a job?

How much money do you want to earn after graduating?

Would you like to get a job in your community, or are you willing to move?

Deciding what your career expectations are, then comparing them to the realities of various jobs will help you to make informed choices about the kind of career that is right for you.

The career descriptions in this guide can help you to narrow down the careers that match your expectations most closely. For example, here are some sample careers, and the number of years of post-secondary study that are required to qualify for each of them:

**1 year** Medical Office Assistant, Pharmacy Assistant, Health Care Assistant

**2 years** Dental Hygienist, Clinical Laboratory Technician, Respiratory Therapist

**4–6 years** Dietitian, Physical Therapist, Speech Language Pathologist

**6–8+ years** Dentist, Specialist Physician, Podiatrist

### *Step 3: Explore Careers in Depth*

After reading this guide, you may have lots of questions. Fortunately, there are many other resources for more detailed information on health careers and programs of study.

Start with the schools and associations that are listed in each health career description, and at the back of this guide. You may want to contact a health professional working in the field you are interested in, or discuss your choice with a teacher or program advisor at a college or university. Ask about the admission requirements, the cost of tuition, the type of instruction and hours of study expected, and whether the school or program assists students with job placements.

In addition, most BC universities and colleges offer advice, and in some cases, specific programs or reserved seats for BC First Nations and Aboriginal students. Check out the following section on Aboriginal Pre-Health Programs, or see the list of schools at the back of this guide for more information.

### **It's Your Future — Make the Most of It!**

There are so many exciting careers available in health, it can be difficult choosing the right one for you. Make sure you give your career choice careful thought, and evaluate your own interests and abilities thoroughly, to make sure your career goal is one that's going to bring you satisfaction and success for years to come.

***Good luck with your education and career journey!***

**Here are some other things to think about as you plan your future career goals:**

*Do you enjoy helping others?*

*Do you like solving problems?*

*Are you a good team player?*

*Do you handle pressure well?*

*Are you flexible and able to think quickly?*

## Preparing for Your Career:

### Aboriginal Pre-Health Programs in BC

There are several programs at BC universities to help students achieve success in health and science degree programs, including some that are specific to the needs of Aboriginal learners. Information is available online about these programs at SFU, UBC, and Thompson Rivers University. Remember that programs change, and new programs are being introduced all the time. For the most current information, consult a guidance counsellor at your school, or visit the Aboriginal Programs and Service Directory, online at the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada: [www.aucc.ca/canadian-universities/aboriginal-student-resources/aboriginal-programs-and-services-directory/](http://www.aucc.ca/canadian-universities/aboriginal-student-resources/aboriginal-programs-and-services-directory/)

#### **Simon Fraser University Aboriginal Pre-Health Program**

This university bridging program is for students of Aboriginal heritage (First Nation, Métis, and Inuit) who are thinking of pursuing a health career, but may not feel ready to go to university.

*More Information:*

[www.sfu.ca/continuing-studies/programs/aboriginal-pre-health-program/overview.html](http://www.sfu.ca/continuing-studies/programs/aboriginal-pre-health-program/overview.html)

#### **Native Education Centre Pathways to Health Careers Program**

This three-semester-long program gives students the skills required, in a supportive and culturally relevant learning environment, to succeed in their post-secondary health education. Core courses are taught by healthcare providers who give students insights into the demands of different health careers, and the variety of settings they may work in, with a focus on the health needs of Aboriginal communities in BC.

*More Information:*

[www.necvancouver.org/programs/pathways-health-careers-0](http://www.necvancouver.org/programs/pathways-health-careers-0)

#### **University of British Columbia Institute for Aboriginal Health Summer Science Program**

Summer Science is a one-week summer camp for Aboriginal students in grades 8 – 12. The program promotes interest in the health and human service field through first-hand experience at the University of British Columbia.

Each year the program takes place in 2 week-long sessions: one for grades 10 – 12, and one for grades 8 – 9. Students stay on campus at UBC, learn about health-related science careers and post-secondary pre-requisites, course planning, and admissions. Facilitators help students work through concerns about attending a college or university, and provide Aboriginal role models in health and science careers.

*More Information:*

[www.iah.ubc.ca/education/programs/](http://www.iah.ubc.ca/education/programs/)

#### **Thompson Rivers University Aboriginal Pathways to Health Careers Program**

This program offers small classes, Elder guidance, support and individual academic planning. Individual assessments identify students' needs and strengths, and the courses encourage strong foundations for success. Once students complete the program, they can apply to enter a health career degree or diploma program.

*More Information:*

[www.tru.ca/nursing/programs/pathways.html](http://www.tru.ca/nursing/programs/pathways.html)

## Distance Education

Distance education, also called online learning, gives students in remote areas of the province the ability to continue their education, while remaining in their home communities. No more classrooms!

Distance education can be a great option for students who aren't able or aren't ready to leave their home community, or who have financial, physical, or other barriers that prevent them from travelling. In distance learning, students learn using some combination of email, mail, online classrooms, lectures and discussions, and phone and fax contacts. Depending on the course, students may have the option to progress at their own pace, or complete coursework and assignments according to a pre-set schedule.

Online learning gives you the flexibility you need to earn credits towards a degree or diploma that will lead to a fulfilling health career, while allowing you to meet your other obligations, such as work and family. You can take part in online discussions, work with groups, connect with classmates, and watch videos, in your own space and according to your own schedule. Post-secondary study has never been so accessible!

Opportunities for online learning are available at nearly all post-secondary institutions in BC. In particular, check out these schools for programs offered entirely or in part through distance education:

### **Thompson Rivers University: TRU Open Learning**

Open Learning at Thompson Rivers University offers students continuous enrolment, flexible scheduling and minimal admission requirements. Take one course or a complete degree program, and study at your own pace.

[www.tru.ca/distance.html](http://www.tru.ca/distance.html)

### **BCIT: British Columbia Institute of Technology**

Distance courses and programs at BCIT are practical, convenient, and affordable for individuals who are not able to attend classes at the BCIT campus. All course assignments and exams are community-based and can normally be completed in your home town or surrounding area.

[www.bcit.ca/distance/](http://www.bcit.ca/distance/)

### **Nicola Valley Institute of Technology**

AT NVIT, students in online learning classes work through assignments together, as courses have scheduled start and end dates. Students must have access to a computer and reliable internet access in order to interact with the instructor and other students online.

[www.nvit.ca/onlinelearning.htm](http://www.nvit.ca/onlinelearning.htm)



## Alternative & Complementary Health

*For many of us, when we think of health careers, our first thoughts are of doctors and nurses. But the field of health also includes a number of careers that focus on helping people to maintain wellness and improve their health and quality of life through what are called complementary and alternative practices — such as reflexology, acupuncture, or herbalism. This group of diverse medical and health care practices are not generally considered part of conventional Western medicine.*

*Alternative and complementary health practitioners take a holistic approach to patient care; they view and treat the patient as a whole person, rather than focusing on particular symptoms. This field of health tends to be strongly prevention-oriented, utilizing low-tech, “hands-on” techniques that are intended to strengthen the body’s natural ability to heal itself. These practitioners usually work in private practice, including group or team practices, or are employed by clinics, health clubs and spas.*

# Acupuncturist

**EARNINGS: \$\$**  
**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍  
**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 5+**

**PROFILE**

*As an Acupuncturist, you'll treat clients with physiological disorders, diseases, or injuries, using acupuncture needles or through the use of laser and electrical stimulation. You'll insert acupuncture needles at precise points on clients' bodies to correct energy imbalances, relieve pain, and improve and maintain health. You will likely work in a private clinic and you may need to work flexible hours to meet the needs of clients. Most Acupuncturists work alone or in partnership with other health professionals, such as Chiropractors, Family Physicians or Massage Therapists.*

## Education & Training

Acupuncturists are required to complete a three year diploma program in Acupuncture and must be registered through the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of British Columbia. Also required is the completion of two years of study at a college or university.

A number of private colleges offer training programs for Acupuncture. These include:

*Pacific Rim College*

*Academy of Classical Oriental Sciences*

*PCU College of Holistic Medicine*

## Find More Info

College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of British Columbia

→ [www.ctcma.bc.ca](http://www.ctcma.bc.ca)

Traditional Chinese Medicine Association of BC

→ [www.tcmabc.org](http://www.tcmabc.org)

## Keys to Success

You'll need to be able to communicate and explain treatments to clients in everyday language, as well as good manual dexterity, good vision, and excellent problem-solving skills.

Acupuncturists should enjoy observing and interviewing people, performing tasks requiring precision (for example, inserting needles into precise points on a client's body) and advising patients. As they often run their own practices or clinics, Acupuncturists may need financial management skills.

## A Look Ahead

WorkBC predicts there will be a balanced demand for workers in this occupation throughout most of the province over the next several years, with the exception of the Lower Mainland/Southwest region, where it is predicted there will be an excess supply of workers as compared to job openings.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

Since most Acupuncturists are self-employed and working part-time is very common, salaries in this occupation vary widely. Like other complementary health practitioners, Acupuncturists' earnings are likely to rise as they build their practices.

# Clinical Hypnotherapist

**EARNINGS:** \$

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL:** 1+

## PROFILE

*Are you interested in exploring the power of the mind to heal? As a Hypnotherapist, you'll use hypnosis to treat clients' medical and psychological conditions through subconscious suggestion. You'll work with clients to help them control unwanted behaviours or find a way of coping with their problems. You may be called on to help with issues such as quitting smoking, weight loss, substance abuse, marriage or family challenges, pain management, or dealing with fears, phobias, or anxieties.*

### Education & Training

A number of private institutions offer training in Hypnotherapy, including:

*VancouverCrossRoads Counselling Group, Vancouver*

*Pacific Institute of Advanced Hypnotherapy*

*The Horizon Centre, Victoria*

Programs vary in length.

Registered hypnotherapists must be certified with the International Medical and Dental Hypnotherapy Association. Details of certification requirements are available from the Association.

### Find More Info

Canadian Society of Clinical Hypnosis (BC Division)

→ [www.hypnosis.bc.ca](http://www.hypnosis.bc.ca)

Association of Registered Clinical Hypnotherapists

→ [www.archcanada.ca](http://www.archcanada.ca)

International Medical and Dental Hypnotherapy Association

→ [www.imdha.com](http://www.imdha.com)

Hypnotherapists can work independently, or as part of a team along with physicians, counsellors, or other health professionals. They may also practice other types of complementary or alternative therapies such as Therapeutic Touch, Reiki, Massage Therapy, or Holistic Healing.

### Keys to Success

You'll need empathy, good communications skills, and problem-solving skills as a Hypnotherapist. Patience, a calm manner, and analytical skills are also necessary skills and abilities for this health career.

### A Look Ahead

Job prospects for practitioners of Natural Healing, such as Hypnotherapists, are good across Canada. Practitioners of natural healing have benefited from the trend toward seeking alternatives to traditional medicine, and the number of practitioners is expected to rise sharply in the coming years, according to Job Futures Canada.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Earnings for Hypnotherapists vary, and depend on the number of clients and hours of work. Many Hypnotherapists work part-time, or provide hypnotherapy services in combination with other therapies. Hypnotherapists in private practice may have overhead costs.

# Doctor of Chinese Medicine

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 5+**

**PROFILE**

*Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioners diagnose diseases, physiological disorders and injuries of patients and treat them using herbs and other medicines, dietary supplements, acupuncture or other types of treatment. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, the body is regarded as an integrated system that needs to be in harmony for optimal health. Some other treatments offered by Doctors of Traditional Chinese Medicine include herbal therapies, qigong — an exercise to regulate the mind and breathing — and tuina, or therapeutic massage.*

Doctors of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioners in BC must be registered with the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of BC.

**Keys to Success**

If you have good analytical abilities, a strong interest in Eastern philosophies, a compassionate manner, problem-solving, listening and communication skills, you may have the qualities that will lead to success as a Doctor of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

**A Look Ahead**

With an aging population and increased interest in complementary health practices, preventative medicine and natural healing, the job outlook is very good for Doctors of Traditional Chinese Medicine in BC.

**What You Can Expect to Earn**

Doctors of Chinese Medicine have earnings that are comparable to physicians, and can be up to \$200,000 per year or more. Doctors running their own practices will have overhead costs, and must have financial management skills in addition to their abilities in health and science.

**Education & Training**

In BC, students are required to have two years of university education as a prerequisite of admission to a Traditional Chinese Medicine program. Colleges offering these programs are governed by the regulatory body College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of BC, which also administers certification exams. To become a registered practitioner, a student needs 2,600 hours of study including 650 hours of clinical work. Private colleges offering programs include:

*Pacific Rim College*

*International College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Vancouver*

→ [www.tcmcollege.com](http://www.tcmcollege.com)

**Find More Info**

Traditional Chinese Medicine Association of BC

→ [www.tcmabc.org](http://www.tcmabc.org)

College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of BC

→ [www.ctcma.bc.ca](http://www.ctcma.bc.ca)

# Herbalist

**EARNINGS:** \$

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL:** 1+

**PROFILE**

*Herbology, or the study of plants and their health benefits, is the basis of a Herbalist's practice. Herbalists help clients to manage health problems and maintain wellness by suggesting dietary and lifestyle changes, and recommending herbal supplements to alleviate symptoms and treat their health concerns.*

Herbalists may grow herbs and manufacture and sell herbal compounds. While some herbalists work in wellness centres or private practices, or as part of a health team along with medical or naturopathic doctors, others may work in herbal or health food stores, answering customers' questions and making recommendations.

**Keys to Success**

If you have compassion, an interest in improving the health and well-being of others, good communication and listening skills, and an interest in the health benefits of herbs and natural products, you may be well suited to a career as an herbalist.

**A Look Ahead**

Specific Labour Market information for herbalists is not available, but along with other complementary and alternative practitioners, it is expected that this field will experience growth as a result of increasing interest in alternative therapies and due to the needs of an aging population.

**What You Can Expect to Earn**

Since most herbalists are self-employed and working part-time is very common, salaries in this occupation vary widely. While Herbalists working in retail stores earn wages comparable to other salespersons, earnings for clinical Herbalists depend on the size of their clientele. Herbalists in private practice will have overhead costs.



**Education & Training**  
Herbalists are not regulated in BC. Private schools offer training in herbalism, including the following:  
*Dominion Herbal College*  
→ [www.dominionherbal.com](http://www.dominionherbal.com)  
*Pacific Rim College*  
→ [www.pacificrimcollege.ca](http://www.pacificrimcollege.ca)

**Find More Info**  
Canadian Herbalists Society of BC  
→ [www.chaofbc.ca](http://www.chaofbc.ca)  
College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of British Columbia  
→ [www.ctcma.bc.ca](http://www.ctcma.bc.ca)

# Homeopath

**EARNINGS:** \$-\$\$

**JOB OUTLOOK:** Unknown

**YEARS IN SCHOOL:** 4+

**PROFILE**

*“Like cures like.” This is the principle that homeopaths use to diagnose and treat illnesses. Homeopaths are medical practitioners who administer small amounts of natural substances to patients which produce symptoms similar to the symptoms the patient is already experiencing. For instance, a Homeopath might treat burning, stinging eyes by prescribing a preparation of red onion. These treatments are meant to stimulate the body’s immune system to fight disease.*

Homeopaths also instruct patients on preventative treatments to ensure wellness, and take part in public education to promote health and wellness. They often work in private clinics, or as part of a team of complementary health practitioners.

**Keys to Success**

If you have excellent communication and observational skills, patience, persistence, an unprejudiced and open mind, strong analytical ability, and compassion for others, you may have the qualities of a successful homeopath.

**A Look Ahead**

Homeopaths form a small occupation group. Most practitioners are self-employed and work from their homes or operate private clinics. In general, employment for practitioners of complementary and alternative health is expected to grow in response to increasing interest in this field of health, and as the population ages.

**What You Can Expect to Earn**

Since most Homeopaths are self-employed and working part-time is very common, salaries in this occupation vary widely.

**Education & Training**

Currently, Homeopathy is an unregulated profession in BC. The Vancouver Homeopathic Academy offers a part-time four-year practitioner program in Homeopathy.

**For More Info**

BC Society of Homeopaths

→ [www.bcsh.ca](http://www.bcsh.ca)

Canadian Society of Homeopaths

→ [www.csoh.ca](http://www.csoh.ca)

West Coast Homeopathic Society

→ [www.wchs.info](http://www.wchs.info)

Vancouver Homeopathic Academy

→ [www.v-h-a.com](http://www.v-h-a.com)

# Reflexologist

EARNINGS: \$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 1+

## PROFILE

*In order to promote relaxation, and better health and well-being, Reflexologists apply gentle finger pressure to specific spots on their clients' feet or hands. Reflexologists may work in wellness centres, spas, chiropractic offices, physiotherapy clinics, hospices or palliative care homes. Some work from their own homes or travel to clients' homes. Usually, a Reflexologist offers other types of natural healing techniques besides reflexology.*

### Education & Training

There are currently no legally required qualifications to practice reflexology in BC. Institutions approved by the Reflexology Association of BC to provide instruction in Reflexology include:

*Advanced Reflexology Institute*

*HCP Reflexology Institute*

*Pacific Institute of Reflexology*

*Viva Holistic Healing*

### For More Info

Reflexology Association of BC

→ [www.reflexologyofbc.com](http://www.reflexologyofbc.com)

Natural Health Practitioners of Canada Association

→ [www.nhpcanada.org](http://www.nhpcanada.org)

Reflexology Association of Canada

→ [www.reflexolog.org](http://www.reflexolog.org)

### Keys to Success

As a Reflexologist, you'll need some or all of the following characteristics:

- an interest in working with people on a one-to-one basis
- a willingness to make direct physical contact with clients
- good health and stamina
- strong hands
- the ability to communicate and establish rapport with others
- respectful of others' opinions, beliefs, customs and values

### A Look Ahead

Reflexologists are part of the larger group of natural healers and there is no specific occupational profile for these practitioners in BC. The outlook for complementary and alternative health practitioners overall is good, as interest in non-traditional health therapies continues to grow.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Reflexologists' incomes vary considerably depending on the number of hours they work and their overhead costs (for example, the cost of renting space in a clinic or salon).

# Registered Massage Therapist

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2+

PROFILE

*Want to help clients to reduce or manage pain, deal with stress and relax? Massage Therapists manipulate the muscles and soft tissues of their clients with their hands, or with heat, light, water or vibrating devices, in order to improve circulation and produce other health benefits. They conduct client assessments to determine the type of treatment required, and they may also consult with other health professionals to develop treatment plans for clients. Registered Massage Therapists may work in teams with physicians, physiotherapists or other health professionals. They frequently work in private clinics and spas.*



**Kim Goetzinger** Haida Nation, *Registered Massage Therapist*

➤ *“Registered Massage Therapists work with soft tissues, and those tissues are often ignored or go unnoticed unless you aggravate them. We have all had back pain, a leg cramp or a sore neck at some point in our lives; my job is not only to help rehabilitate those tissues so you can move freely again, but to educate you about them.”*

### Keys to Success

If you have the following skills and abilities, you may be well suited to work as a Massage Therapist:

- *good communication and time management skills*
- *strong, flexible hands*
- *able to work in a standing position for long periods of time*
- *critical thinking skills*
- *friendly, outgoing personality and caring attitude*

### A Look Ahead

Massage Therapy is a fast-growing career, as more and more people realize the benefits of these types of treatments, and as more employee benefit plans and private health insurance increasingly cover Massage Therapy.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Earnings for Massage Therapists can vary widely depending on number of clients, location, and years of experience. Massage Therapists working in private practice will have overhead costs associated with running their own clinic or office. In 2013, the average salary for this occupational category, according to workbc.ca, is \$29,341.

#### Education & Training

In order to be registered as a Massage Therapist in BC, you must complete 3000 hours of training at a certified school of Massage Therapy. For information on specific program requirements, contact the schools below, or the College of Massage Therapists of BC.

*Okanagan Valley College of  
Massage Therapy* — Vernon  
*Utopia Academy*

→ [www.utopiaacademy.com](http://www.utopiaacademy.com)

*Vancouver Career College* —  
Burnaby

*West Coast College of Massage  
Therapy*

→ [www.collegeofmassage.com](http://www.collegeofmassage.com)

#### For More Info

College of Massage Therapists  
of BC → [www.cmtbc.ca](http://www.cmtbc.ca)

Massage Therapists Association of BC  
→ [www.massagetherapy.bc.ca](http://www.massagetherapy.bc.ca)

# Osteopath

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6+**

## PROFILE

*As an Osteopath, your hands will be your primary tool for diagnosing and treating illnesses and injuries. Osteopaths use their hands to examine their clients' backs and other parts of the body, such as joints, tendons, ligaments, and muscles, for pain and restriction during motion that could signal an injury or impaired function. Then they recommend and apply treatments that focus on restoring proper movement and function to the entire body.*

Osteopaths take a holistic view of health, and they seek to enhance the body's natural healing ability. Osteopaths diagnose disorders and injuries of the musculo-skeletal, circulatory and nervous systems and mainly treat patients through manipulative therapy.

### Keys to Success

As an Osteopathic practitioner, you'll need to have excellent observational skills. You'll use clinical knowledge and your intuitive skills to make a diagnosis. Communication skills are essential to this position, along with analytical and creative thinking, good manual dexterity, patience and attention to detail.

### A Look Ahead

Osteopaths are part of the larger group of natural healers and there is no specific occupational profile for these practitioners in BC. However, overall the outlook for complementary and alternative health practitioners is good, as interest in non-traditional health therapies continues to grow in this province.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Earnings for Doctors of Osteopathy may be comparable to other physicians. Because they often run their own practices or clinics, these practitioners have the associated costs of running a small business.

### Education & Training

A bachelor's degree is required for admission to a Doctor of Osteopathy program. Completion of a four-year Osteopathy program, followed by a year of medical residency are required for licensing in BC.

For information on schools and degree programs in osteopathy, see the BC Osteopathic Association.

### For More Info

BC Osteopathic Association

→ [www.osteopathic.bc.ca](http://www.osteopathic.bc.ca)

Canadian Osteopathic Association

→ [www.osteopathic.ca](http://www.osteopathic.ca)

# Clinical Laboratory Science

*Medical laboratory professionals are the third largest group of medical professionals in BC. They provide critical information that is used in up to 85 percent of decisions about diagnosis and treatment. Most medical laboratory technologists work in hospitals, but jobs are also available in private laboratories, community health clinics, public health facilities, university research labs, biotechnology companies and specialty labs.*

*Areas of specialization include clinical chemistry, hematology, clinical microbiology, transfusion science, histotechnology, diagnostic cytology, clinical genetics, immunology, electron microscopy, virology, parasitology and flow cytometry... to name a few!*



# Medical Laboratory Technologist

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2-3**

## PROFILE

*If you loved science class, a career as a Medical Laboratory Technologist may be perfect for you. Medical Laboratory Technologists conduct experiments, run laboratory tests, analyze the results and send reports to physicians. The tests that they conduct are crucial to the accurate diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease.*

### Education & Training

In a Medical Laboratory Technologist program you'll complete two or three years of accredited medical laboratory education and a period of supervised practical training. Certification by the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) is usually required by employers.

Programs are offered at:

*BCIT (British Columbia Institute of Technology)*

*Please visit the school's website to review prerequisites for entering this program.*

### For Further Info

British Columbia Society of Laboratory Science

→ [www.bcls.net](http://www.bcls.net)

Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science

→ [www.csmls.org](http://www.csmls.org)

As a Medical Laboratory Technologist, you'll get to:

- conduct chemical analyses of blood, urine, cerebrospinal and other body fluids
- study blood cells and other tissue to determine their relation to various physiological and pathological conditions
- prepare tissue sections for microscopic examinations using techniques to demonstrate special cellular tissue elements or other characteristics

Medical laboratory technologists work in many settings including:

- hospitals, community laboratories, BC Health Authorities, Canadian Blood Services, research institutions, public health laboratories, veterinary clinics, universities and private clinics

### Keys to Success

To succeed as a Medical Laboratory Technologist, it helps if you are:

- detail oriented and able to follow strict procedures
- able to work both independently and as part of a team
- a good communicator, with strong interpersonal skills

Employers are looking for Medical Laboratory Technologists who have strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and who work well as part of a team.

### A Look Ahead

There is strong growth predicted in this field over the next several years. The regions with the highest annual average growth for Medical Technologists are the Northeast, the Lower Mainland/Southwest, and the Cariboo region.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

According to the Working in Canada Wage Report, the average salary for Medical Laboratory Technologists in BC in 2013 was \$53,000 to \$66,000.

# Jessica Humchitt *Heiltsuk First Nation*

## Health Sciences Student, Simon Fraser University



Photo by Fabrice Grover

**MY STORY** I was fortunate enough to take part in a trip sponsored by the Heiltsuk Community College to attend a University Orientation for post-secondary recruitment. I was able to learn about opportunities I was really interested in, including Maternal Health, Policy Development for returning rural maternal care to our communities, and Art Therapy. The University tour gave me a clearer picture of some of the potential paths I could choose for me and my family.

Shortly after the University tour I was invited to apply for a pilot program called the 'Aboriginal Pre-Health Program' through Simon Fraser University's Continuing Education Program. I applied and was granted entry into a ten month bridging program to assist me in pursuing health-related post-secondary education. Following the completion of the Aboriginal Pre-Health Program I enrolled as a Health Sciences student at Simon Fraser and was offered a role in a Biology Lab doing biomedical research through fluorescent live-cell imaging. Now I get to do general lab assisting and research that focuses on mitochondrial

dynamics and the neurodegenerative effects of cellular morphology for diseases like Parkinson's and Alzheimers from live cell samples and neurons with a microscope.

I really enjoy my lab time because I get to participate in some amazing scientific experiences and the Mitochondrial Lab has given me so many teachings I never thought would be available to me. I'm able to use pretty incredible equipment doing research that is also very meaningful.

There is currently huge potential for First Nations students at SFU to become future research assistants within biomedical laboratories, and students who complete the Aboriginal Pre-Health Program are granted priority placements with labs that are partnered through the Biology Department.

My long term goals are to continue to learn more — not just scientific method but also balancing my teachings with an incorporation of traditional and cultural aspects of our health and well-being.

# Medical Laboratory Assistant

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 1+

## PROFILE

*Medical Laboratory Assistants are responsible for a number of pre-analytical laboratory functions. If you go into this career, you'll likely find yourself working in a medical laboratory in a hospital, clinic, research institute, university, or in a government research laboratory. You'll almost certainly do some of the following:*

- collect blood or other samples from patients
- process and transport specimens and prepare special chemicals called reagents for use in testing
- log patient samples and prepare them for testing
- set up medical laboratory equipment
- conduct routine laboratory tests and sample analyses
- perform electrocardiograms (ECGs)

## Keys to Success

Are you:

- detail oriented and able to follow procedures?
- able to maintain a high level of accuracy, both in work procedures and in maintaining concise records?
- able to work independently and as part of a team?

If you have these skills, as well as manual dexterity and good written and verbal communications skills, a career as a Medical Laboratory Assistant could be right for you!

## A Look Ahead

There is currently a shortage of Medical Laboratory Technologists and Assistants in BC and the shortage is expected to continue for the next several years. Hospitals and medical laboratories that provide contracted diagnostic services predict that they'll experience growth, and will require more staff.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The provincial average salary for Medical Laboratory Assistants in 2013 was \$44,000 to \$53,000, according to the Working in Canada Wage Report.

### Education & Training

Medical Laboratory Assistants who have graduated from an approved training program may obtain certification through the BC Society of Laboratory Science (BCSLs). Certification is voluntary in BC, but preferred by most employers.

Approved programs are offered at:

*MTI Community College*

*Stenberg College*

*VCC: Vancouver Community College*

*West Coast College of Health Care*

*CDI College*

### For More Info

British Columbia Society of Laboratory Science

→ [www.bcsls.net](http://www.bcsls.net)

Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science

→ [www.csmls.org](http://www.csmls.org)



## Diagnostic Imaging

*Diagnostic imaging is the art and science of producing medical images which allow physicians to accurately diagnose patients, by enabling them to see internal views of a patient's anatomy. As a Diagnostic Imaging Technologist, you can provide diagnostic imaging support in various areas, including: Emergency Trauma, Orthopaedics, Neurosciences, Intensive Care, Cardiac Sciences, Transplants, Burns, Plastic Surgery and more!*

# Diagnostic Medical Sonographer / Ultrasound Technician

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 3+**

## PROFILE

*As a Sonographer, you'll use ultrasound equipment to produce and record images of various parts of the body. Ultrasound images are used by doctors to monitor pregnancies and to diagnose injuries and medical disorders. The ultrasound imaging equipment transmits high frequency sound pulses through the body to produce images of those parts of the body requiring examination. You'll evaluate the quality of the images, monitor the patient to ensure their safety and comfort, and prepare reports for physicians. You may work in hospitals or in clinics.*

### Education & Training

Ultrasound technicians need to complete a three to four-year program in Diagnostic Medical Sonography or Ultrasound Technology, followed by registration with the Canadian Association of Registered Diagnostic Medical Ultrasound Professionals.

BC's Diagnostic Medical Sonography program is offered at *BCIT (British Columbia Institute of Technology)*

### For More Info

Canadian Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers  
→ [www.csdms.com](http://www.csdms.com)

### Keys to Success

Sonographers need to have a knowledge of physics, an ability to work with complex instruments, and an understanding of physical anatomy. If you've got good manual dexterity, strong verbal and written communications skills, compassion and patience when working with clients one on one, and good attention to detail, you may want to pursue a career in Medical Sonography.

### A Look Ahead

There is predicted to be an increase in Ultrasound Technician positions across Canada at clinics and outpatient facilities as ultrasound equipment becomes more mobile and less expensive to operate. More than half the Sonographer jobs becoming available in BC over the next several years will be replacing retiring workers, according to BC's Labour Market Outlook 2010 – 2020.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary for Medical Sonographers in BC in 2013 was from \$53,000 to \$66,000, and the median full-time hourly rate was \$35.16.

# Medical Radiation Technologist

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2+**

**PROFILE**

*As a Medical Radiation Technologist, you'll be an integral part of the healthcare team, performing diagnostic imaging examinations and administering radiation therapy treatments. You'll use highly sophisticated X-ray equipment, mammography equipment, or C.T. (computerized tomography) scanners to produce images that are used by Radiologists to diagnose disease or injury.*

Related careers include: magnetic resonance technologists, nuclear medicine technologists, radiation therapists, and radiological technologists.

**Keys to Success**

Because Medical Radiation Technologists operate sophisticated equipment, you'll need to have some mechanical ability as well as good manual dexterity. If you have a good memory, and you're resourceful, detail oriented, interested in science and willing to work with others, you have some of the qualities that Medical Radiation Technologists find useful in their work. Medical Radiation Technologists also need to be able to work compassionately with patients who may have acute and chronic illnesses.

**A Look Ahead**

Employment prospects for Medical Radiation Technologists are expected to be above average in the coming years. While many of the openings will be due to job creation, there will be also be a considerable number of jobs available because of the need to replace experienced workers as they retire.

**What You Can Expect to Earn**

Salaries vary depending on the Medical Radiation Technologist's area of specialty, level of training, location of practice and experience. In general, however, in 2013 Medical Radiation Technologists could expect to earn between \$35,000 and \$90,000 a year, according to Service Canada's Labour Market Information.

**Education & Training**

You'll need to complete a two to three year college program and pass the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (CAMRT) certification exam. Then you can register with the British Columbia Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (BCAMRT), which also gives you membership in the national CAMRT. Radiological Technology programs are offered at:

*BCIT*

*Comosun College*

*College of New Caledonia*

*Contact the individual schools for details of program prerequisites.*

**For More Info**

Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists  
→ [www.camrt.ca](http://www.camrt.ca)

# Nuclear Medicine Technologist

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2+

PROFILE

*Do you love chemistry, physics, and high-tech equipment?*

*As a Nuclear Medicine Technologist, you'll get to work with all three, while playing an important role in patient diagnosis. You will give patients radioactive substances by mouth, needle, or other means, then track and take images of the radiation given off inside the patient's body using special high tech cameras. You'll be responsible for explaining to patients what you are doing, safely handling the radioactive materials, and for the proper functioning and use of the equipment.*

## Education & Training

You'll complete a two-year Nuclear Medicine Technology program, followed by certification from the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists. Programs in BC are offered at:

*BCIT*

## For More Info

Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (CAMRT)

→ [www.camrt.ca](http://www.camrt.ca)

## Keys to Success

Nuclear Medicine Technicians operate highly specialized instruments, and handle radioactive substances, so a high degree of precision, attention to detail, and the ability to follow strict procedures is an asset for this job. Compassion and communication skills when dealing with patients with critical illness are valuable qualities. You should be able to work independently, and as a member of a team, and to think quickly and respond well to pressure.

## A Look Ahead

Employment prospects for Nuclear Medicine Technologists are expected to be above average in the coming years. While most new job openings will arise due to job creation, there will be also be a considerable number of jobs available due to retirements. The aging population is contributing to a need for diagnostic imaging technicians.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

Nuclear Medicine Technologists in BC earned an average of \$54,000 to \$68,000 per year in 2013.



## Health Administration

*Hospitals, health centres and other medical facilities are often large, complicated organizations, and they don't run themselves! We all depend on professionals in Health Administration to make sure that medical facilities and services are efficient and cost-effective. These professionals are skilled managers who understand the realities of providing health services and ensure that the day-to-day and long term needs of patients and staff in hospitals are met, by planning, directing, coordinating and supervising the delivery of health care services.*

# Health Administrator

EARNINGS: \$\$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6+

PROFILE

*Health Administrators, also known as Hospital Administrators or Health Services Managers, may oversee entire health care facilities, or they may manage specific programs or services. In general, they are responsible for supervising staff, ensuring that laws and regulations are followed, managing budgets, and developing and implementing plans and processes for the management of the program or service.*



**Franny Alec** Xaxli'p First Nation, Health Manager T'it'q'et Administration



*"I have worked within communities in the capacity of health care administration and social programs since 1980. This has been a unique opportunity and experience, gaining knowledge of our communities and from the people. I've worked for T'it'q'et Administration as Community Health Representative and Health Manager since September 2001."*



➤ *“Some of my undertakings that helped me to get where I am today: taking the Community Health Representative training with Health Canada, getting my Human Services Certificate, studying management skills for supervisors, office administration, accounting and book-keeping, and receiving my Aboriginal Health Care Administrative Certificate from UBC in 2005. I also have a Professional Diabetes Training certificate, and have taken a Capital Projects Course with INAC.*

*To think of entering into the health field you must see a need for improved health. By pursuing a career in health you will make a great change for yourself, your family, and your community. The gratitude of someone you helped is so valuable and meaningful, only when this happens to you will you understand the special and fulfilling feeling.”*

### Education & Training

Many Health Administrators have degrees in commerce, business administration, or management.

Specific programs in health administration include:

*UBC : Sauder School of Business,  
MBA in Healthcare*

*UBC: School of Population and  
Public Health, Master of Health  
Administration,*

*Royal Roads University: MA in  
Leadership, Health specialization*

### For More Info

Health Care Leaders Association  
of BC → [leads.cchl-ccls.ca](http://leads.cchl-ccls.ca)

Canadian College of Health Leaders  
→ [www.cchl-ccls.ca](http://www.cchl-ccls.ca)

### Keys to Success

Health Administrators are leaders. To be successful, you'll need to have:

- *good organizational skills*
- *strong communication and interpersonal skills*
- *leadership and team building skills*

### A Look Ahead

Growth is expected in this occupation as a result of retirements, and as health care facilities expand and increase to serve the aging population.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Salaries for Health Administrators can vary widely, depending on the size of the health facility and your level of experience and seniority. According to a 2011 wage and salary survey, the average hourly wage for Health Care Administrators was \$51.50.

# Medical Office Assistant

**EARNINGS: \$\$**  
**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍  
**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 1**

**PROFILE**

*Got what it takes to keep a medical office running*

*smoothly? Medical Office Assistants perform a variety of secretarial and administrative duties in doctors' offices, hospitals, medical clinics and other medical settings. They support doctors and other health care professionals by scheduling appointments, greeting patients, word processing, bookkeeping and accounting, photocopying, filing, and answering telephone calls and correspondence. Medical Office Assistants and secretaries work in doctors' offices and clinics, in hospitals and other health facilities, and for private companies such as insurers.*

## Education & Training

A one-year diploma from a Medical Office Assistant Program is available from a number of schools in BC, including:

**BCIT**

*Douglas College*

*MTI Community College*

*Okanagan College*

*Sprott Shaw College*

*Stenberg College*

*Surrey Community College*

## For More Info

Medical Office Assistants  
Association of BC → [www.medicalofficeassistantsofbc.com](http://www.medicalofficeassistantsofbc.com)

## Keys to Success

If you're interested in this occupation, it will be helpful to have:

- excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to be tactful and maintain patient confidentiality
- organizational skills for managing large amounts of detailed information
- the ability to work both independently and in a team setting, and to work under pressure

To be successful as a Medical Office Assistant, you'll also need basic knowledge of anatomy and physiology and knowledge of medical and pharmaceutical terminology.

## A Look Ahead

The three regions in BC expecting highest levels of average annual growth for Medical Office Assistants are the Northeast, Lower Mainland/Southwest, and Kootenay regions. Almost two-thirds of all job openings expected for this occupation will be as a result of retirements.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The provincial average salary for Medical Office Assistants in 2013 was \$33,000 to \$44,000, and the median hourly wage was \$20.15.



## Health Information & Communications

*Every time someone visits a health professional, records are created or updated. Managing all that information efficiently, and safeguarding it, is crucial to maintaining our health care system. As a health information management professional, you'll collect, record, manage and report on health information. You'll make sure that personal health information is kept private and confidential. And by making sure that information gets to the people who need it, when they need it, you'll improve patient care, administrative decision-making, financial planning and resource allocation. Information you gather and interpret could also contribute to the education of physicians and other health professionals, and research into new treatments and cures.*

# Health Information Technician

**EARNINGS: \$\$**  
**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍  
**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2**

**PROFILE**

*Health Information Technicians collect, code, record, review and manage health information. Working in hospitals, clinics, health research facilities, community health agencies and government agencies they determine whether medical records are complete, translate the information into coding symbols, and organize the records for easy retrieval. When doctors, health administrators, insurance companies, lawyers and patients need information from health records, they turn to the skills and expertise of health information technicians.*

## Education & Training

Douglas College offers a two-year diploma program in Health Information Management. After graduation, students are eligible to complete the national certification exam with the Canadian Health Information Management Association.

## For More Info

Canadian Health Information Management Association

→ [www.echima.ca](http://www.echima.ca)

National Institutes of Health Informatics → [www.nihi.ca](http://www.nihi.ca)

COACH: Canada's Health Informatics Association

→ [www.coachorg.com](http://www.coachorg.com)

## Keys to Success

Health Information Technicians need an aptitude and interest in health, computer science, business and research. They work with health information systems and databases, collect and analyze health information, and apply their medical terminology knowledge to the coding process. To succeed in this job, you'll need:

- good written communication skills
- attention to detail
- ability to maintain confidentiality

## A Look Ahead

Job growth in this occupational category is expected to be highest in the Northeast, the Cariboo, and the Southwest/Mainland regions, according to WorkBC's Labour Market Navigator. As with health occupations generally, population growth, longer life expectancies and the aging population are increasing the demand for Health Information Technicians.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary in BC in 2013 for workers in this category was \$44, 000 to \$53, 000, according to WorkBC's Labour Market Navigator.

# Health Information Manager

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2+**

**PROFILE**

*Health Information Managers plan, organize, direct, control and evaluate health information services. They make sure that patient information systems and clinical and administrative data meet the medical, legal, ethical and administrative requirements of health care delivery for communities. These managers are employed by government departments and agencies, as well as community health clinics, mental health and outreach programs, educational institutions, and workers' compensation offices.*

**Education & Training:**

Douglas College offers a two-year diploma in Health Information Management.

→ [www.douglas.bc.ca/](http://www.douglas.bc.ca/)

**For More Info**

Canadian College of Health Information Management (CCHIM)

→ [www.echima.ca](http://www.echima.ca)

Canadian Institute for Health Information → [www.cihi.ca](http://www.cihi.ca)

**Keys to Success**

You'll need an aptitude for working with financial and medical data, as well as knowledge of the legal aspects of health information management, including privacy concerns. You'll need to be a good communicator, self-directed, able to supervise and direct the work of others, and able to solve problems and make decisions.

**A Look Ahead**

As the information management needs of the health care system continue to grow, there is expected to be an increased need for Health Information Managers across BC.

**What You Can Expect to Earn**

The median hourly wage for this occupation in BC was \$47.00 in 2013, according to Working in Canada.

# Health Policy Researcher

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 4+

## PROFILE

*As a Health Policy Researcher, you'll conduct research, and analyze how well our health care policies and programs are serving our communities' health needs. You may be employed by a government department or agency, at a consulting firm, a university or research institute, or in a hospital, community agency, or non-governmental organization. You'll collect and analyze statistical data, conduct interviews, monitor and evaluate health care program and services, design, implement and evaluate health care projects, and provide advice on health policies and regulations.*

## Education & Training

A masters degree or PhD is required for most health policy researcher positions. The Centre for Health Services and Policy Research at UBC offers graduate programs. Other relevant programs include the School of Public Policy at SFU, University of Victoria's Centre for Aboriginal Health Research, and the University of Northern BC's MSC in Community Health Sciences.

## For More Info

UBC Centre for Health Services and Policy Research

→ [www.chspr.ubc.ca](http://www.chspr.ubc.ca)

Centre for Aboriginal Health

Research, Uvic → [www.cahr.uvic.ca](http://www.cahr.uvic.ca)

School of Public Policy, SFU

→ [www.sfu.ca/mpp.html](http://www.sfu.ca/mpp.html)

Community Health Sciences, UNBC

→ [www.unbc.ca/health-sciences/community-health](http://www.unbc.ca/health-sciences/community-health)

## Keys to Success

You'll do best in this job if you have excellent analytical skills, and if you're a skilled communicator. You'll need to be a creative problem-solver, be detail oriented, and able to synthesize large amounts of data and information.

## A Look Ahead

Job opportunities for Health Policy Researchers are predicted to show balanced growth until 2020, reflecting the growth of the health field as a whole.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The median hourly wage for Health Researchers in BC in 2013 was \$30.77, according to Working in Canada. The average full-time salary according to WorkBC was \$58,000 in 2011.



*Elaine M. Alec* Okanagan and Shuswap First Nations  
**Health Consultant**

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**MY STORY** I fell into health and wellness in my early 20s. My mother suffered a massive stroke in her early 50s and I was diagnosed with chronic disease (Rheumatoid Arthritis and Fibromyalgia). My uncle, who was an integral part of my life, suffered from diabetes and was extremely overweight and using a walker to get around. I started taking steps to take better care of my health, understood that we were all afflicted with preventable diseases (for the most part) and that we had it in our power to take charge of our health to create a better quality of life for ourselves and our children by making changes to the way we did things. I then realized that I could inspire hope in others to do the same thing.

I majored in Computer Science at Idaho State University but ended up taking English and Philosophy classes. In my early 20s I took yoga classes, which led me to the fitness centre, which led me to doing more cardio, which led me to enjoy running again, especially after I quit smoking. From there, I took Yoga Teacher in Training Classes through the South Okanagan Yoga Association, a Personal Training Certification through Can-Fit Pro, Walk/Run Leader Training through SportMedBC, and a

Nutrition and Supplement Course through Herbal Magic. I ended up working in and co-managing a gym in Penticton for a while and did a lot of volunteer work for the Penticton Indian Band.

Now, most of the work I get is by word of mouth and I do holistic health counseling for individuals or organizations, including holistic community planning and event organizing such as health conferences and symposiums.

I love what I do. Working from home and being self employed allows me to take care of myself and my family. I am able to make my own hours, take time off when I want to, travel and meet new people, and get inspired and hear stories that keep me going. My favorite part in doing this work is having people share with me that they have done something positive to change their life and improve the quality of their health.

My ultimate goal is to just keep doing what I'm doing and if I put the right time, right mind and right thinking into it, it will evolve into something that I couldn't even imagine for myself and my family.

# Medical Transcriptionist

**EARNINGS:** \$\$

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍 👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL:** 1+

## PROFILE

*Are you a good listener? Medical Transcriptionists listen to audio dictation recorded by doctors or other health practitioners, or review hand-written notes, and transcribe their words into medical reports, creating an official written record of the care that a patient or client has received. Medical Transcriptionists often have other duties in a medical office, such as receiving patients, scheduling appointments, and billing. They are employed by hospitals, medical clinics and doctors' offices, or they may be self-employed.*

### Education & Training

A number of colleges in BC offer programs for Medical Transcriptionists, including:

*Surrey Community College*

→ [www.surreycollege.ca](http://www.surreycollege.ca)

*Thompson Career College*

→ [www.thompsoncc.ca](http://www.thompsoncc.ca)

*Selkirk College*

→ [www.selkirk.ca/program/amt](http://www.selkirk.ca/program/amt)

### Keys to Success

A good command of written and spoken language is key to success as a Medical Transcriptionist, along with the following skills and abilities:

- ability to work quickly and accurately, with attention to detail
- ability to maintain patient confidentiality
- knowledge of medical terminology and willingness to keep up to date with new terms
- ability to work independently
- strong word-processing skills, proofreading skills

### A Look Ahead

The Mainland/Southwest, Kootenay and Northeast regions of BC are projected to have the strongest growth in demand for Medical Transcriptionists, with average annual growth rates of between 1.3% and 1.8%.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average annual salary for Medical Transcriptionists working in BC in 2013 was \$33,000 to \$44,000, according to WorkBC's Labour Market Navigator.



## Maternal & Child Health

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*Professionals in the area of Maternal and Child Health work to improve the health of women, families and communities. Through information and support they encourage cultural continuity, including the exploration of birthing options, traditional birthing practices, breastfeeding, self-care for pregnant women, and the role of community in raising children.*

# Doula

EARNINGS: \$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

EDUCATION & TRAINING: 1

PROFILE

*Helping pregnant women and their partners can be a very emotionally satisfying career. As a Doula, you'll provide care and support to women and families during labour and childbirth and in the post-partum period. Doulas are trained professionals who make sure their clients have the information they need to make informed decisions about the birth, and provide emotional support and physical comforting to labouring women. Post-partum Doulas care for mothers and family members in the days and weeks following birth so they can focus on their new babies. In BC, some Doulas work as part of Community Birthing Programs, while others are in private practice.*

## Education & Training

Douglas College offers training for birth and postpartum Doulas, leading to certification with Doulas of North America (DONA). The College of the Rockies offers online birth doula studies. Full information on the certification process is available at [www.dona.org](http://www.dona.org).

## For More Info

Doulas of North America (DONA)  
→ [www.dona.org](http://www.dona.org)  
Doula Services Association of BC  
→ [www.bcdoulas.org](http://www.bcdoulas.org)  
Douglas College  
College of the Rockies

## Keys to Success

Doulas need to have good communication skills, have compassion for others, be non-judgemental, able to work in a team environment, and be able to instill confidence in others, especially in emergency situations.

## A Look Ahead

There is a growing public interest in alternative medicine and preventive care. According to bcdoulas.org, birth Doulas charge between \$500 and \$750 for an entire birth contract. Postpartum Doulas charge between \$20 and \$25 per hour to provide support following the birth.

# Lactation Consultant

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** Unknown

**YEARS OF EDUCATION: 2+**

**PROFILE**

*Lactation Consultants promote and support breastfeeding — by offering information, advice, and support to new mothers. They are healthcare providers, often registered nurses, who have specialized training in human lactation and breastfeeding support. If you become a Lactation Consultant, you'll use your knowledge to develop a breastfeeding plan for mothers and babies experiencing difficulties with feeding. You'll help initiate breastfeeding, and trouble-shoot when challenges arise. You may work in private practice, on staff at a hospital, or in public health or community settings.*

**Education and Training:**

Douglas College offers a Breastfeeding for Health Care Providers Course. Lactation Consultants must be certified with the International Lactation Consultant Association.

Requirements include two years of post-secondary study in science, 1000 hours of clinical experience, as well as specific education in breastfeeding. For more information on certification, visit → [www.iblce.org](http://www.iblce.org).

**For More Info**

Canadian Lactation Consultant Association → [www.ilca.org](http://www.ilca.org)  
International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners  
→ [www.iblce.org](http://www.iblce.org)

**Keys to Success**

Lactation Consultants work directly with the public, and they require good verbal communications skills, coaching and teaching ability, patience and a sense of compassion.

**A Look Ahead**

There is no occupational profile for Lactation Consultants in BC, so labour market information is not available.

**What You Can Expect to Earn**

Although no earnings data is available for Lactation Consultants in BC, information from other jurisdictions indicates that Lactation Consultants in hospital settings can expect to earn \$55,000 to \$65,000 in 2013.

# Midwife

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍

**YEARS OF EDUCATION: 4**

**PROFILE**

*Midwives are primary health care providers who offer comprehensive care to pregnant women and their babies. During pregnancy, labour, birth, and the early weeks of a baby's life, Midwives work with and support the mother and her family to make informed decisions. They are responsible for providing assessments, physical examinations, screening and diagnostic testing, and for delivering births, and following up with home visits. They also provide health promotion and post-partum education on nutrition, exercise, breastfeeding and parenting to mothers, fathers, families, and communities.*

Midwives are self-employed practitioners and often work in group or team practices to ensure continuity of care to their patients. They can be found working in the homes of their patients, birthing centres, clinics or hospitals.

**Keys to Success**

The career of a Midwife is holistic in nature involving all aspects of health (social, emotional, cultural, spiritual, psychological and physical) through a woman's pregnancy and birth experience. A Midwife needs a caring, nurturing disposition, compassion, and dedication for others. Midwives require confidence paired with great organizational and communication skills as they often work in collaboration with other health professionals.

**A Look Ahead**

The field as a whole continues to be relatively small in comparison to the other health professionals that deliver babies; however, the role is expanding and like many health professions the demand outweighs the current supply. All signs point towards a continuing steady growth in the profession. Midwifery care is covered by the BC Medical Services Plan.

**What You can Expect to Earn**

The average salary for BC practitioners in this occupational category (which also includes nurse practitioners and Physician Assistants) in 2013 was \$95,000 to \$125,000, according to WorkBC. This will vary depending on the number of pregnancies and births supported.



**Education & Certification**  
 The UBC Midwifery Program reserves selected seats for qualifying Aboriginal students each year  
**UBC (Vancouver) —**  
 Bachelor of Midwifery  
 Registration with the Midwives Association of BC

**For More Info**  
 Canadian Association of Midwives  
 → [www.canadianmidwives.org](http://www.canadianmidwives.org)  
 Career Trek → [www.careertrekbc.ca/episode/midwife](http://www.careertrekbc.ca/episode/midwife)  
 College of Midwives of BC  
 → [www.cmbc.bc.ca](http://www.cmbc.bc.ca)  
 Midwives Association of British Columbia  
 → [www.bcmidwives.com](http://www.bcmidwives.com)  
 National Aboriginal Council of Midwives  
 → [www.aboriginalmidwives.ca](http://www.aboriginalmidwives.ca)  
 UBC Midwifery  
 → [www.midwifery.ubc.ca](http://www.midwifery.ubc.ca)

# *Evelyn Harney* *Anishinaabe First Nation* **Registered Midwife**



**MY STORY** I am Anishinaabe, and I live at the Penticton Indian Reserve with my partner who is Syilx.

During high school I had some friends and cousins who had babies and I saw that they could use a lot of extra support and gentleness. Entering university I thought I would go into social services to work with young parents. In that time I learned about the health of our communities, and about global health. I also had the honour of assisting my auntie at the birth of my niece, a homebirth with midwives. I saw how powerful and vulnerable she was, and I felt drawn to work in women's health, in order to protect women, and to protect the honour and importance of bearing life. I learned the Anishinaabe teachings of womanhood and I met traditional midwives.

When I decided to enter the Midwifery profession I was already enrolled in a BA program at McMaster University. I applied for admission to the Ryerson University Midwifery Education Programme. I had to go back and take a high school biology class in summer school, which felt a bit silly at the time, but was well worth it. I never dreamed in high school that I was going to go into the health sciences!

I love what I do. It's this amazing privilege we have as midwives, to be invited into the most intimate and important time in a family's life. It's so neat to watch the

family evolve over time, and I am happy to be carrying on a tradition. I believe being treated respectfully and gently during this time and welcoming that baby in a good way is important for the health of the whole community, young and old.

Midwives look after women in pregnancy, during the labour and birth, and during the first six weeks after the baby is born. So my day usually involves a combination of prenatal visits, maybe a birth, and some mom and baby care. I do visits in a clinic and in home, and I also work at the hospital. I volunteer at the elementary school and I often participate in prenatal groups or I may go speak to a youth group.

I would love to see each community being served by midwives from their own community, and to make Midwifery education and training closer to home for everyone. I would love if the whole lifecycle of care were available to our communities, so everyone could be supported by loved ones during birth, and also at the end of life. Too many families are separated at these important times. It is my goal to help our communities get there.



# Family, Marriage and Other Related Counsellor

**EARNINGS: \$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍

**YEARS OF EDUCATION: 2-6**

## PROFILE

*As a Counsellor you'll assist individuals and groups of clients to identify, understand and overcome their personal problems and achieve their goals. Counsellors are employed by counselling centres, social service agencies, group homes, government agencies, family therapy centres, and health care and rehabilitation facilities, or they may work in private practice.*

You'll interview clients, assess their problems and prepare a case history, before developing and implementing a counselling and intervention program to assist your clients in reaching their goals. Counselling and therapy may be one-on-one, or in facilitated group sessions. Counsellors may specialize in areas such as addictions counselling, child and youth counselling, family or marriage counselling, registered clinical counselling, rehabilitation or vocational rehabilitation counselling.

## Keys to Success

Counsellors need to have emotional maturity, patience, tolerance for beliefs and values that are not their own, and a belief that individuals, families and communities can change. They should be sensitive and understanding, but need to remain emotionally detached and objective in order to be effective in their role. This career requires excellent communication and time management skills.

## A Look Ahead

Nationally, there is expected to be a shortage of workers in this occupational category between 2010 and 2020. Areas of BC predicting the highest demand for this group of workers are the Cariboo, the Northeast, and the Mainland/Southwest regions.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The median hourly wage for counsellors across BC in 2013 ranged from \$29.54 to \$32.31, according to the Working in Canada website. The average salary in 2013 for Addictions Counsellors in BC is \$33,000 to \$44,000.

### Education & Training

A Master's Degree is required to become a Registered Clinical Counsellor. For certain areas of counselling, such as addictions counselling, an undergraduate degree or diploma is required.

Programs in BC include:

*University College of the Fraser Valley, Substance Abuse Counsellor Diploma Program*

*Kelowna College of Professional Counselling, Diploma of Applied Psychology and Counselling*

*Vancouver Community College, Addiction Counselling Skills Certificate*

*University of Victoria, Counselling Psychology*

### For More Info

BC Association for Family and Marriage Therapy

→ [www.bcarnft.bc.ca](http://www.bcarnft.bc.ca)

BC Association of Clinical Counsellors

→ [www.bc-counsellors.org](http://www.bc-counsellors.org)

Canadian Addiction Counsellors Certification Federation

→ [www.caccf.ca](http://www.caccf.ca)

Canadian Council of Professional Certification

→ [www.cpcpprofessionals.com](http://www.cpcpprofessionals.com)

# Care Aide and Community Health Worker

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍👍

YEARS OF EDUCATION: 1

## PROFILE

*Care Aides and Community Health Workers are also known as Health Care Assistants or HCAs. They are frontline care providers in a variety of institutional and community settings including home support agencies, residential care facilities and assisted living. They assist elderly and/or disabled clients with personal care and day-to-day living, promoting their physical, emotional and social well-being. They frequently work shifts, including nights and weekends, to provide clients with round the clock care.*

### Education & Training

Schools that offer Health Care Assistant programs in BC are listed on the BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry.

→ [www.cachwr.bc.ca](http://www.cachwr.bc.ca)

*Camosun College* offers a Health Care Assistant — Indigenous program for Aboriginal learners who wish to focus on Indigenous communities and culture.

*Employers require a criminal record check.*

### For More Info

BC Care Aide and Community Health Care Registry

→ [www.cachwr.bc.ca](http://www.cachwr.bc.ca)

### Keys to Success

Oral communication skills are very important for Health Care Aides. They need to be able to talk with patients and with family and friends, to explain procedures and respond to their questions and concerns, and to listen to patients in order to assess their needs. They also need to clearly share information about patients to other members of the health care team. Because they frequently work alone, they need to be able to solve problems and make decisions.

### A Look Ahead

Demand for Health Care Assistants is high across BC, and the potential for employment is very good. Home health care is a growing industry, largely due to the aging population.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The median wage for a Care Aide in BC in 2013 was \$20.95, according to the Working in Canada website.

# Child/Youth Worker

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS OF EDUCATION: 2

## PROFILE

*Helping kids and families — that's the focus of a Child and Youth Worker. These practitioners promote the healthy development of children and youth: physically, emotionally, spiritually and socially. They interview and assess clients, assist them to find community resources, provide support and assistance including locating appropriate programs and social services to meet their needs, and develop and deliver life skills workshops, behaviour management programs, or other programs and services, in collaboration with other social service or health care professionals.*

### Education & Training

The following schools offer Child and Youth Care Diploma programs with a focus on Aboriginal communities:

*Douglas College*

*University of Victoria*

*University of Vancouver Island*

### For More Info

Child and Youth Care Association of BC → [www.cycabc.com](http://www.cycabc.com)

They work for social service and government agencies, mental health agencies, group homes, school boards, parent education and family support programs, and in the juvenile justice system.

### Keys to Success

Child and Youth Care Workers should have a positive outlook. They must be empathetic and able to reach out to those in need. They should have strong communication and organizational skills, as well as basic computer skills. This work can be emotionally demanding, but many Child and Youth Workers find it very satisfying.

### A Look Ahead

According to the Working in Canada website, demand for workers in this occupational category is expected to grow between 2011 and 2020, as a result of recent increases in births. Growth is also expected in the area of First Nations outreach and community development, especially for youth.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The median hourly wage for Child and Youth Workers in BC in 2013 was \$18.75, according to the Working in Canada website.

# Health Coach

**EARNINGS: \$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** Unknown

**YEARS OF EDUCATION: 1+**

**PROFILE**

*A Health Coach mentors and motivates individuals to cultivate positive health and lifestyle choices. Health Coaches educate and support clients to achieve their health goals through lifestyle and behaviour adjustments. Health Coaches may work in private practice, or as part of a group practice with other alternative or complementary health practitioners. Generally, Health Coaches are health professionals (nurses, dietitians, health promotion specialists, physiotherapists, social workers, rehabilitation counselors, or others) who have taken additional training as a Health Coach.*

## Education & Training

For information on health coaching programs available in Canada and throughout North America, please visit the websites listed below.

## For More Info

National Society of Health Coaches

→ [www.nshcoa.com](http://www.nshcoa.com)

Institute for Optimizing Health Outcomes

→ [www.optimizinghealth.org](http://www.optimizinghealth.org)

## Keys to Success

Health Coaches need to have excellent listening and verbal communications skills. They need to be able to offer mentoring, advice, and support to clients to assist them to meet their goals, and they need to model healthy lifestyle choices. As part of a health practitioner team, Health Coaches need to work well with others.

## A Look Ahead

As interest in complementary health alternatives continues to increase, this occupation can be expected to grow. As an emerging occupation in complementary health there is no current occupational data available for this career in BC.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

Earnings for Health Coaches may vary widely, depending on numbers of clients, location, and years of experience.

# Patient Advocate

**EARNINGS:** \$\$\$  
**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍 👍 👍  
**YEARS OF EDUCATION:** 4

**PROFILE**

*Patient Advocates, also called Patient Navigators, offer support to people using health services. They are a link between the patient, the family, the community and the health care provider, helping with communication and ensuring that the patient's health care experience is culturally safe and inclusive. Aboriginal Patient Navigators focus on bridging western and traditional health care practices and support culturally competent practices. As a Patient Navigator, you'll make sure that patients understand the hospital processes and that health care staff appreciate the needs of the patient. You'll work with people in acute care, residential care, mental health, public health, home and community care services.*



**Education & Training**  
Employers require a degree or diploma in social work, health care, or a relevant field (e.g. Registered Nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse).

**For More Info**  
Alliance of Professional Health Advocates  
→ [www.advoconnection.com](http://www.advoconnection.com)

## Keys to Success

Because Patient Navigators often work with critically or chronically ill patients, you'll need to be sensitive and understanding. As an integral part of the health care team, you'll need good communications skills and the ability to work in a team environment. An understanding of medical terminology and health care systems and processes is needed, as well as skills in conflict resolution and problem-solving.

## A Look Ahead

Patient Navigators are an emerging occupation. The need for Patient Navigators is growing as the health field recognizes the need for culturally competent services and for patient support in the complex health care system.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

Patient Navigators in BC in 2013 earned between \$37.00 to \$46.00 per hour.

# Registered Psychologist

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS OF EDUCATION: 6+

PROFILE

*As a Psychologist, you'll help people to understand and cope with life problems and mental health issues. You'll treat clients, working with them individually or in couples, families, or groups, to manage their behavioural, emotional or cognitive disorders. You'll help clients through life transitions, grief and loss, and support them to achieve their goals. You may offer counselling, mediation, psychotherapy, or other types of therapy to assist clients, and you may also conduct research or teach.*



**Roger Elliot John** Tsalalh First Nation, Counsellor & Indigenous Advisor, UVic Faculty of Human and Social Development



*"Tsalalhmeckan, St'at'imckan, S'Talhalam nskwatsitsa. My father is Vincent Samuel Casper John or Tsalalh and my mother is Matilda John (nee Terry) of Xwisten. I am a Counsellor, a PhD student in counselling psychology at the University of British Columbia, and an Indigenous Advisor at UVic."*



*"My family was affected by alcoholism, poverty, family violence, and by multiple acts of colonization. In spite of these challenges, our parents instilled in us a respect for the values of education, self-sufficiency, respect for others, pride in being St'at'imac, and they taught us the importance of contributing to community. When I have completed my PhD I will register as a Psychologist and use my education to help Indigenous peoples move through the trauma caused by colonization, both as a practicing Psychologist and as a teacher."*

Registered Psychologists may work in private practice or in institutions, such as clinics, correctional facilities, hospitals, rehabilitation centres, businesses, schools and universities.

#### **Keys to Success**

To be successful as a Psychologist, you may need excellent listening skills, a caring and patient attitude, and highly developed verbal communications skills. You'll need to be skilled and creative at problem-solving, analysis, and leadership. You'll work on your own, as well as part of a team of health professionals.

#### **A Look Ahead**

Growth is expected in the private field for this occupation, as more businesses and employee assistance programs are offering supports to employees. According to WorkBC, industry sources report that Northern BC currently requires more practitioners. As well, graduates who focus on neuropsychology and forensic psychology are in high demand. The three regions with highest demand for Psychologists are the Northeast, Cariboo, and Southwest/Lower Mainland.

#### **What You Can Expect to Earn**

In 2013, the average salary for Psychologists in BC was \$53,000 to \$66,000, according to WorkBC's Labour Market Navigator.

*"Never stop believing in yourself, never stop moving forward. A person can achieve and overcome incredible things simply by placing one foot front of the other; our ancestors walk with us for each footstep. Be proud of being St'at'imc, the most important knowledge and education we have, as St'at'imc people, are the words, knowledge, culture, spirituality and wisdom of our Elders. Kukwstumkalap."*

#### **Education & Training**

A PhD in psychology is required for registration as a Psychologist in BC. Psychologists must pass a written exam, and register with the College of Psychologists of British Columbia (CPBC).

*Simon Fraser University*

*UBC*

*University of Northern BC*

*University of Victoria*

#### **For More Info**

BC Psychological Association

→ [www.psychologists.bc.ca](http://www.psychologists.bc.ca)

College of Psychologists of BC

→ [www.collegeofpsychologists.bc.ca](http://www.collegeofpsychologists.bc.ca)

bc.ca

# Social Worker

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS OF EDUCATION: 4+

## PROFILE

*Want to make a difference in the lives of individuals, and the health and wellbeing of communities? Consider social work. Social Workers recognize the many links between physical, emotional, social and economic aspects of health, and they work to promote and support the health of their clients in all these aspects. They may specialize in community development, child welfare, primary health care, or other areas, and are often found working in hospitals, schools, social service agencies, band councils, for government, or in private practice.*

### Education & Training

An undergraduate degree is mandatory, and for many positions a Master degree in Social Work is required. Specialized training may be necessary in some areas of social work, for instance child protection. Social Workers must be registered with the BC College of Social Workers.

*Nicola Valley Institute of*

*Technology*

*University of Victoria*

*University of Northern BC*

*University of the Fraser Valley*

*UBC*

*Thompson Rivers University*

### For More Info

BC College of Social Workers

→ [www.bccollegeofsocialworkers.ca](http://www.bccollegeofsocialworkers.ca)

Canadian Association for Social Work Education

→ [www.caswe-acfts.ca](http://www.caswe-acfts.ca)

### Keys to Success

Social Workers need to be empathetic and compassionate. Because they deal directly with clients who may be in challenging situations, sensitive communications skills and the ability to deal well with stress are useful attributes for Social Workers, as well clerical ability, attention to detail, and an ability to be directive. Social work can be emotionally demanding.

### A Look Ahead

The aging population is expected to create a need for Social Workers specializing in geriatrics. There is also growing demand for Social Workers with other clinical specialties, such as youth services, or psychiatric social work. Demand is predicted to be highest in the Cariboo, Northeast, and Lower Mainland/Southwest areas of the province, according to BC's Labour Market Navigator.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average full time salary for Social Workers in 2013, according to WorkBC, was \$53,000 to \$66,000. There were more than 5,000 registered Social Workers in BC in 2013, making it an above average sized occupational group.

# Nursing & Nursing Support



*Becoming a Nurse means joining one of today's fastest growing areas of health care. Nurses are dedicated to achieving the best possible quality of life for their patients. They provide care for people of all ages, for families, groups and communities, for both the sick and the well, and in all kinds of settings. Nursing includes the promotion of health, prevention of illness, and the care of the sick or injured. Nurses also have roles in advocacy, in promoting safe and healthy environments, in research and education, and in shaping health policy and health systems management.*



# Community Health Nurse

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 3-4**

**PROFILE**

*Community Health Nurses provide nursing services for individuals, families and groups in a variety of settings. They may counsel and advise clients over the telephone, travel to see clients in their homes, and deliver services in community settings. In some isolated communities, the Community Health Nurse may be the only local health professional. Their responsibilities can vary widely, and could include:*

- developing and delivering health promotion and education programs
- facilitating support groups and community solutions to local health problems
- delivering immunization and screening programs for tuberculosis or breast cancer
- visiting new mothers and Elderly patients
- providing health support and counselling services for people in crisis and helping them access resources

As a Community Health Nurse, you may work for a regional health authority, hospital or primary care facility, or for social service or non-profit organizations

### Keys to Success

Community Health Nurses must have the ability to work well with individuals, families and groups from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. They must be able to work independently and to deal with issues of personal safety, because they may visit patients in their homes. Community Health Nurses need to be flexible and to react quickly and effectively to new or unusual situations, and they need:

- physical and emotional stamina
- good communication skills
- problem solving and critical thinking skills

### A Look Ahead

There is expected to be continued high demand for Community Health Nurses in BC, particularly in areas where there are shortages of physicians and other primary health care professionals. Regions with highest demand for nurses are the Northeast, Kootenays, and Cariboo, with a predicted annual average growth rate of 2.7% to 3.2%.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Full time nurses in BC earned, on average, \$53,000 to \$66,000 per year in 2013, according to BC's Labour Market Navigator.



**Education & Training**  
Nursing education programs are available at numerous colleges and universities in BC. For a list of the nursing programs recognized by the BC College of Registered Nurses, visit their website  
→ [www.crnbc.ca/WhatNursesDo/NurseStudying/Pages/Default.aspx](http://www.crnbc.ca/WhatNursesDo/NurseStudying/Pages/Default.aspx)

**For More Info**  
Community Health Nurses of Canada → [www.chnc.ca](http://www.chnc.ca)  
College of Registered Nurses of BC → [www.crnbc.ca](http://www.crnbc.ca)  
Nursing Education Council of BC → [www.bcahc.ca](http://www.bcahc.ca)

# Licensed Practical Nurse

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2

## PROFILE

*Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) provide nursing care under the direction of medical practitioners and under the supervision of registered nurses. They take vital signs, apply sterile dressings, ensure infection control, monitor nutritional intake, conduct specimen collection, administer medication and observe and document therapeutic effects. They may provide pre-operative and post-operative care, and in long-term care homes they may work as team leaders, supervising nursing aides.*

Because nursing care is needed 24/7, Licensed Practical Nurses must be prepared to work shifts, including nights, evenings, and weekends, as required.

### Keys to Success

To succeed as an LPN, you must be able to problem-solve, use critical thinking skills, and make decisions and professional judgements. You'll need manual dexterity, and the strength and coordination to assist patients. And you'll need the skills to listen, understand, and communicate information with other members of the health care team, and with patients and family members.

### A Look Ahead

Industry sources report there is strong demand for LPNs across BC and job prospects are expected to be above average over the next several years. There is demand for LPNs in extended care and long-term care facilities, larger acute care hospitals, and in specialty areas, such as emergency and paediatric wards, and operating rooms.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Practical Nurses working full-time generally earn between \$30,000 and \$65,000 a year. Part-time workers in this field may earn from about \$16 to \$30 an hour.

#### Education & Training

Practical Nurses must be registered with the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of BC. Practical nursing programs are offered at a number of colleges in BC, including:

*Douglas College*

*Okanagan College*

*University of the Fraser Valley*

*Camosun College*

*Thompson Rivers University*

#### For More Info

College of Licensed Practical Nurses of BC

→ [www.clpnbc.org](http://www.clpnbc.org)

Licensed Practical Nurse Association of BC

→ [www.lpnabc.ca](http://www.lpnabc.ca)

Nursing Education Council of BC

→ [www.bcahc.ca](http://www.bcahc.ca)

# Nurse's Aide/Orderly/ Resident Care Aide

**EARNINGS:** \$  
**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍  
**YEARS IN SCHOOL:** 1+

**PROFILE**

*Nurse Aides or Orderlies, also called Resident Care Aides, work under the direction of nurses, hospital staff and physicians to assist in the care of patients. They provide basic patient care, including taking temperature and pulse, helping with bathing, dressing, grooming and eating, collecting specimens, moving physically challenged patients, and other duties as requested by the members of the health care team. They work in hospitals, long-term care facilities, group homes, home support and community care. Resident Care Aides can acquire additional training and education to become Licensed Practical Nurses.*



**Genny Humphreys** T'it'q'et First Nation, *Resident Care Aide*

➤ *"I am the second oldest daughter of Ceda and (late) Grand Chief James Scotchman. My interest in my current health career began in 2006 when the local Thompson Rivers University campus started working towards bringing in the Care Aide Program here. I decided to register with TRU to take the Home Support Resident Care Program. I completed the program on March 3, 2007 and was hired on at Mountain View Lodge on April 18th. "*



*“My interest over these few years has been in Hospice and Palliative Care. My work as a Care Aide has been rewarding, knowing that I am an active member on our Health Care Team providing personal quality care, support, and comfort to our long-term residents. In your own health career choice, as a skilful professional, remember that you can be a mentor to a new member on the team.”*

#### Education & Training

Programs are offered at many colleges throughout BC, including:

*Camosun College*

→ [www.camosun.ca/learn/](http://www.camosun.ca/learn/)

[programs/health-care-assistant](#)

*College of New Caledonia* → [www.cnc.bc.ca/CNC\\_Programs/Health\\_Care\\_Assistant\\_Certificate.htm](http://www.cnc.bc.ca/CNC_Programs/Health_Care_Assistant_Certificate.htm)

*Douglas College* → [www.douglas.bc.ca/programs/health-care-support-worker.html](http://www.douglas.bc.ca/programs/health-care-support-worker.html)

*Douglas College* → [www.douglas.bc.ca/programs/health-care-support-worker.html](http://www.douglas.bc.ca/programs/health-care-support-worker.html)

*Douglas College* → [www.douglas.bc.ca/programs/health-care-support-worker.html](http://www.douglas.bc.ca/programs/health-care-support-worker.html)

*Douglas College* → [www.douglas.bc.ca/programs/health-care-support-worker.html](http://www.douglas.bc.ca/programs/health-care-support-worker.html)

#### For More Info

BC Care Aide and Community

Health Worker Registry

→ [www.cachwr.bc.ca](http://www.cachwr.bc.ca)

#### Keys to Success

Resident Care Aides require physical strength and stamina as well as good social and interpersonal skills. Because they need to create a comfortable environment for patients and clients, they should also have:

- *excellent observational skills*
- *the ability to adapt to changing environments*
- *the ability to follow directions, policies and procedures*
- *sensitivity and patience*

#### A Look Ahead

As the population grows and ages, there will be increased demand for Resident Care Aides. The BC government is creating more long-term care beds, which will mean increased employment for Resident Care Aides. Because of shortages of Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses, Resident Care aides are increasingly being employed in acute care settings, according to WorkBC. Highest demand will be in the Kootenay, Cariboo and Northeast regions of the province.

#### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average annual salary for Nurse's Aides and Resident Care Aides in BC in 2013 was \$33,000 to \$40,000 according to WorkBC.

# Registered Nurse

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 3-4**

**PROFILE**

*If you enjoy caring for people, nursing may be the right career for you. Registered Nurses work as part of the health care team to plan, implement, co-ordinate and evaluate patient care in consultation with patients and their families. They administer medications and treatments as prescribed by a physician, assist with surgeries, and monitor patients to assess treatments. Nurses work in hospitals, outpatient facilities, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, for home healthcare agencies and in physicians' offices. You may decide to specialize in an area of nursing, such as critical care, paediatrics, neonatology and gerontology. Becoming a Registered Nurse can also be your first step toward a career in healthcare administration, nursing education, or becoming a nurse practitioner.*



**Karen Riley** Ts'kw'aylaxw First Nation, Registered Nurse



*"I am from the Statimc territory, born in Lilloet, BC. I worked in Kamloops as a Medical Office Assistant for eight years before deciding to become a Nurse. I am currently living in Victoria working as a Registered Nurse on an Oncology Unit. I have always wanted to become a Nurse — it was a childhood dream of mine that became a reality."*



➤ *“I enjoy working with people, comforting them and caring for them. I chose a career in oncology because I have noticed many people in my life, whether it is family or friends, have been affected by cancer. This triggered an interest to learn more about the causes and cures for cancer. My goal is to continue to learn more about cancer and its treatments and to eventually take the oncology nursing course. Another goal is to become trained to administer chemotherapy.”*

*“I think nursing is such a rewarding career choice and I would recommend it to anyone who has a passion for caring for others. ”*

#### Education & Training

Nursing education programs are available at numerous colleges and universities in BC. For a list of the nursing programs recognized by the BC College of Registered Nurses, visit their website

➔ [www.crnbc.ca/WhatNursesDo/NurseStudying/Pages/Default.aspx](http://www.crnbc.ca/WhatNursesDo/NurseStudying/Pages/Default.aspx)

#### For More Info

College of Registered Nurses of BC

➔ [www.crnbc.ca](http://www.crnbc.ca)

Registered Nurse Foundation of BC

➔ [www.rnfb.ca](http://www.rnfb.ca)

RN Network of BC ➔ [www.nursing.ubc.ca/Scholarship/RNNetwork](http://www.nursing.ubc.ca/Scholarship/RNNetwork)

#### Keys to Success

Nurses must have good problem-solving and communication skills, good judgment, patience and strong interpersonal skills. They need to have the ability to handle stress, and to work a variety of shifts, including nights, evenings and weekends. In addition, Nurses need compassion, dependability, maturity, self-discipline and the ability to multi-task in complex and fast-paced environments

#### A Look Ahead

There is expected to be continued high demand for Nurses in BC. The regions with highest demand for Nurses are the Northeast, Kootenays, and Cariboo, with a predicted annual average growth rate of 2.7% to 3.2%.

#### What You Can Expect to Earn

Full time Registered Nurses in BC earned, on average, \$53,000 to \$66,000 per year in 2013, according to BC's Labour Market Navigator.

# Nurse Practitioner

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 4+

## PROFILE

*Nurse Practitioners are nurses with advanced training who are qualified to assess, diagnose and treat common and predictable conditions experienced across the lifespan. In addition to typical nursing responsibilities Nurse Practitioners order and interpret diagnostic tests, diagnose and treat conditions, prescribe medications and oversee patient care. Nurse Practitioners may specialize in a specific area of practice such as family health, psychiatry, paediatrics, women's health, or geriatrics. They can work in a variety of health-care settings, including community clinics, health-care centres, doctors' offices, nursing homes, hospitals and the homes of patients.*

### Education & Training

To be registered as a Nurse Practitioner in BC you'll need a Masters degree in Nursing.

UBC → [www.nursing.ubc.ca/Graduate/MNNP.aspx](http://www.nursing.ubc.ca/Graduate/MNNP.aspx)

University of Northern BC

→ [www.unbc.ca/calendar/graduate/nursing](http://www.unbc.ca/calendar/graduate/nursing)

University of Victoria → [www.uvic.ca/hsd/nursing/prospective/graduate/practitioner/index.php](http://www.uvic.ca/hsd/nursing/prospective/graduate/practitioner/index.php)

### For More Info

College of Registered Nurses of BC

→ [www.crnbc.ca](http://www.crnbc.ca)

BC Nurse Practitioner Association

→ [www.bcnpa.org](http://www.bcnpa.org)

Canadian Association of Advanced Practice Nurses → [www.caapn.com](http://www.caapn.com)

### Keys to Success

Nurse Practitioners need to have problem-solving abilities, and to develop critical thinking skills required to make professional judgements. They must be able to communicate information clearly, manage their time effectively, and respond well under stress and in situations of conflict.

### A Look Ahead

There is expected to be continued high demand for Nurse Practitioners in BC, particularly in areas where there are shortages of physicians and other primary health care professionals. Regions with highest demand for nurses are the Northeast, Kootenays, and Cariboo, with a predicted annual average growth rate of 2.7% to 3.2%.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Full time Nurse Practitioners in BC earned, on average, \$53,000 to \$66,000 per year in 2013, according to BC's Labour Market Navigator.



## Nutrition



*Want to use your knowledge of food, nutrition and health to help others maintain health and prevent disease? A career as a dietitian or diet technician / nutrition manager may be right for you! Practitioners in this field are experts on eating right, whether at home, in a health care setting, or other institution. With increased public awareness of the dangers of obesity and diabetes, and an aging and health-conscious population, there is a growing demand for dietitians and nutrition managers in BC communities.*

# Registered Dietitian

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 4+**

## PROFILE

*Registered Dietitians provide advice about diet, food and nutrition. They use the science of nutrition to help people make healthy food choices. As a Dietitian, you'll plan, implement and oversee nutrition and food service programs. You'll develop nutrition and food preparation and service programs for institutions such as hospitals, nursing homes, schools or company cafeterias. You'll provide nutrition counselling and consulting to health professionals, community groups, government, and individuals, and you'll help prevent or treat inadequate nutrition in individuals. And you'll plan and conduct nutrition education programs, and develop nutrition education materials.*

### Education & Training

*UBC (Vancouver)* — Bachelor of Science in Food, Nutrition and Health — Dietetics Major

*Langara College* — Associate of Science (Dietetics) prepares students for application to 3rd year of the dietetics program at UBC  
*Registration required with the College of Dietitians of British Columbia*

### Find More Info

College of Dietitians of BC

→ [www.collegeofdietitiansbc.org](http://www.collegeofdietitiansbc.org)

Dietitians of Canada

→ [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)

Registered Dietitians in Aboriginal Communities

→ [www.dietitians.ca/Downloadable-Content/Public/ANN-Report-Final-2012](http://www.dietitians.ca/Downloadable-Content/Public/ANN-Report-Final-2012)

Downloadable-Content/Public/ANN-Report-Final-2012

You may work in hospitals, extended care facilities, public health centres, the food and beverage industry, educational institutions, government, or as a private consultant.

### Keys to Success

Dietitians must have great skills in the areas of communication (written and oral), critical thinking, and organization, while showing the ability to work well in a team and independently. They also must express desire and dedication to help others achieve their health goals.

### A Look Ahead

There is a shortage of trained Dietitians throughout Canada. Employers in all areas of Canada, especially rural and remote areas, are finding it difficult to recruit Dietitians. Regions with the highest demand for Dietitians are Kootenays, Thompson-Okanagan, and Lower Mainland/Southwest, with average annual growth rates of 1.4% to 2.0% predicted, according to BC's Labour Market Navigator.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average annual salary for a Dietitian in BC in 2013 was \$58,000, according to WorkBC.

# Diet Technician/ Nutrition Manager

**EARNINGS:** \$\$  
**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍  
**YEARS IN SCHOOL:** 2

**PROFILE**

*Diet Technicians support the work of Registered Dietitians by implementing meal plans based on patient food preferences and therapeutic diet restrictions. Under the direction of registered dietitians, Diet Technicians conduct initial screening of patients, develop meal plans, visit patients to assess meal plan tolerance, and complete calorie counts. Nutrition Managers work with registered dietitians to provide nutrition care to patients/clients and are responsible for patients at low to moderate nutrition risk.*



**Education & Training**  
Langara College → [www.langara.bc.ca/departments/nutrition](http://www.langara.bc.ca/departments/nutrition)

**Find More Info**  
British Columbia Nutrition Council  
→ [www.nutritionlink.org](http://www.nutritionlink.org)  
Canadian Society of Nutrition Management  
→ [csnm.in1touch.org/](http://csnm.in1touch.org/)  
Pacific Society of Nutrition Management  
→ [www.psnm.net/](http://www.psnm.net/)

Nutrition Managers and Diet Technicians work in:

- health care facilities — acute, chronic, rehabilitation, and long term care
- commercial catering services
- government agencies
- schools, colleges, and universities
- consulting services
- private practice

### Keys to Success

Dietary Technicians need to be able to follow directions and implement procedure and processes with a high degree of accuracy. They need to be detail oriented and skilled at communicating with and relating to a wide variety of people. An interest in food and nutrition, and the desire to stay current through ongoing learning are valuable for success in this job.

### A Look Ahead

The highest demand for Dietary Technicians is in the Cariboo, Kootenay, and Vancouver Island and Coast regions.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average full-time salary for a Dietary Technician in BC in 2013 was \$46,000, according to WorkBC.





## Oral Health

*Good oral health is key to overall health. Mouth or tooth pain, missing teeth or oral infections can affect a person's physical, mental and social well-being. If you're interested in helping people to maintain good oral health, you're in luck — as we learn more about the importance of healthy teeth, gums, and mouths, opportunities in the field of dental hygiene, dental technology, and dentistry are growing.*

# Dental Hygienist

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2+**

**PROFILE**

*Dental Hygienists assess the dental health of clients, develop appropriate treatment plans, and treat oral health conditions. They provide patients with information related to the prevention of diseases and disorders of the teeth and mouth. Most Dental Hygienists work in dental clinics and private practices, while others may work in hospitals or other medical facilities. As a Dental Hygienist, you'll need to be comfortable standing or sitting, bending, reaching, and twisting for prolonged periods. The work requires frequent repetitive motion.*

**Education & Training**

Dental Hygienists in BC must complete a two-year degree or diploma program, and must be registered with the College of Dental Hygienists. The following schools offer programs in dental hygiene:

*Camosun College*

→ [www.camosun.bc.ca](http://www.camosun.bc.ca)

*College of New Caledonia*

→ [www.cnc.bc.ca](http://www.cnc.bc.ca)

*Vancouver Island University*

→ [www.viu.ca](http://www.viu.ca)

*Vancouver Community College*

→ [www.vcc.ca](http://www.vcc.ca)

*UBC* → [www.dentistry.ubc.ca/hygiene](http://www.dentistry.ubc.ca/hygiene)

**Find More Info**

College of Dental Hygienists of BC

→ [www.cdhbc.com](http://www.cdhbc.com)

BC Dental Hygienists Association

→ [www.bcdha.bc.ca](http://www.bcdha.bc.ca)

Canadian Dental Hygienists Association

→ [www.cdha.ca](http://www.cdha.ca)

**Keys to Success**

- caring attitude and good verbal communication skills
- good eyesight, dexterity and fine motor skills
- ability to work both independently and as a team
- strong problem solving abilities

**A Look Ahead**

The strongest demand for Dental Hygienists in BC is in the Cariboo, Kootenay, and Mainland/Southwest regions, where the average annual growth rate of employment is predicted to be from 2.4% to 2.9%.

**What You Can Expect to Earn**

According to BC's Labour Market Navigator, Dental Hygienists earned an average salary of \$53,000 to \$66,000 in 2013.

# *Ethel Henry* *Wei Wai Kum First Nation*

## **Dental Hygienist**

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**MY STORY** I love to see people smile! I enjoy helping people and I wanted a career that would support my family and me.

My parents always encouraged me to get an education; they always made me dream of what I could do when I graduated from high school. Once I decided on Dental Hygiene, I kept to my goal, taking the courses I needed at Malaspina College in Nanaimo. I tried a couple of years there and wasn't getting any further ahead so I decided in my third year that I wanted to succeed and I transferred to Camosun College. I graduated in 1994.

In my career I have worked in general dental offices, and have promoted dental health to First Nations communities from Nanaimo to Rivers Inlet with the Inter-Tribal Health Authority and Kwakiutl District Community Health. I now manage my own practice and I am employed with Island Health as Campbell River's Community Dental Hygienist.

As a Community Dental Hygienist, I provide dental support to families with children 0 - 3 years old. I promote good dental health by educating families and caregivers on cavity prevention, healthy eating choices, and daily dental care including tips on brushing babies' and young children's teeth.

I enjoy Community Dental Hygiene as it has opened my eyes to the dental needs of the community. I enjoy visiting community groups such as family time, baby time, and Strong Starts. My favorite group to visit is the teen parent group at the local high school. I was a young mom so I can relate to their issues. I feel that if I can promote good dental habits for them and their children while encouraging these young parents to continue their education, I am really doing what I am passionate about: communicating the importance of dental health and the message that you can do anything you put your mind to!

Dental health is a key component for overall general health, but it is not always taken very seriously. Our mouths are the portal to the rest of our bodies, so if we are not looking after our mouths we are not looking after our overall health. I cannot stress enough that daily dental care is so important and we need more First Nations dental professionals to look after our people.

# Certified Dental Assistant

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 1

PROFILE

*Certified Dental Assistants (CDAs) are essential members of the dental health care team. They help dentists during the examination and treatment of patients, provide patient education and comfort, patient care procedures, and office administration services. They sterilize instruments, schedule patient appointments, take and develop x-rays, order supplies, and do other tasks as required. They generally work in dental offices and clinics, although they may also work in hospitals, or other health care facilities.*

## Education & Training

Certified Dental Assistants must complete a one-year diploma program and be registered with the College of Dental Surgeons of BC. The following colleges offer programs:

*College of New Caledonia*

*Comosun College*

*College of the Rockies*

*Douglas College*

*Okanagan College*

*Vancouver Community College*

*Vancouver Island University*

*University of the Fraser Valley*

## Find More Info

Certified Dental Assistants of BC

→ [www.cdabc.org](http://www.cdabc.org)

College of Dental Surgeons of BC

→ [www.cdsbc.org](http://www.cdsbc.org)

## Keys to Success

If you enjoy working as a part of a team, and if you have good communications skills and a sociable and relaxed manner, a career as a Dental Assistant may be right for you. You'll also need to have excellent manual dexterity and fine motor skills, and you should enjoy working with people.

## A Look Ahead

Demand for Dental Assistants is high— the population is growing, and there is increasing awareness of the importance of good dental hygiene. As people keep their natural teeth longer, older people will require more dental care than previously required. The fastest-growing regions for Dental Assistants are the Northeast, Kootenay and Cariboo regions, where the predicted annual average job growth rate is between 2.6% and 2.9%.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average hourly wage for a CDA in BC in 2013 was \$24.67, according to the Certified Dental Assistant Association of BC.

# Dental Technician or Technologist

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2

## PROFILE

*Got an eye for detail and a steady hand? As a Dental Technologist or Technician, you'll design, create and repair dentures and dental devices as prescribed by dentists and other specialists, including full or partial dentures, crowns, bridges, inlays, onlays, clasps and bands, and implants. Most Dental Technicians and Technologists work in commercial dental laboratories. There are currently about 300 dental laboratories in BC — most are small labs employing fewer than ten people.*

### Education & Training

Dental Technicians complete a two-year diploma program, and must register with the College of Dental Technicians of BC. Programs are offered at:

*Vancouver Community College,  
CDI College, Surrey*

### Find More Info

College of Dental Technicians of BC  
→ [www.cdt.bc.ca](http://www.cdt.bc.ca)

### Keys to Success

If you have the following skills, you could be well suited to a career as a Dental Technologist:

- excellent hand-eye coordination
- an ability to focus on small details
- creative artistic inclinations
- good colour perception

You'll also need the ability to follow instructions and procedures and to work with a high degree of precision

### A Look Ahead

BC currently has a shortage of skilled Dental Technicians, particularly in the areas of crown and bridge, ceramics, and orthodontics. Regions with the highest demand for Dental Technicians include Cariboo, Kootenay, and Mainland/Southwest. In these regions, there is average annual growth predicted of between 2.4% and 2.9%.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The annual average salary for BC Dental Technicians in 2013 was between \$33,000 and \$44,000, according to WorkBC.

# Dentist

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍 👍 👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6+**

## PROFILE

*Dentists diagnose, treat and prevent disorders of the teeth and mouth. They examine patients' teeth, gums and jaws to diagnose disease, injury and decay. They clean and repair teeth, and educate and inform patients about good oral hygiene practices. They extract teeth and may implant replacements (bridges or dentures) and perform oral surgery. They also supervise dental hygienists and Assistants, and often manage the financial and administrative aspects of running a dental office.*

Dentists may specialize in such areas as oral surgery, orthodontics, paediatric dentistry, periodontics, endodontics, prosthodontics, oral pathology, oral radiology, or public health dentistry.

## Keys to Success

As a Dentist, you'll need good manual dexterity, good vision, and excellent people skills. There's a strong educational element to the job, so you should be comfortable teaching people how to care for their teeth. Critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership are essential skills for this position, as well as a commitment to ongoing learning in order to stay abreast of new developments and techniques of dentistry.

## A Look Ahead

Future employment prospects for Dentists are expected to be above average over the next several years. Many opportunities for Dentists will become available due to retirements. Industry sources report the current supply of new graduates is insufficient to meet demand. In particular, there is currently a shortage of Dentists in rural areas of the province.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary for a Dentist in 2013 was \$95,000 to \$125,000, according to WorkBC. Earnings can vary a great deal depending on the area the Dentist lives in and the number of regular patients. The highest wages are generally earned by specialists, such as orthodontists and periodontists. At busy practices in large urban areas, these specialized Dentists can make more than \$200,000 a year.

### Education & Training

UBC offers BC's only program leading to the Doctor of Dentistry degree. It is a four-year program, and students must have completed three years of undergraduate studies. Graduates must register with the College of Dental Surgeons of BC.

*UBC Faculty of Dentistry*

→ [www.dentistry.ubc.ca](http://www.dentistry.ubc.ca)

### Find More Info

College of Dental Surgeons of BC

→ [www.cdsbc.org](http://www.cdsbc.org)

Canadian Dental Association

→ [www.cda-adc.ca](http://www.cda-adc.ca)



# Pharmacy



*Doctors, dentists, nurses and other health professionals — none of them can successfully treat patients without the help and support of a pharmacist. It's the pharmacist, with the assistance of pharmacy technicians or pharmacist assistants, who dispenses prescription medications, and who gives patients advice on how to take the medications and any possible side effects. We all depend on the expert advice of professionals and staff in our pharmacies. If you've got an interest in science, and you enjoy working with the public, a career in pharmacy could be right for you!*

# Pharmacist

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 4+**

**PROFILE**

*As a Pharmacist, you'll be responsible for working with patients and healthcare providers to prepare and dispense medications and ensure that patients receive optimal care and therapy. You'll educate patients and health professionals on the administration, uses and effects of medications, as well on potential side effects and drug incompatibilities. You'll advise clients on selecting and using non-prescription medication, and you'll participate in research, testing and investigations of new drugs. You'll also develop and provide information materials on drug products and medications for clients.*

**Education & Training**

Pharmacists must take a four-year pharmacy program and register with the College of Pharmacists of BC. In BC, UBC is the only university offering a pharmacy program.

→ [www.pharmacy.ubc.ca/](http://www.pharmacy.ubc.ca/)

**Find More Info**

BC Pharmacy Association

→ [www.bcpharmacy.ca](http://www.bcpharmacy.ca)

College of Pharmacists BC

→ [www.bcpharmacists.org](http://www.bcpharmacists.org)

While most Pharmacists own or practice in a community pharmacy, others may work as part of a team of health professionals in a hospital, long-term care facility, or other institution.

**Keys to Success**

Communications skills are essential to a career as a Pharmacist. You'll need to be able to communicate information clearly and efficiently. You also need to be detail-oriented, with good vision and the ability to work with a high degree of accuracy and precision. You'll need problem-solving and critical thinking skills as well.

**A Look Ahead**

Employment prospects for Pharmacists in BC are expected to be above average over the next several years. Industry sources report a current shortage of pharmacists in BC. In particular, rural communities are particularly short of both community and hospital Pharmacists. Many jobs will continue to be created in retail pharmacies as more supermarkets open pharmacies.

**What You Can Expect to Earn**

Earnings vary depending on experience and responsibilities, as well as the size and type of business. The average annual salary is between \$70,000 to \$100,000. Those Pharmacists who own and run retail pharmacies can earn well over \$100,000 a year.

# Pharmacist Assistant

**EARNINGS:** \$

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL:** 0-1

**PROFILE**

*If you decide to become a Pharmacist's Assistant, you'll work under the direction of a Pharmacist to help prepare and provide medication and other essential health products. Some of your responsibilities will include ensuring that medications are properly stored, entering patient and prescription data, packaging and labelling prescriptions, maintaining computerized record systems, and maintaining the inventory of medications. Pharmacist's Assistants may choose to upgrade their skills and become registered Pharmacy Technicians.*

## Education & Training

A number of private colleges offer one-year pharmacy assistant diploma programs. Some pharmacists may require only on-the-job training. Pharmacy assistants interested in upgrading their skills and becoming pharmacy technicians may take a bridging program, available through **UBC** → [www.pharmacy.ubc.ca/programs/non-degree-programs/development/pharm-tech-program/program-information](http://www.pharmacy.ubc.ca/programs/non-degree-programs/development/pharm-tech-program/program-information)

## Find More Info

BC Pharmacy Association  
→ [www.bcpharmacy.ca](http://www.bcpharmacy.ca)  
College of Pharmacists BC  
→ [www.bcpharmacists.org](http://www.bcpharmacists.org)

## Keys to Success

To succeed in this job you'll need to have an eye for detail, a friendly manner for dealing with the public, and an aptitude for using computerized databases to manage large amounts of data. Pharmacy Assistants benefit from being organized and having the ability to problem-solve.

## A Look Ahead

The Northeast, Kootenay and Cariboo regions will have the highest average annual growth rates for this occupation category. It is predicted that demand for workers in this field will grow over the next several years, as more pharmacies open to meet the needs of the aging population.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

Workers in this occupation category earned an average of \$33,000 to \$44,000 in 2013. The average hourly wage was \$18.

# Pharmacy Technician

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 1

PROFILE

*You'll work in a pharmacy, under the direction of a Pharmacist, to prepare prescription medications. You'll mix medications, prepare creams, and precisely count and verify prescriptions. Pharmacy Technicians are responsible for ensuring that prescriptions are complete and authentic, for transferring prescriptions to and receiving prescriptions from other pharmacies, ensuring that prepared prescriptions are accurate and ensuring the accuracy of drug and personal health information on patient records. Pharmacy Technicians are registered with the College of Pharmacists of BC.*



**Mistiy Diablo** Xaxli'p First Nation, *Pharmacy Technician*



*"I attended University College of the Cariboo, now known as Thompson Rivers University (TRU) and I have a Bachelor of Science with a major in Animal Biology. I also have a pharmacy technician certificate. I have been working as a pharmacy technician for over ten years and I just received my sterile compounding certificate!"*

### Keys to Success

Pharmacy Technicians have an aptitude for working with computers, excellent manual dexterity, a good eye for detail, the ability to follow procedures with a high degree of accuracy, and an interest in science.

### A Look Ahead

The job prospects for Pharmacy Technicians are good — pharmacies are expanding throughout the province to serve the growing population and particularly the needs of older demographics, and there is currently a shortage of qualified technicians.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Pharmacy Technicians in BC earned an average of \$33,000 to \$44,000 in 2013.

#### Education & Training

Pharmacy Assistants interested in upgrading their skills and becoming Pharmacy Technicians may take a bridging program, available through UBC:

→ [www.pharmacy.ubc.ca/programs/non-degree-programs/development/pharm-tech-program/program-information](http://www.pharmacy.ubc.ca/programs/non-degree-programs/development/pharm-tech-program/program-information)

Colleges that offer accredited one-year programs leading to registration as Pharmacy Technician include:

*Selkirk College*

*Okanagan College*

*Vancouver Community College*

#### Find More Info

BC Pharmacy Association

→ [www.bcpharmacy.ca](http://www.bcpharmacy.ca)

College of Pharmacists BC

→ [www.bcpharmacists.org](http://www.bcpharmacists.org)

Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs

→ [www.ccapp-accredit.ca](http://www.ccapp-accredit.ca)

# Physicians & Related Careers



*If you want to promote, maintain and restore the health of people in your community, you may want to consider becoming a Physician, Naturopath, or Chiropractor. These professionals are among the most highly paid in the health field — and for good reason! They must dedicate many years of study and training to qualify in their area of speciality, and they generally work long hours in order to serve the needs of their patients. The rewards are significant, and not just financially — these professionals have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of their patients.*



# Chiropractor

**EARNINGS: \$\$**  
**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍  
**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6+**

**PROFILE**

*A Chiropractor is a health professional who diagnoses and treats neuromuscular disorders by manually adjusting or manipulating patients' spines. They may also offer complementary treatments such as electrotherapy, nutrition, light and massage, paying special attention to the spine.*

### Education & Training

Chiropractors must complete a Doctor of Chiropractic degree, which requires four years of study at an accredited school. At least three years of undergraduate study are usually required for admission to a Chiropractic program. A list of accredited schools in Canada can be found on the website of the College of Chiropractors of BC.

### Find More Info

College of Chiropractors of BC  
→ [www.bcchiro.com](http://www.bcchiro.com)

As a Chiropractor you'll work to reduce your patients' pain and improve their functionality, as well as to educate them on how they can maintain their own health and treat their back pain problems through exercise, ergonomics and other therapies. Chiropractors usually work in private practice or in clinics with other health practitioners. They are considered alternative or complementary health practitioners.

### Keys to Success

You'll need to be resourceful and empathetic as a Chiropractor, with good interpersonal skills. You'll also need to have the strength and coordination to treat patients by manipulating their spines. Business and financial skills are important for Chiropractors who run their own practices.

### A Look Ahead

This is a very small occupation group in BC, with fewer than 800 Chiropractors around the province. There is expected to be an oversupply of Chiropractors in the Lower Mainland in the next few years, but other regions will have moderate growth.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary for a Chiropractor in BC is \$53,000, according to WorkBC.

# General Practitioner/ Family Physician

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍 👍 👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 7+**

## PROFILE

*As a Family Physician or General Practitioner, you're the practitioner that sees everything from sore throats to serious illnesses, and everyone from babies to senior citizens. You'll assess your patients' symptoms, run tests to diagnose their conditions, prescribe medications or treatments, or refer patients to specialists. You'll also advise your patients on making healthy lifestyle choices, maintaining wellness and preventing illness. You can choose to work in a variety of settings, including solo or group practices, family health teams, hospitals, community care centres, or public health units.*

Family Physicians may work long hours, including evenings and weekends, in order to meet the needs of patients. Physicians in BC who choose to practise in rural areas may receive incentives such as signing bonuses, student loan reductions, premiums, or travel subsidies.

## Keys to Success

Family Physicians need to have excellent interpersonal skills and be good communicators, as well as being committed to their work and to enhancing health and well-being. These physicians need to have strong analytical skills and be good problem-solvers in order to diagnose the conditions of their patients, and they need to be committed to continuous learning in order to stay current with new developments in research and treatments.

## A Look Ahead

Employment prospects for General Practitioners and Family Physicians are expected to be above average over the next several years, because BC's growing and aging population will require more health services. Rural communities are under-served as compared to urban areas, and there is a higher demand for Family Physicians in rural areas.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary for a General Practitioner in BC in 2013 was \$95,000 to \$125,000.

### Education & Training

Qualifying as Family Physician requires four years of medical school followed by two years of residency training. Three years of undergraduate studies are required in order to qualify for admission to medical school.

UNBC — Prince George

UBC — Vancouver

UBC — Okanagan — Kamloops

UVIC — Victoria

### Find More Info

BC Medical Association

→ [www.bcma.org](http://www.bcma.org)

BC College of Family Physicians

→ [www.bccfp.bc.ca](http://www.bccfp.bc.ca)

Rural Practice Programs in BC

→ [www.health.gov.bc.ca/pcb/rural.html](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pcb/rural.html)

# Specialist Physician

EARNINGS: \$\$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 8+



**PROFILE**

*Specialist Physicians are doctors who are trained and certified in a specific discipline — such as psychiatry, cardiology, or plastic surgery. They specialize in preventing, diagnosing and treating specific types of diseases, disorders, and injuries. They examine patients and provide advice and treatment towards the management of patient health. They also act as consultants to other physicians and perform surgery.*



**Dr. Charles Perry (Adolph) Xaxli'p** First Nation, *Plastic Surgeon*



*"I grew up in a small community and our family doctor made a big impression upon my career. Through my university education I became more involved in helping others through medicine and the healing arts. Giving back to the community continues to inspire me to be the best I can be for others. This path has taken me to healing through plastic surgery and its many procedures."*



➔ *“You have many gifts to share with the world, and you come from a rich history of healers!”*



### Education & Training

To become a Specialist Physician, you'll need to complete three years of undergraduate university studies, followed by a Medical Doctor (MD) degree, an internship in the speciality you've chosen, and a period of residency (a paid training period). Residency requirements vary according to speciality.

*UBC*

*UBC Okanagan*

*UNBC*

*University of Victoria*

### Find More Info

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

➔ [www.rcpsc.medical.org](http://www.rcpsc.medical.org)

Medical Council of Canada

➔ [www.mcc.ca](http://www.mcc.ca)

College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC ➔ [www.cpsbc.ca](http://www.cpsbc.ca)

BC Medical Association

➔ [www.bcma.org](http://www.bcma.org)

Some specialist areas are: paediatrics, emergency medicine, gynecology, surgery, internal medicine, neurology and many more. There are more than 50 specialities and subspecialities recognized in Canada.

Specialist Physicians tend to work in hospitals, outpatient centres, clinics, and private offices. Specialists in clinical medicine usually work in offices or in a hospital while those in laboratory medicine and in surgery usually work in hospitals.

### Keys to Success

To be a Specialist Physician, you'll need to have a passion for science and health care. You should be someone with good interpersonal skills and an interest in helping people. Depending on the speciality, you may need physical strength and stamina (to perform long surgical procedures) or patience and empathy (psychiatry). In general, you need to be committed to life-long learning to stay current with new research and treatments in your area of speciality.

### A Look Ahead

There is a shortage of Specialist Physicians across BC, and throughout Canada. Specialist Physicians tend to work in larger centres and in connection to large medical facilities. The increased health needs of the growing and aging population are contributing to opportunities in this occupation.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Medical specialists (such as internists, paediatricians, neurologists, anesthesiologists and psychiatrists) are collecting \$288,532 on average in BC according to the National Physician Database. Surgical specialists in BC are making an average of \$425,836. Doctors who run their own practices will need to pay costs such as rent, staff salaries, and supplies.

# Naturopathic Physician

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 4+

## PROFILE

*Naturopathic Physicians diagnose their patients' diseases and disorders and treat them with natural methods of healing such as acupuncture and acupressure, spinal manipulation, reflexology, hydrotherapy, herbal medicines, biochemical therapy, clinical nutrition, homeopathy and counselling. As a Naturopath, you'll take patient histories, perform physical exams, run laboratory tests, prescribe natural medicines such as herbs, supplements and homeopathic medicines, and perform physical therapies, such as naturopathic manipulation and physiotherapy in order to treat patients.*

### Education & Training

There is one accredited school of Naturopathic medicine in BC:

*The Boucher Institute of Naturopathic Medicine*

→ [www.binm.org](http://www.binm.org)

### Find More Info

BC Naturopathic Association

→ [www.bcna.ca](http://www.bcna.ca)

College of Naturopathic Physicians of BC → [www.cnpbc.bc.ca](http://www.cnpbc.bc.ca)

### Keys to Success

If you have a strong interest in talking with people and helping them to improve their health, as well an affinity for science, you may be well suited to becoming a Naturopathic Doctor. You'll need to have good problem-solving and critical thinking skills in order to make diagnoses, and leadership and financial management skills if you operate your own practice. Additionally, an interest in the health benefits of alternative and complementary therapies along with western medicine is an asset for Naturopathic Doctors.

### A Look Ahead

Naturopathic Doctors are currently a very small occupational group in BC, and the province is underserved by NDs. Because of the growing awareness of natural approaches to regaining and maintaining health there is a demand for Naturopathic Doctors in many areas of BC.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The annual average income for Naturopathic Doctors in BC is in the \$80,000 range, according to the BC Naturopathic Association.



## Public Health



*For public health professionals, the community is their patient! In this exciting, multidisciplinary field, you'll have the opportunity to explore ways to protect and improve the health of everyone in your community. You'll focus on prevention — looking for ways to prevent problems from happening — as opposed to just treating illness. Public health services can be provided in homes, clinics, drop-in centres, community sites, schools and child care facilities — wherever the community gathers.*

# Environmental Health Officer / Public Health Inspector

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6**

**PROFILE**

*Environmental Health Officers evaluate and monitor health and safety hazards, and develop strategies to control health risks. They inspect restaurants, spas, swimming pools, industrial facilities, and other workplaces, investigating issues such as contaminated drinking water, in order to ensure that the public isn't at risk of getting sick. They ensure that workplaces and public facilities are in compliance with government regulations for sanitation, pollution control, safety, and the handling and storage of hazardous substances. As an Environmental Health Officer, you could be employed either in the private field, or by government. If you like variety, you'll enjoy working as an Environmental Health Officer!*

### Education & Training

To become an environmental officer, you'll need to complete a two-year Bachelor of Technology in Environmental Health. In BC, this program is offered at the BC Institute of Technology. Following graduation, you'll need to become certified with the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors.

### Find More Info

Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors – BC Branch  
→ [www.ciphi.bc.ca](http://www.ciphi.bc.ca)

### Keys to Success

To succeed as an Environmental Health Officer, you'll need to develop critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making and communication skills. You'll need to be prepared to deal with the public in a variety of different situations, and to resolve conflict when it occurs. You'll need to be professional, practical, and tactful in your dealings with the public, and to be able to follow procedures and implement guidelines.

### A Look Ahead

There is expected to be higher than average overall growth in this occupational category over the next several years, due to the need to ensure compliance with increasing standards and regulations in various fields such as the environment and occupational health and safety.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

In 2013, full-time Environmental Health Officers in BC earned salaries ranging from \$56,500 to \$70,500.

# Epidemiologist

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6+

## PROFILE

*Epidemiologists are sometimes called “disease detectives”.*

*They monitor the rates of disease in populations, and when an outbreak occurs, they investigate and try to stop or control the spread of disease.*

*They also research health disparities between populations, plan disease prevention campaigns, and health promotion activities. You might also*

*evaluate workplace health and safety, manage environmental health programs, and conduct research. Epidemiologists work at regional health*

*authorities and public health departments, for federal agencies such as the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Health*

*Canada and Environment Canada, at universities and in the private field.*

## Education & Training

Simon Fraser University offers a Master of Science in Population and Public Health, the University of Northern BC offers a Master of Science in Community Health, and UBC has a Masters of Public Health program.

## Find More Info

BC Environmental and Occupational Health Research Network → [www.bceohrn.ca](http://www.bceohrn.ca)  
Council on Education for Public Health → [www.ceph.org](http://www.ceph.org)

## Keys to Success

Epidemiologists need to be very analytical, able to assemble evidence and make conclusions based on data. You need to be inquisitive and creative, and a good problem-solver. It's also helpful if you're:

- *detail-oriented: you'll examine large amounts of data, looking for trends and making comparisons*
- *a good communicator: you'll need to prepare scientific reports, make presentations, and give lectures. You may even need to speak to the media!*

## A Look Ahead

Most Epidemiologists in BC work in the Lower Mainland/Southwest region.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary for this occupational category in BC was \$76,000 in 2013, according to WorkBC.

# Genetic Counsellor

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6

PROFILE

*For many people, finding out that they, or their children, have a genetic condition, can be very difficult. Genetic Counsellors help people through this period, giving individuals and families that have a medical history or potential risk for some genetic or inherited condition information and supportive counseling, coordinating testing, and connecting them with appropriate community resources. As a Genetic Counsellor, you'd provide information and support to people about:*

- their chances of having or developing an inherited condition.
- their chances of having a child with an inherited condition.
- pre-natal testing for high-risk pregnancies.
- you'll help people to understand the medical facts, including the diagnosis, probable course of the condition, and the available management for their condition

### Keys to Success

You'll need empathy, patience, understanding, and an ability to deal with conflict and trauma. You'll also need an aptitude for science, and an ability to communicate complex information clearly and sensitively.

### A Look Ahead

This is a small occupation group, but there is a need for Genetic Counsellors in Canada, and the field is growing as knowledge of genetic conditions increases and testing becomes more commonplace. Most Genetic Counsellors in BC work in medical genetics clinics in Vancouver or Victoria.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary for a Genetic Counsellor in Canada in 2013 was \$62,000.

### Education & Training

Genetic Counsellors complete a Master of Science degree in genetic counselling from a recognized university program. You'll need an educational background in biology, nursing, social work or psychology. In BC, the *University of British Columbia* offers a two-year Masters program in the Department of Medical Genetics.

### Find More Info

Canadian Society of Genetic Counsellors → [www.cagc-accg.ca](http://www.cagc-accg.ca)  
National Society of Genetic Counsellors → [www.nsgc.org](http://www.nsgc.org)

# Health Educator

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 4-6



## PROFILE

*Do you enjoy teaching and sharing information? As a Health Educator, you'll teach people in your community about healthy lifestyle choices that can maintain or improve wellness and prevent illness. You'll develop health promotion campaigns, run workshops, develop educational materials, and may work with clients one-on-one. You might work for a community agency, in a school or hospital setting, in a research institute, or for government. You may also be called a health promoter, health program coordinator, or health promotion specialist.*



**Education & Training**  
A bachelor's degree in health science or social science is required. The *University of Northern BC* offers a two-year Masters degree in Community Health Science.

### Keys to Success

You'll need to be creative, have good written communication skills, and presentation skills in order to explain health concepts to clients and the public using easy-to-understand language. You need strong research skills, and the ability to work in teams with other health professionals.

### A Look Ahead

Most people working in this occupation are in the Lower Mainland/Southwest region of the province. There is expected to be growth in this occupation as the result of growth in the health field and increasing interest in health prevention and promotion.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Employees in this occupation in BC earned between \$53,000 and \$66,000 in 2013.

# Health Planner / Policy Analyst

**EARNINGS:** \$\$  
**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍  
**YEARS IN SCHOOL:** 4 - 6

**PROFILE**

*Research and analysis are essential to make sure our health system is working well for everyone. As a Health Planner and Policy Analyst, you'll have the opportunity to make sure health programs and services are addressing the needs of our communities. You'll collect statistical data, analyze it, write reports and make recommendations. You'll design new health programs and policies, and monitor their success, and you'll develop health education materials for the public and your organization.*

### Education & Training

The Nicola Valley Institute of Technology offers a diploma in Aboriginal and Community Health Development. Most health policy researcher positions will require a bachelors or masters degree.

### Find More Info

Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research  
→ [www.cahspr.ca](http://www.cahspr.ca)  
Canadian Public Health Association  
→ [www.cpha.ca](http://www.cpha.ca)

### Keys to Success

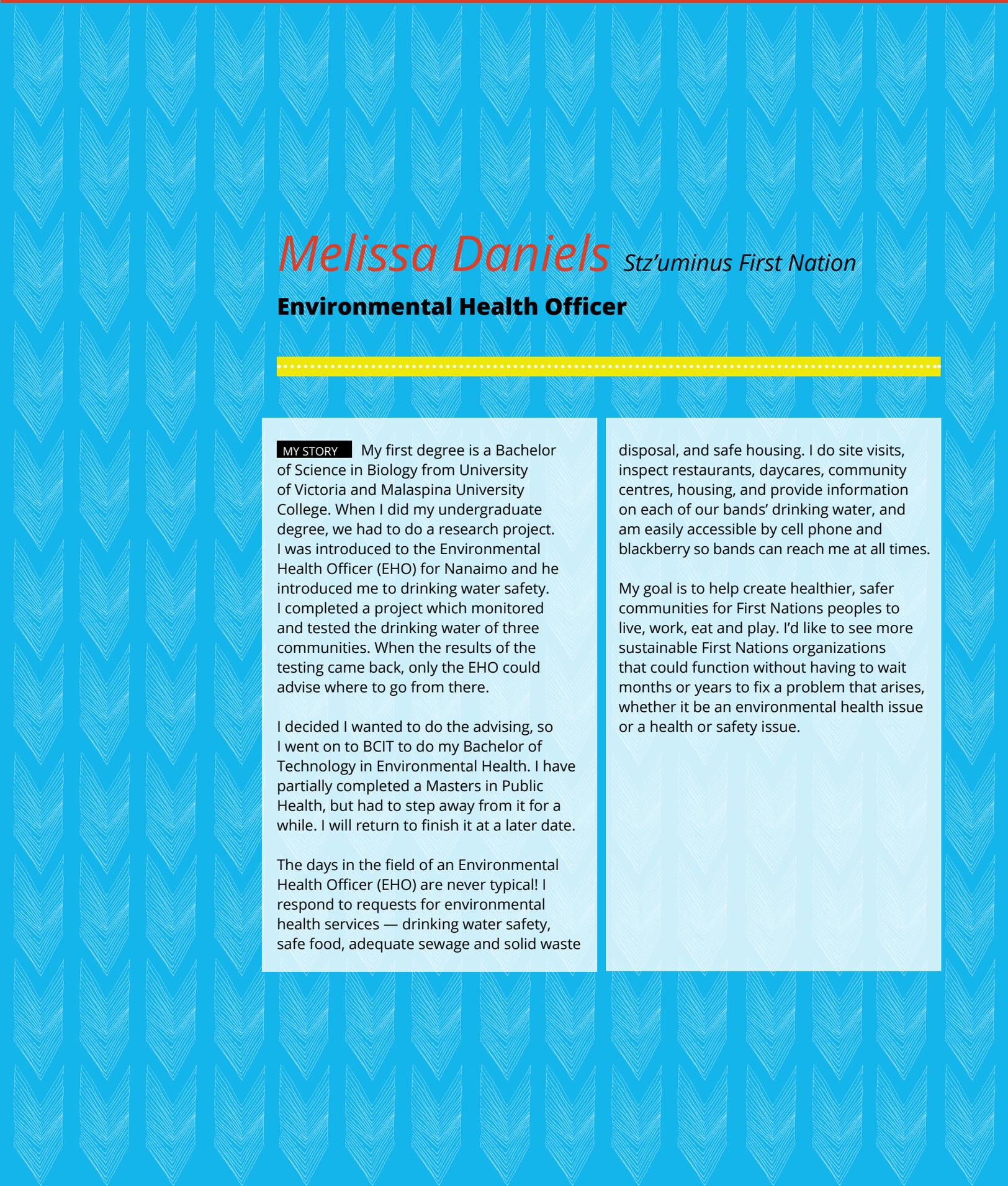
As a researcher and writer, you'll need excellent written communication skills. You'll also need strong planning and leadership skills, and a good understanding of health issues and terminology. It's also important to have project management skills, and to work well in teams.

### A Look Ahead

Most workers in this occupation are employed in the Lower Mainland/Southwest region of BC. This is a competitive area, and new opportunities will be mainly the result of retirements.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary for this occupation in 2013 was \$53,000 to \$66,000.



*Melissa Daniels* Stz'uminus First Nation  
**Environmental Health Officer**

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**MY STORY** My first degree is a Bachelor of Science in Biology from University of Victoria and Malaspina University College. When I did my undergraduate degree, we had to do a research project. I was introduced to the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) for Nanaimo and he introduced me to drinking water safety. I completed a project which monitored and tested the drinking water of three communities. When the results of the testing came back, only the EHO could advise where to go from there.

I decided I wanted to do the advising, so I went on to BCIT to do my Bachelor of Technology in Environmental Health. I have partially completed a Masters in Public Health, but had to step away from it for a while. I will return to finish it at a later date.

The days in the field of an Environmental Health Officer (EHO) are never typical! I respond to requests for environmental health services — drinking water safety, safe food, adequate sewage and solid waste

disposal, and safe housing. I do site visits, inspect restaurants, daycares, community centres, housing, and provide information on each of our bands' drinking water, and am easily accessible by cell phone and blackberry so bands can reach me at all times.

My goal is to help create healthier, safer communities for First Nations peoples to live, work, eat and play. I'd like to see more sustainable First Nations organizations that could function without having to wait months or years to fix a problem that arises, whether it be an environmental health issue or a health or safety issue.

# Home / Community Care Worker

**EARNINGS:** \$  
**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍👍  
**YEARS IN SCHOOL:** 1

PROFILE

*Do you enjoy helping others in their homes and community? If you said yes, then you may want to consider becoming a Home Care Worker. You'll work with Elders and others who require individualized care and resources so they can continue to live in their own homes and in the community. You'll assist with transportation, house cleaning, personal hygiene, exercises, physiotherapy, monitoring blood pressure and other physical conditions, providing meals, and other health and wellness related activities.*

### Education & Training

There are a number of health aide and community care programs available at colleges around BC. For a complete list, visit the BC Care Aide and Community Worker Registry at → [www.cachwr.bc.ca/About-the-Registry/List-of-HCA-programs-in-BC.aspx](http://www.cachwr.bc.ca/About-the-Registry/List-of-HCA-programs-in-BC.aspx)

### Find More Info

BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry  
→ [www.cachwr.bc.ca](http://www.cachwr.bc.ca)

### Keys to Success

You'll need to be able to work independently, and to evaluate situations and make decisions about safety and medical issues. You'll need good interpersonal and communication skills, patience, and understanding. And you'll also need cultural awareness and sensitivity.

### A Look Ahead

As the population continues to age, the need for Home and Community Care Workers is growing. Employment growth will be strongest on Vancouver Island and in the Okanagan, Greater Vancouver and Fraser Valley as many people move to these regions to retire.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Full-time workers in this occupation category made \$28,700 in 2013.

# Paramedic

**EARNINGS: \$\$**  
**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍  
**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 1**

**PROFILE**

*Paramedics and Ambulance Attendants give emergency medical care to patients with injuries or illnesses and transport them to hospitals or other medical facilities for further care. Today, Paramedics can also be found in settings beyond the traditional ambulance environment — they are assisting physicians and nurses in emergency rooms, supporting patients with in-home care, working in industry and providing public health education in the community. Most Paramedics work for the BC Ambulance Service. Many Paramedics use their training and experience to move on to medical schools, nursing programs and other health fields.*

## Education & Training

There are five levels of practitioners in BC, with varying requirements. Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) requires a 105-hour entry-level training program in emergency patient care and transportation. Emergency medical responders must pass a licensing exam in order to practice in BC.

Two colleges in BC offer 8-month Primary Care Paramedic programs.

*Justice Institute of BC*

→ [www.jibc.ca](http://www.jibc.ca)

*College of the Rockies*

→ [www.cotr.bc.ca](http://www.cotr.bc.ca)

## Find More Info

Emergency Medical Assistants  
Licensing Board

→ [www.health.gov.bc.ca/ema](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/ema)

Paramedic Association of Canada

→ [www.paramedic.ca](http://www.paramedic.ca)

Ambulance Paramedics of BC

→ [www.apbc.ca](http://www.apbc.ca)

## Keys to Success

Working as a Paramedic is physically and emotionally demanding. You need to be able to think clearly in crisis situations, and take quick and decisive action. You need to work well in team situations, and show leadership. Be prepared to work nights, evenings and weekends.

## A Look Ahead

Most opportunities in the BC Ambulance Service are the result of retirements. Industry sources report that there may be increased demand for advanced care level Paramedics in hospital Emergency Room settings and for rural health care teams because of the greater scope of practice of these practitioners.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary for workers in this occupation in 2013 was \$57,000.

# First Nations Community Health Director

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6+**

**PROFILE**

*Health Directors may undertake a number of duties, depending upon community need, including management, technical duties (program planning and evaluation), administration, report writing, and financial management. Health Directors are also responsible for staff management, strategic planning, staff capacity building and service coordination. Health Directors work within First Nation communities across BC. Depending upon the size of the community, the Health Director often works from the locally established Health Centre in partnership with staff and other health professionals.*

## Education & Training

UBC offers a ten-month certificate program in Aboriginal Health and Community Administration. Professional certification, such as a Certified Health Executive available through the Canadian College of Health Service Executives, is an asset.

## Find More Info

UBC Continuing Studies

→ [www.cstudies.ubc.ca/](http://www.cstudies.ubc.ca/)

[certificate-in-aboriginal-health-and-community-administration/index.html](http://www.cstudies.ubc.ca/certificate-in-aboriginal-health-and-community-administration/index.html)

First Nations Health Directors

Association → [www.fnhda.ca](http://www.fnhda.ca)

Canadian College of Health Leaders

→ [www.cchl-ccls.ca](http://www.cchl-ccls.ca)

## Keys to Success

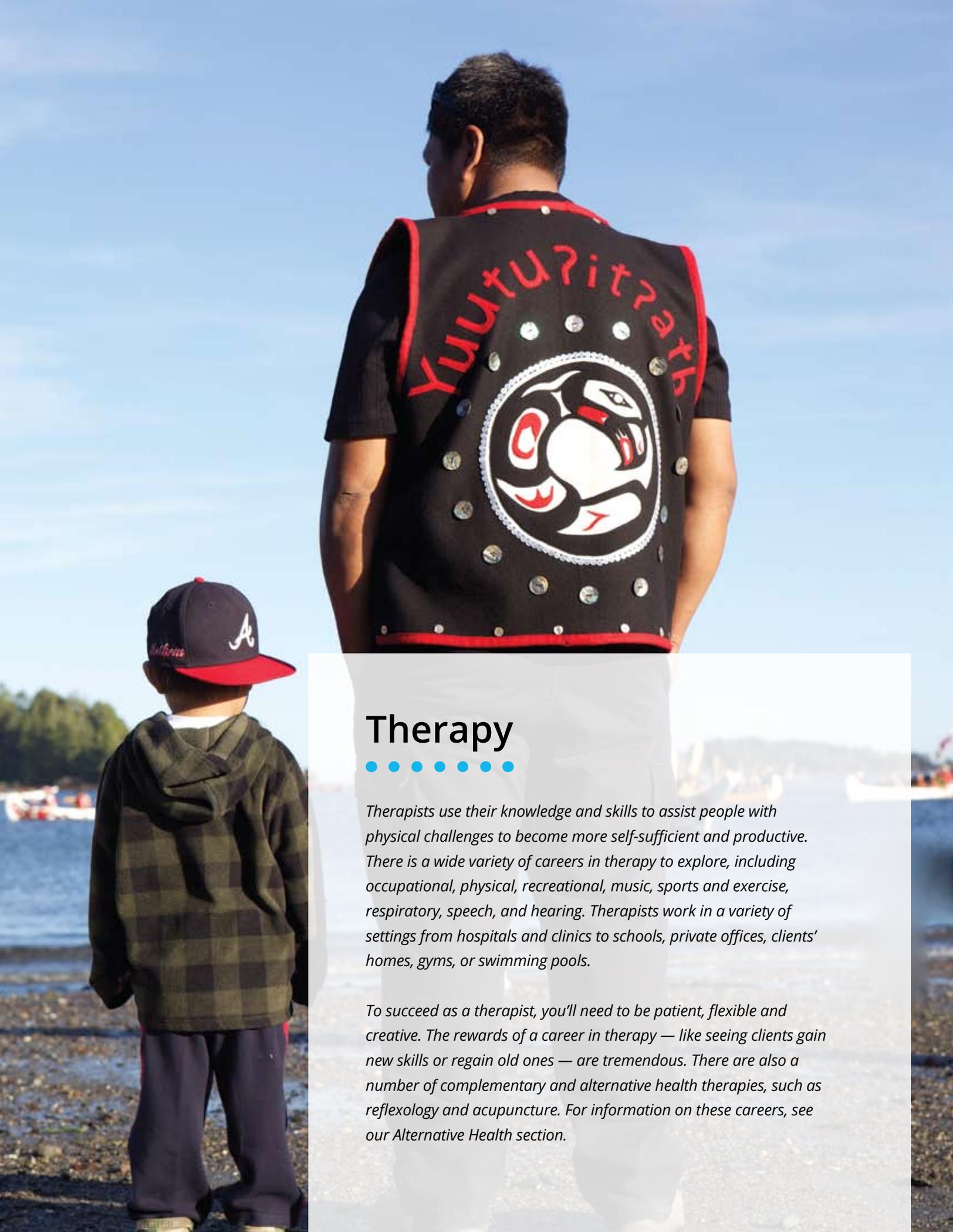
As community wellness is the core of the position, Health Directors need to be compassionate, caring, supportive and approachable. They also need to have the ability to be proactive, follow through on tasks, use good judgement and be a role model for others. Strong communication skills are important for this position, as well as the ability to be organized and multi-task.

## A Look Ahead

There are opportunities in this area as the result of the growing population.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

According to a report by the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of BC, the average salary in 2011 was approximately \$70,000.



## Therapy

Therapists use their knowledge and skills to assist people with physical challenges to become more self-sufficient and productive. There is a wide variety of careers in therapy to explore, including occupational, physical, recreational, music, sports and exercise, respiratory, speech, and hearing. Therapists work in a variety of settings from hospitals and clinics to schools, private offices, clients' homes, gyms, or swimming pools.

To succeed as a therapist, you'll need to be patient, flexible and creative. The rewards of a career in therapy — like seeing clients gain new skills or regain old ones — are tremendous. There are also a number of complementary and alternative health therapies, such as reflexology and acupuncture. For information on these careers, see our [Alternative Health](#) section.

# Audiologist

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6

PROFILE

*Audiologists diagnose hearing loss, and help clients to prevent, manage, and treat hearing disorders. As an Audiologist, you'll get to work with clients of all ages, from babies to the Elderly. You'll fit people for hearing aids and other devices, you'll develop and implement screening programs to identify people with hearing loss, and you'll design and implement rehabilitative programs for patients with hearing disorders. You may work in a variety of settings, including hospitals, public health units, schools, or in private practice.*

## Education & Training

Audiologists in BC must have a Masters degree in Audiology. UBC is the only university in BC to offer an Audiology and Speech Sciences program.

## Find More Info

BC Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists

→ [www.bcaslpa.ca](http://www.bcaslpa.ca)

Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists

→ [www.speechandhearing.ca](http://www.speechandhearing.ca)

College of Speech and Hearing Professionals of BC

→ [www.cshhpb.org](http://www.cshhpb.org)

## Keys to Success

To work in this area, you'll need to be able to communicate easily with people of all ages, to think logically and analytically, and to apply your scientific knowledge to help others. Teamwork and leadership are essential skills for this position, as well as a caring and patient-focused attitude.

## The Job Outlook

There is a shortage of Audiologists throughout the province, and an increased demand in Northern and remote areas. In particular, sources note that public health Audiologists are in slightly higher demand in the Interior and rural/remote areas of the province. The BC provincial government has offered loan forgiveness to audiology graduates who commit to work in underserved regions of the province.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average full time salary for Audiologists in BC in 2013 was \$59,000, and more experienced Audiologists can expect to make up to \$85,000.

# Kinesiologist

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 4

PROFILE

*Kinesiologists are movement experts. They study all aspects of human movement — at home, at work, during sports and recreation — and look for ways to improve clients' health outcomes or enhance their performance. They conduct fitness and movement tests and assessments, design fitness and mobility programs to help people during rehabilitation following an illness or injury, and work with athletes to improve performance levels.*

## Education & Training

Kinesiologists must have an undergraduate degree. Universities which offer degree programs in kinesiology include:

*UBC School of Kinesiology*

→ [www.kin.educ.ubc.ca](http://www.kin.educ.ubc.ca)

*SFU Department of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology*

→ [www.sfu.ca/bpk.html](http://www.sfu.ca/bpk.html)

*University of Victoria School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education*

A number of colleges offer two-year diploma programs or university transfer programs in kinesiology, including:

*Capilano University*

*College of the Rockies*

*Douglas College*

*Langara College*

## Find More Info

BC Association of Kinesiologists

→ [www.bcak.bc.ca](http://www.bcak.bc.ca)

Canadian Physiotherapy

Association National Office

→ [www.physiotherapy.ca](http://www.physiotherapy.ca)

Canadian Kinesiology Alliance

→ [www.cka.ca](http://www.cka.ca)

## Keys to Success

Kinesiology can be physically demanding. You may need to assist patients with exercises, and move or support patients who cannot exercise alone. You may need to operate a variety of instruments and exercise machines. You'll need to have leadership skills, good interpersonal communication skills, as well as creativity and flexibility in your problem-solving approaches.

## The Job Outlook

Balanced demand is predicted for this occupational group over the next few years. Regions with the highest annual average growth rate will be the Northeast, Mainland/Southwest, and Thompson-Okanagan, with rates from 1.4% to 2.6%.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average annual salary for this occupational category is \$41,000 in BC in 2013.

# Creative Arts Therapist

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2-6

PROFILE

*As a Creative Arts Therapist, you'll use your knowledge and skills in one of the creative arts to help clients maintain and improve their physical or mental health and support their wellbeing, creativity, and personal growth. Creative Arts Therapists include Dance Therapists, Drama Therapists, Music Therapists, and Expressive Arts Therapists. You'll assess clients' needs and strengths, identify treatment goals and objectives, and use creative approaches to develop and implement therapeutic treatment programs for individuals who have physical, emotional or mental challenges or limitations.*

You may work in a hospital, school, day-care, nursing home, community agency, prison, or in private practice.

### Keys to Success

Creative Arts Therapists should enjoy using their creativity to help people, should have strong communication skills and an enthusiastic and positive attitude. Depending on the type of therapy, they may need to be active and/or assist clients to take part in activities, so they should have the necessary physical strength and coordination.

### A Look Ahead

Most Creative Arts Therapists in BC are currently working in the Lower Mainland, or in larger urban centres. Regions with the highest predicted annual average growth rate for this occupation are Thompson-Okanagan, Cariboo, and the Northeast.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The annual average salary for people in this occupational category in 2013 was \$33,000 to \$44,000.

### Education & Training

Education and Training requirements vary by area of speciality. For more information on programs and requirements, see BC's Education Planner  
→ [www.educationplanner.ca](http://www.educationplanner.ca)

### Find More Info

Arts Health Network Canada  
→ [www.artshealthnetwork.ca](http://www.artshealthnetwork.ca)

BC Art Therapy Association  
→ [www.bcarttherapy.com](http://www.bcarttherapy.com)

Dance Movement Therapy Association in Canada  
→ [www.dmtac.org](http://www.dmtac.org)

Music Therapy Association of BC  
→ [www.mtabc.com](http://www.mtabc.com)

Canadian Association for Music Therapy → [www.musictherapy.ca](http://www.musictherapy.ca)

# Occupational Therapist

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6

PROFILE

*If you're interested in playing a vital role in helping people with disabilities, injuries, or disease to work, play, and do everyday activities to the best of their abilities, then consider Occupational Therapy. Occupational Therapists help their clients of all ages to learn or regain the skills they need for the job of living. Your clients may range from a child with disabilities who is adapting to school life, to an older person suffering from severe arthritis, to a person recuperating from a workplace injury or car accident.*

## Education & Training

An accredited Masters of Occupational Therapy program is offered at UBC. Graduates must be certified with the College of Occupational Therapists of BC in order to practise.

## Find More Info

College of Occupational Therapists of BC → [www.cotbc.org](http://www.cotbc.org)  
Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists → [www.caot.ca](http://www.caot.ca)

You'll help your clients:

- regain the use of an injured body part or improve strength, endurance, movement and self-confidence
- learn to use assistive technologies such as mobility devices and safety equipment
- find new ways to perform daily activities, and learn new skills to cope with disability or disease

## Keys to Success

You'll spend much of your day standing, bending and assisting clients. You'll need the strength and coordination to lift weight and assist clients, as well as good interpersonal and communication skills. You'll also need problem-solving and critical thinking skills, creativity and empathy.

## A Look Ahead

Future job prospects in this occupational group are expected to be above average in upcoming years. Occupational Therapists are currently in high demand throughout the province. Industry sources report that more BC Occupational Therapists are expected to move to private practice, as insurance coverage for occupational therapy services becomes more common. The Northeast, Cariboo and North Coast/Nechako are expected to see the highest annual average rate of growth for this occupation.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

Occupational Therapists generally earn between \$40,000 and \$65,000 a year, with a national average of about \$55,000 a year. However, experienced Occupational Therapists may make \$75,000 a year or more.

# Physiotherapist

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6

## PROFILE

*As a Physiotherapist, you'll plan and carry out individually designed treatment programs to maintain, improve, or restore physical functioning and alleviate pain in your patients. You'll help people to recover from injuries, diseases or disorders with therapeutic exercise, manipulations, massage, education, the use of electro-therapeutic and other mechanical equipment, and hydro-therapy. You might practise in a range of public and private settings, including hospitals, private clinics, home care, child-development centres, or extended-care facilities. Many Physiotherapists decide to specialize in one of the over 30 different areas of specialization.*

### Education & Training

To work as a Physiotherapist in BC you must have a Masters degree in Physical Therapy, and register with the BC College of Physiotherapists. The University of British Columbia is the only institution in BC that currently offers the Master of Physical Therapy degree.

### Find More Info

College of Physiotherapists

→ [www.cptbc.org](http://www.cptbc.org)

### Keys to Success

You'll need good interpersonal skills and patience in your work with clients, and you'll need to be observant and a good critical thinker in order to make effective decisions about their therapy. You will also need a thorough understanding of anatomy and pathology. Leadership and teamwork skills are also required for working in coordination with other health professionals.

### A Look Ahead

Industry sources report that the current supply of new graduates in the occupation is insufficient to fill the current and emerging vacancies as Physiotherapists retire. The BC provincial government has offered loan forgiveness to physiotherapy graduates who commit to work in the North and in some regions on Vancouver Island.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average income in this career is between \$55,000 and \$80,000 a year. Experienced Physiotherapists can expect to make over \$100,000 per year, and those who own their own practices may make even more, depending on the number of clients.

# Rehabilitation Assistant

EARNINGS: \$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2

PROFILE

*As a Rehabilitation Assistant, you'll work with Occupational and Physical Therapists to help patients who are ill or have been injured to regain or maintain their ability to move about and care for themselves. You'll work with children, adults, and seniors, helping them with exercise routines and other activities. You will use a variety of equipment including wheelchairs, walking aids, splints, mechanical lifts, exercise equipment and low voltage electrical equipment.*

### Education & Training

Capilano University offers a two-year program leading to a Rehabilitation Assistant Diploma.

→ [www.capilano.ca/radp](http://www.capilano.ca/radp)

Okanagan College offers a two-year Therapy Assistant program.

→ [www.okanagan.bc.ca](http://www.okanagan.bc.ca)

### Find More Info

Rehabilitation Assistants Association of BC

→ [www.raaofbc.ca](http://www.raaofbc.ca)

Rehabilitation Assistants work in hospitals, continuing care facilities, community health agencies, physiotherapy clinics, and schools.

### Keys to Success

This work can be physically demanding. You'll need to help patients to stand, walk and exercise. You may be standing for long periods of time, and you'll need to be able to move and operate equipment safely. You'll also need good communications skills as well as patience and empathy when dealing with clients.

### A Look Ahead

There is expected to be growth in this occupation over the next several years as a result of the increased health care needs of the aging population.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average annual salary for workers in this occupational category in 2013 was \$33,000.

# Respiratory Therapist

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 3-4

PROFILE

*Take a deep breath, and explore this exciting career.*

*Respiratory Therapists help patients by evaluating their heart and lung function, identifying and diagnosing problems or disorders, and implementing effective treatments. They use highly specialized technology, and usually work in hospital settings, providing advanced life support for severely ill patients in intensive care, emergency rooms, operating rooms, and in neonatal care. They work closely with physicians and other health professionals.*

## Education & Training

Thompson Rivers University offers BC's only accredited Respiratory Therapy degree program. Graduates of this four-year program are eligible for certification with the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists, which is required in BC.

## Find More Info

Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists → [www.csrt.com](http://www.csrt.com)  
BC Society of Respiratory Therapists → [www.bcsrt.ca](http://www.bcsrt.ca)

## Keys to Success

As a Respiratory Therapist, you'll need to be able to take quick and decisive action in crisis situations. You need to be able to manage stress, and to work well as part of a team. Critical thinking and communication skills are essential attributes for Respiratory Therapists, as well as attention to detail and the ability to use technology and follow procedures with a high degree of accuracy.

## A Look Ahead

There is a shortage of Respiratory Therapists in BC and throughout Canada, particularly outside of large urban centres. Growth is expected to continue for this occupation over the next several years, due to a rise in the number of cases of respiratory disease as the population ages.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

Professionals in this occupational category earn between \$55,000 and \$66,000 per year.

# Speech – Language Pathologist

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6

## PROFILE

*Speech-Language Pathologists work with children and adults to help them improve their communication skills. They identify and diagnose their clients' communications disorders and language impairments, and plan and implement treatment therapies. They work with a range of tools, from books and toys, to linguistic analysis software, sophisticated sound analyzers and electronic communication devices.*

### Education & Training

In BC Speech-Language Pathologists are required to have a master's degree in science with a major in speech-language pathology, and to register with the College of Speech and Hearing Health Professionals of BC. UBC's School of Audiology and Speech Sciences is the only program in BC.

### Find More Info

BC Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists

→ [www.bcaslpa.ca](http://www.bcaslpa.ca)

Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists

→ [www.speechandhearing.ca](http://www.speechandhearing.ca)

College of Speech and Hearing Professionals of BC

→ [www.cshhpbcc.org](http://www.cshhpbcc.org)

They work with clients on:

- listening and comprehension
- expressing thoughts and feelings
- pronunciation of speech sounds
- use of the voice and language fluency

They work in a variety of settings, including hospitals, clinics, schools and in clients' homes.

### Keys to Success

Speech-Language pathology may be a good career choice for you, if you:

- are interested in how people communicate and interact
- have the desire to apply your scientific and clinical knowledge to improve patients' communication abilities
- have excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- are patient and enthusiastic

### A Look Ahead

Speech-language Pathologists are needed throughout BC, however there is increased demand in Northern and remote areas. The BC provincial government has offered loan forgiveness to Speech-Language Pathology graduates who commit to work in underserved regions of the province.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary for Speech-Language Pathologists in BC was \$59,000 in 2013, however experienced practitioners can expect to earn up to \$75,000 or more.





## Special Technologies & Services

*Medical technology is an ever-changing field, and new research and innovations are making the pace of change faster all the time. That makes Special Technologies and Services an exciting and dynamic field, full of opportunities for people with specialized technical training, knowledge, and aptitudes. From cardiopulmonary technologists to pedorthists — learn more about the careers in this sector!*

# Biomedical Engineering Technologist

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2+

## PROFILE

*If you've got an interest in working with technology, Biomedical Engineering Technologist could be right for you. You'll inspect, test, maintain, and perform repairs on biomedical equipment from hospital areas such as medical imaging, respiratory, anaesthesia, and the operating room. You need to make sure the equipment is cleaned, stored and cared for properly, that it is functioning well, and that medical staff are informed how to use it correctly. You'll work in hospitals, clinics, research laboratories, medical equipment manufacturer sales, and service organizations.*

### Education & Training

You'll need a diploma from a recognized two-year program in Biomedical Engineering Technology. In BC, this program is offered at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT).

### Find More Info

Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC

→ [www.asttbc.org](http://www.asttbc.org)

Canadian Medical and Biological Engineering Society

→ [www.cmbes.ca](http://www.cmbes.ca)

### Keys to Success

An aptitude for technology is essential! You'll need excellent observational skills and great attention to detail, as well as good hand-eye coordination and computer skills. The ability to clearly communicate technical information, and to keep up with changes in technology is also very valuable in this job.

### A Look Ahead

Job growth is expected to continue in this occupation, as new developments in biomedical technology occur, and as the aging population creates demand for more medical services.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Professionals in this occupation earned an average of between \$56,500 to \$70,500 in 2013. The average hourly wage of recent Biomedical Engineering Tech graduates in 2011 was \$27.00.

# Cardiology Technologist

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2

## PROFILE

*Cardiology Technologists perform tests on cardiology patients that provide physicians with the information they need to diagnose and treat heart disease. You'll use electronic monitoring equipment for electrocardiography (ECG) and other types of testing, perform blood pressure analysis, and conduct pacemaker clinics. You'll need to explain procedures to patients, ensure their comfort and safety during tests, and report on test results to physicians for interpretation, as well as maintain and troubleshoot complex, high-tech equipment. Most Cardiology Technologists work in hospital cardiology departments, or in private laboratories or clinics.*

### Education & Training

BCIT offers a two-year distance and online program leading to a Cardiology Technology Diploma. Most employers in BC will also require Cardiology Technologists to be registered members of the Canadian Society of Cardiology Technologists.

### Find More Info

Canadian Society of Cardiology Technologists → [www.csct.ca](http://www.csct.ca)

### Keys to Success

Cardiology Technologists need to be prepared to work shifts, including evenings and weekends, and to stand for long periods of time. You may also need to lift and move patients who cannot move on their own. You should have the ability to work independently, with great attention to detail and a high degree of precision. You'll need to deal with patients in a calm and reassuring manner, and you need to be able to think quickly in emergencies. You should enjoy working with technology.

### A Look Ahead

Regions with the expected highest annual average growth rates up to 2020 are the Northeast, Cariboo and Mainland/Southwest, with increases of between 2.6% and 3.2% per year.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

On average, BC's Cardiology Technologists earned between \$44,000 and \$53,000 in 2013.

# Electroneurophysiology Technologist

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2+

## PROFILE

*It may be tough to pronounce, but electroneurophysiology can be a great career choice. You'll be responsible for performing tests on patients to record the electrical activity of the brain, cranial and central nervous system. The test results provide valuable information to neurologists and other physicians to enable them to make accurate diagnoses. You'll also evaluate the results to assess the performance of your test equipment, and perform quality control procedures on equipment and basic calibration/maintenance functions.*

You'll work in a hospital or clinic, in one of the following areas: electroencephalography (electrical activity of the brain), electromyography (electrical activity of the neuro-muscular system), evoked potentials (electrical activity generated by stimulation of the sensory systems), and polysomnography (electrical activity of the body during sleep).

## Keys to Success

To succeed in this career, you'll need an aptitude for math, physics, and other sciences. You should be comfortable working with high-tech equipment, and able to perform procedures with a high degree of accuracy and attention to detail. You'll also need good interpersonal skills to interact with patients, and the ability to work as part of a team.

## A Look Ahead

This is a small occupation group, and most are employed in the Mainland/Southwest region of the province. Job openings are expected to fill retirements, and increased demand due to the aging population.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

Average annual salary for this occupation in 2013 was \$61,800, while the median hourly rate was \$28.13.

### Education & Training

BCIT offers a two-year diploma program in Electroneurophysiology.

### Find More Info

Canadian Association of Electroneurophysiology Technologists → [www.caet.org](http://www.caet.org)  
British Columbia Society of Electroneurophysiology Technologists (BCSET) → [www.bcset.org](http://www.bcset.org)

# Orthopedic Technologist

EARNINGS: \$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2

PROFILE

*As an Orthopedic Technologist you'll apply and adjust casts, splints, and orthopedic devices, giving assistance to orthopedic surgeons in the treatment of orthopedic diseases and injuries. You'll also assist in the application, maintenance and adjustment of traction equipment. You'll clean and dress wounds, and remove casts when treatment is completed. And you'll also instruct patients and their families about using orthopedic devices and caring for their casts. Most Orthopedic Technologists work in hospitals and medical clinics.*

## Education & Training

A two-year orthopedic technologist program is required, plus one year of on-the-job training in order to qualify for certification with the Canadian Society of Orthopaedic Technologists. Visit their website for information on institutions offering the program.

## Find More Info

Canadian Society of Orthopaedic Technologists

→ [www.pappin.com/csot](http://www.pappin.com/csot)

Canadian Orthopaedic Association

→ [www.coa-aco.org](http://www.coa-aco.org)

## Keys to Success

You'll need to be able to work well as part of a team, to communicate clearly with patients and other health care professionals, and to follow procedures with great attention to detail.

## A Look Ahead

There is predicted to be growth in this occupational category over the next few years, due to expansion in the health field.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary for this occupational group in 2013 was \$33,000.

# Pedorthist

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍 👍 👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 5**

**PROFILE**

*As a Pedorthist, you'll be a foot and footwear expert!*

*You'll assess, design, fit and modify custom foot appliances and footwear for patients referred by a physician or other health care professional.*

*You'll assess patients' feet and lower limbs, test their range of motion and stride, and advise them on the footwear that can alleviate their painful or debilitating conditions and provide assistance for abnormalities or limited actions of the lower limbs and feet. You'll inform and educate patients and help people to live healthier, more active lives by helping them to maintain proper foot care.*

## Education & Training

Pedorthists must complete a Bachelor's degree, followed by a one-year diploma in Pedorthics. Information on schools that offer pedorthics programs in Canada can be found on the website of the Pedorthic Association of Canada.

## Find More Info

Pedorthic Association of Canada

→ [www.pedorthic.ca](http://www.pedorthic.ca)

College of Pedorthics of Canada

→ [www.cpedcs.ca](http://www.cpedcs.ca)

## Keys to Success

You'll need good observational and analytical skills, as well as communications and interpersonal skills for dealing with patients. You may need to physically assist patients who have limited range of motion.

## A Look Ahead

With an increased awareness of the benefits of custom foot orthotics and appropriate footwear, and the aging population who want to remain active, the number of patients looking for a foot care specialist is on the rise.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average income for Canadian Certified Pedorthists in 2011 was \$67,000, according to the most recent salary survey conducted by the Pedorthic Association of Canada.

# Perfusionist

EARNINGS: \$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6+

## PROFILE

*As a Cardiovascular Perfusionist, you'll play an important role on the open-heart surgical team. It's your job to use a heart-lung machine to conduct a cardiopulmonary bypass, allowing the surgeons to operate on the patient's heart while it's not beating. You'll closely monitor the patient's blood flow and other vital signs during open-heart surgery and you're also responsible for administering intravenous fluids, blood products and anesthetic drugs. Perfusionists are also experts of other life support equipment such as ventricular assist devices and intra-aortic balloon pumps.*

### Education & Training

BCIT offers a two-year program leading to an Advanced Certificate in Cardiovascular Perfusion credential. Applicants to the program require a Bachelor's degree and experience working as a Respiratory Therapist. The program accepts six students every two years.

### Find More Info

Canadian Society of Clinical Perfusion → [www.cscp.ca](http://www.cscp.ca)

### Keys to Success

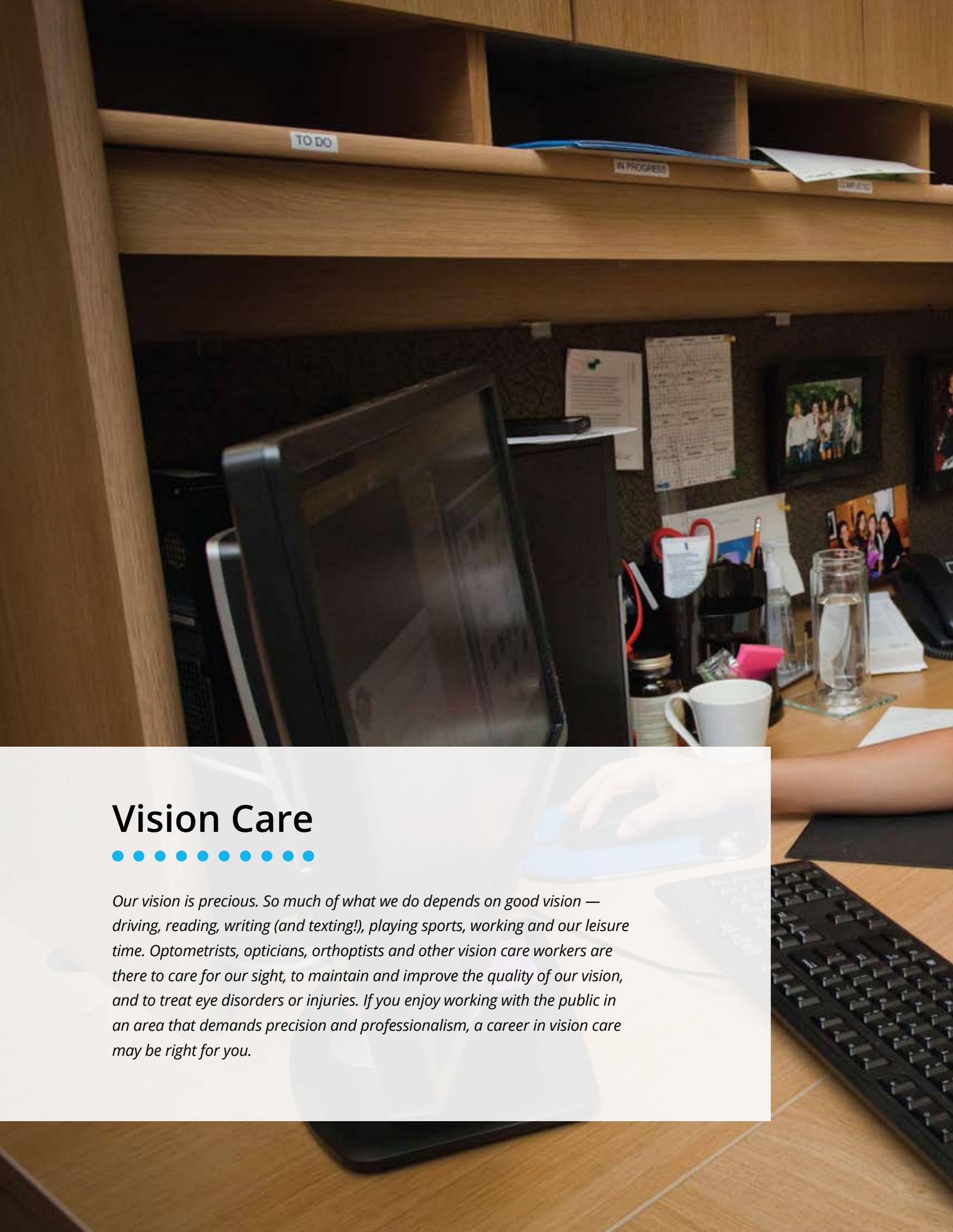
You need to be skilled at teamwork, and able to think quickly and act decisively under stressful conditions. You may need to spend long periods of time on your feet, and you'll need to have a sharp eye for detail and the ability to use high-tech equipment with precision and accuracy.

### A Look Ahead

Employment opportunities for clinical Perfusionists are on the rise, due to the growing numbers of people age 65 and older who are more likely to develop cardiovascular disease and require open-heart surgery. There is currently a shortage of clinical Perfusionists in BC.

### What You Can Expect to Earn

Perfusionists can expect to earn \$40 to \$42 per hour, according to the Working in Canada website.



## Vision Care



*Our vision is precious. So much of what we do depends on good vision — driving, reading, writing (and texting!), playing sports, working and our leisure time. Optometrists, opticians, orthoptists and other vision care workers are there to care for our sight, to maintain and improve the quality of our vision, and to treat eye disorders or injuries. If you enjoy working with the public in an area that demands precision and professionalism, a career in vision care may be right for you.*



# Optometrist

**EARNINGS: \$\$\$**

**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍

**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 7+**

**PROFILE**

*Optometrists are health specialists who examine the eyes to detect signs of injury, disease, abnormality and defects in vision. As an Optometrist, you'll be trained to examine clients' eyes, give advice on visual problems, and prescribe and fit glasses or contact lenses. You'll recommend treatments or visual aids for patients with eye disorders, and you may refer patients with eye disease to specialists as necessary.*

## Education & Training

To become an Optometrist, you'll need to complete a four or five-year Doctor of Optometry program, preceded by two to four years of science-based undergraduate training. You can find information on Canadian universities that offer optometry programs listed on the website of the BC Association of Optometrists.

## Find More Info

BC Association of Optometrists

→ [www.optometrists.bc.ca](http://www.optometrists.bc.ca)

College of Optometrists of BC

→ [www.optometrybc.com](http://www.optometrybc.com)

BC Doctors of Optometry

→ [www.bc.doctorsofoptometry.ca](http://www.bc.doctorsofoptometry.ca)

Canadian Association of

Optometrists → [www.opto.ca](http://www.opto.ca)

You can choose to work in an optometry chain or an independent practice, or in a hospital, clinic, health unit, or other medical facility. If you enjoy running a business, optometry gives you the opportunity to operate your own practice or a franchise.

## Keys to Success

To succeed as an Optometrist, you'll need good manual dexterity, and the ability to work with a high degree of accuracy and attention to detail. Excellent communication skills are vital to enable you to give your patients the information and reassurance they need. Organizational and administrative skills are also useful, particularly if you run your own practice.

## A Look Ahead

There are approximately 2,000 Optometrists in BC today, and there is predicted to be a high rate of growth in the field, with new opportunities becoming available due to the aging population requiring more vision care. Regions with the highest annual average growth will be the Northeast, Cariboo and Kootenays.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary range for Optometrists in BC is between \$66,000 and \$95,000, and may be up to \$165,000. Earnings for Optometrists who run their own practices will vary depending on the location and number of clients. These professionals will have associated overhead costs.

# Optician

**EARNINGS: \$\$**  
**JOB OUTLOOK:** 👍👍  
**YEARS IN SCHOOL: 2**

**PROFILE**

*Opticians are licensed health professionals who are trained to help you see better. Whether you're near-sighted, far-sighted, or have more complex eye health issues, Opticians can advise on the type of lens and frames that will work best for you. After examining a patients' eyes, the optometrist may prescribe corrective lenses. These are ordered, produced, and fitted by a trained Optician.*

## Education & Training

Douglas College offers a two-year program for Dispensing Opticians. They are the only public college in BC offering this program. Graduates must register with the College of Opticians of BC in order to be licensed to practice.

## Find More Info

College of Opticians of BC  
→ [www.cobc.ca](http://www.cobc.ca)  
Opticians Association of Canada — BC Chapter  
→ [www.opticians.bc.ca](http://www.opticians.bc.ca)

## Keys to Success

As an Optician, you'll have many opportunities to work with the public, so a friendly and approachable manner is key, as well as the ability to deal with conflict. You'll spend much of your time standing, and you will need to pay attention to fine detail, and have manual dexterity to manipulate small objects and instruments.

## A Look Ahead

There are currently about 1,100 Opticians in BC. As the population ages, there is expected to be a demand for more Opticians to help with age-related eye diseases.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The average salary for Opticians in BC in 2013 was between \$33,000 and \$44,000. The average hourly wage is \$13.00 to \$23.00.

# Orthoptist

EARNINGS: \$\$\$

JOB OUTLOOK: 👍👍

YEARS IN SCHOOL: 6

PROFILE

*Orthoptists work in hospitals or ophthalmology practices alongside Ophthalmologists (physicians who specialize in disorders of the eye). They assess and treat vision disorders such as squints, double vision and other abnormalities. To diagnosis and treat eye disorders they perform specialized eye tests to measure and assess patients' vision and to detect abnormal eye movement in patients. They may prescribe treatments such as eye exercises or patching regimens. Orthoptists can also work as vision researchers, vision screeners, or in the area of equipment development and sales. Orthoptic training can lead to advancement into managerial positions in the health sector, or into teaching or academic positions.*

## Education & Training

Orthoptists must complete a two-year orthoptic program, following a three or four-year undergraduate program. In BC, the BC Children's Hospital runs an orthoptic teaching program.

See → [www.bcchildrens.ca](http://www.bcchildrens.ca) for more information.

## Find More Info

Canadian Orthoptic Society

→ [www.tcos.ca](http://www.tcos.ca)

Canadian Orthoptic Council

→ [www.orthopticscanada.org](http://www.orthopticscanada.org)

## Keys to Success

To be an Orthoptist, you need to be able to work effectively with people of all ages and abilities. You need good visual acuity, in order to observe patients' eye motions, and you'll need fine motor skills, to use delicate instruments with precision. You should be detail-oriented and well organized, and a love of science doesn't hurt!

## A Look Ahead

This is a small occupational category, with fewer than 300 professionals working in BC today. However, growth can be expected as the population ages and requires assistance with age-related vision disorders. Most Orthoptists work in larger centres with specialist medical facilities.

## What You Can Expect to Earn

The annual average salary for professionals in this occupational group was \$70,000 in 2013.

# Resources



*Post-Secondary Institutions in BC*

*Indigenous Adult & Higher Learning Institutes in BC*

*Financial Aid*

*Online Resources for BC Students*



## Post-Secondary Institutions In BC

An important part of planning for your new career is finding out what kind of education and training you'll need, where courses are offered, how to apply, and what the prerequisites are. The career profiles in this guidebook are a good place to start, but there's much more information out there! Get in touch with the schools below to find out more about the programs they offer that can lead to great careers in health.

Many colleges and universities in BC have First Nations Coordinators, who can provide a wealth of information about courses, financial aid, and support for First Nations and Aboriginal students.

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### **British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT)**

3700 Willingdon Avenue  
Burnaby, BC V5G 3H2  
T: 604-434-1610 / 1-866-434-1610  
F: 604-431-6917  
[www.bcit.ca](http://www.bcit.ca)

#### ***Aboriginal Services***

T: 604-432-8474  
F: 604-431-0724  
aboriginalservices@bcit.ca  
[www.bcit.ca/aboriginal](http://www.bcit.ca/aboriginal)

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### **Camosun College**

3100 Foul Bay Road  
Victoria, BC V8P 5J2  
T: 250-370-3550 / 1-877-554-7555  
[www.camosun.bc.ca](http://www.camosun.bc.ca)

#### ***Aboriginal Education and Community Connection***

T: 250-370-3299  
F: 250-370-3291  
aboriginal@camosun.bc.ca  
[www.camosun.ca/services/fnes](http://www.camosun.ca/services/fnes)

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### **Capilano University**

2055 Purcell Way  
North Vancouver, BC V7J 3H5  
T: 604-986-1911  
F: 604-984-4985  
[www.capilanou.ca](http://www.capilanou.ca)

#### ***Kéxwusm-áyakn (First Nations) Student Centre***

T: 604.984.1762  
[www.capilanou.ca/services/first-nations/](http://www.capilanou.ca/services/first-nations/)

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### **College of New Caledonia**

3330 22nd Avenue  
Prince George, BC V2N 1P8  
T: 250-562-2131 / 1-800-371-8111  
[www.cnc.bc.ca](http://www.cnc.bc.ca)

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### **College of the Rockies**

2700 College Way, Box 8500  
Cranbrook, BC V1C 5L7  
T: 250-489-8243 / 1-877-489-2687  
[www.cotr.bc.ca](http://www.cotr.bc.ca)

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### **Douglas College**

PO Box 2503  
New Westminster, BC V3I 5B2  
T: 604-527-5478  
F: 604-526-5095  
[www.douglas.bc.ca](http://www.douglas.bc.ca)

#### ***Coordinator, Aboriginal Student Services***

T: 604-527-5565  
[www.douglas.bc.ca/services/aboriginal.html](http://www.douglas.bc.ca/services/aboriginal.html)

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### **Justice Institute of British Columbia**

715 McBride Blvd.  
New Westminster, BC V3I 5T4  
T: 604-525-5590 / 1-877-528-5591  
[www.jibc.ca](http://www.jibc.ca)

#### ***Advisor, Aboriginal Student Services***

T: 604-528-5647  
aboriginal@jibc.ca  
[www.jibc.ca/aboriginal](http://www.jibc.ca/aboriginal)

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### **Kwantlen Polytechnic University Surrey Campus**

12666 72nd Avenue  
Surrey, BC V3W 2M8  
T: 604-599-2000  
F: 604-599-2086  
[www.kwantlen.bc.ca](http://www.kwantlen.bc.ca)

#### ***First Nations Education Coordinator***

T: 604-599-2269  
F: 604-599-2171  
<http://www.kpu.ca/aboriginal>

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**Langara College**

100 West 49th Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5Y 2Z6  
T: 604-323-5241  
F: 604-323-5590  
[www.langara.bc.ca](http://www.langara.bc.ca)

**Manager, Services for Aboriginal Students**

T: 604-323-5645  
aboriginal@langara.bc.ca  
[www.langara.bc.ca/student-services/aboriginal-services](http://www.langara.bc.ca/student-services/aboriginal-services)

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**Native Education College**

**Vancouver, BC**  
Phone: 604-873-3772  
Fax: 604-873-9152  
[www.necvancouver.org](http://www.necvancouver.org)

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**Nicola Valley Institute of Technology**

4155 Belshaw Street  
Merritt, BC V1K 1R1  
T: 250-378-3300 / 1-877-682-3300  
F: 250-378-3332  
[www.nvit.bc.ca](http://www.nvit.bc.ca)

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**North Island College**

2300 Ryan Rd.  
Courtenay, BC V9N 8N6  
T: 250-334-5000 / 1-800-715-0914  
F: 250-334-5018  
[www.nic.bc.ca](http://www.nic.bc.ca)

**Coordinator, Aboriginal Education**

T: 250-923-9741  
[www.nic.bc.ca/services/aboriginalservices/](http://www.nic.bc.ca/services/aboriginalservices/)

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**Northern Lights College**

11401 – 8th Street  
Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4G2  
T: 250-782-5251  
F: 250-782-6069  
[www.nlc.bc.ca](http://www.nlc.bc.ca)

**Aboriginal Services Coordinator**

T: 250-784-7544  
[www.nlc.bc.ca/Services/AboriginalServices.aspx](http://www.nlc.bc.ca/Services/AboriginalServices.aspx)

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**Northwest Community College**

5331 McConnell Ave.  
Terrace, BC V8G 4X2  
T: 250 635-6511 / 1-877-277-2288  
F: 250 638-5432  
[www.nwcc.bc.ca](http://www.nwcc.bc.ca)

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**Okanagan College**

1000 KLO Road  
Kelowna, BC v1y 4X8  
T: 250-762-5445 / 1-877-755-2266  
F: 250-862-5466  
[www.okanagan.bc.ca/home.html](http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/home.html)

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**Selkirk College**

301 Frank Beinder Way, Box 1200  
Castlegar, BC V1N 4L3  
T: 1-888-953-1133  
F: 250-365-6568  
[www.selkirk.ca](http://www.selkirk.ca)

**Aboriginal Advisor**

T: 250-365-7292 Ext. 21357  
[selkirk.ca/aboriginal-services](http://selkirk.ca/aboriginal-services)

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**Simon Fraser University**

Burnaby Campus  
8888 University Drive  
Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6  
T: 604-291-3111  
[www.sfu.ca](http://www.sfu.ca)

**Office for Aboriginal Peoples**

T: 778-782-8925  
F: 778-782-5933  
[www.sfu.ca/programs/for-aboriginal-peoples.html](http://www.sfu.ca/programs/for-aboriginal-peoples.html)

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**Thompson Rivers University**

900 McGill Road  
Kamloops, BC V2C 5N3  
T: 250-828-5000  
F: 250-828-5086  
[www.tru.ca](http://www.tru.ca)

**Services for Aboriginal Students**

T: 250-377-6050  
F: 250-377-6077  
[www.tru.ca/staffairs/aboriginal.html](http://www.tru.ca/staffairs/aboriginal.html)

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**University of British Columbia**

1874 East Mall, Rm 1200

Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1

T: 604-822-9836

F: 604-822-6943

[www.askme.ubc.ca](http://www.askme.ubc.ca) / [www.ubc.ca](http://www.ubc.ca)

**Aboriginal Student Recruitment and Advising**

T: 604-822-8840 / 1-877-272-1422

F: 604-822-6943

[you.ubc.ca/ubc-life/support/services-for-aboriginal-students-ok](http://you.ubc.ca/ubc-life/support/services-for-aboriginal-students-ok)

**UBC Institute for Aboriginal Health**

409 - 2194 Health Sciences Mall

Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z3

Education Coordinator:

T: 604-822-2115

F: 604-822-6612

[www.iah.ubc.ca](http://www.iah.ubc.ca)

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**University of Northern British Columbia**

3333 University Way

Prince George, BC V2N 4Z9

T: 250-960-6300

[registrar-info@unbc.ca](mailto:registrar-info@unbc.ca)

[www.unbc.ca](http://www.unbc.ca)

**Director, First Nations Centre**

T: 250-960-5517

[www.unbc.ca/first-nations-centre](http://www.unbc.ca/first-nations-centre)

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**University of the Fraser Valley**

45635 Yale Road

Chilliwack, BC V2P 6T4

T: 604-792-0025 / 1-888-504-7441

F: 604-792-2388

[www.ufv.ca](http://www.ufv.ca)

**Aboriginal Access Services Coordinator**

T: 1-888-504-7441 ext. 2835

F: 604-792-2388

[www.ufv.ca/arc.htm](http://www.ufv.ca/arc.htm)

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**University of Victoria**

PO Box 1700, STN CSC

Victoria, BC V8W 2Y2

T: 250-721-8121

F: 250-721-6225

[www.askuvic.ca](http://www.askuvic.ca)

[www.uvic.ca](http://www.uvic.ca)

**Office of Indigenous Affairs**

T: 250-472-4913

F: 250-472-4952

[inafadm@uvic.ca](mailto:inafadm@uvic.ca)

[www.uvic.ca/inaf](http://www.uvic.ca/inaf)

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**Vancouver Community College**

1155 East Broadway

Vancouver, BC V5T 4V5

T: 604-871-7000 / 1-866-565-7820

F: 604 871-7458

[www.vcc.ca](http://www.vcc.ca)

**Aboriginal academic advisor**

T: 604-871-7000, ext. 5048

F: 604-871-7100

[www.vcc.ca/services/services-for-students/aboriginal-services/](http://www.vcc.ca/services/services-for-students/aboriginal-services/)

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**Vancouver Island University**

900 Fifth Street

Nanaimo, BC V9R 5S5

T: 250-753-3245 / 1-888-920-2221

F: 250-740-6225

[info@viu.ca](mailto:info@viu.ca)

[www.viu.ca](http://www.viu.ca)

**First Nations Student Services**

T: 250-740-6510

[fnss@viu.ca](mailto:fnss@viu.ca)

[www.viu.ca/fnss](http://www.viu.ca/fnss)

## Indigenous Adult & Higher Learning Institutes in BC

The highlighted institutes deliver health education or training programs, or have delivered these programs in the past and may deliver them in the future. Contact the institutes directly for up-to-date information about upcoming courses, academic supports and/or financial aid.

### **Ahousaht Education Authority**

Ahousaht, BC  
T: 1-888-670-9662  
F: 250-670-9660  
[ahousat.ps@gmail.com](mailto:ahousat.ps@gmail.com)  
[www.ahousaht.ca](http://www.ahousaht.ca)

### **a-m'aa-sip Learning Place (Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council)**

Port Alberni, BC  
T: 250-723-1331  
F: 250-723-0463  
Toll-free: 1-877-677-1131  
[psinfo@nuuchahnulth.org](mailto:psinfo@nuuchahnulth.org)

### **Burns Lake Native Development Corporation**

Burns Lake, BC  
T: 250-692-3188  
F: 250-692-7483  
[blndc@bcinfo.com](mailto:blndc@bcinfo.com)  
[www.blndc.ca](http://www.blndc.ca)

### **Cheam Indian Band**

Chilliwack, BC

T: 604-794-7924

### **Chemainus Native College**

Ladysmith, BC  
T: 250-245-3522  
F: 250-245-3012  
[len.merriman@stzuminus.com](mailto:len.merriman@stzuminus.com)  
[www.stzuminus.com/organization/education](http://www.stzuminus.com/organization/education)

### **Community Futures Dev. Corp. of Central Interior First Nations**

Kamloops, BC  
T: 250-828-9833  
F: 250-828-9972  
[www.cfdcofcifn.com](http://www.cfdcofcifn.com)

### **Cowichan Tribes - Quw'utsun Syuw'entst Lelum**

Duncan, BC  
T: 250-715-1022  
F: 250-715-1023  
[www.cowichantribes.com](http://www.cowichantribes.com)

### **En'owkin Centre**

Penticton, BC  
T: 250-493-7181  
F: 250-493-5302  
[enowkin@vip.net](mailto:enowkin@vip.net)  
[www.enowkincentre.ca](http://www.enowkincentre.ca)

### **First Nations Training and Development Centre**

Prince Rupert, BC  
T: 250-627-8822  
F: 250-624-2813

### **Fort Nelson First Nation Community Education**

Fort Nelson, BC  
T: 250-774-7662  
F: 250-774-7655

### **Gitksan Wet'suwet'en Education Society**

Hazelton, BC  
T: 250-842-0216  
F: 250-842-2219  
[receptionist@gwes.ca](mailto:receptionist@gwes.ca)  
[www.gwes.ca](http://www.gwes.ca)

### **Gitwangak Education Society**

Kitwanga, BC  
T: 250-849-5330  
F: 250-849-5327  
Toll-free: 1-800-207-3441  
[gem@gitwangak.ca](mailto:gem@gitwangak.ca)

### **Heiltsuk College**

Bella Bella, BC  
T: 250-957-2141  
F: 250-957-2793  
[joannpg1@gmail.com](mailto:joannpg1@gmail.com)

### **Ittatsoo Learning Centre**

Ucluelet, BC  
T: 250-726-7342  
F: 250-726-7552

### **K'ak'otlats'i School**

Coal Harbour, BC  
T: 250-949-9666  
F: 250-949-9680

### **Kitamaat Village Council / Kitimat Valley Institute**

Kitamaat, BC  
T: 250-639-9199  
F: 250-636-9669  
[www.kvic.ca](http://www.kvic.ca)

### **Kwadacha Dune Tiiy - Aatse Davie School**

Fort Ware, BC  
T: 250-471-2002  
F: 250-471-2080

**Kyah Wiget Education Society** Smithers, BC  
T: 250-847-1477  
F: 250-847-3813

**Lip'althayc Learning Centre (Nuxalk College)** Bella Coola, BC  
T: 250-799-5911  
F: 250-799-5513  
[www.nuxalknation.org](http://www.nuxalknation.org)

**Muskoti Learning Centre - Sauteau First Nations** Moberly Lake, BC  
T: 250-788-9754  
F: 250-788-9347

**Neskonlith Education Centre** Chase, BC  
T: 250-679-2963  
F: 250-679-2968  
[www.saulteau.com/Muskoti](http://www.saulteau.com/Muskoti)

**Nicola Valley Institute of Technology**  
Merrit, BC  
T: 250-378-3300  
F: 250-378-3333  
[www.nvit.ca](http://www.nvit.ca)

**Northern Shuswap Tribal Cncl. - Weekend University Program**  
Williams Lake, BC  
T: 250-392-7361  
F: 250-392-6158  
[www.northernshuswaptribalcouncil.com](http://www.northernshuswaptribalcouncil.com)

**Saanich Adult Education Centre**  
Brentwood Bay, BC  
T: 250-652-2313  
F: 250-652-6920  
[www.wsanecschoolboard.ca](http://www.wsanecschoolboard.ca)

**Seabird College** Agassiz, BC  
T: 604-796-2177  
F: 604-796-3729  
[www.seabirdisland.ca](http://www.seabirdisland.ca)

**Sechelt Indian Band Education Centre**  
Sechelt, BC  
T: 604-885-6016  
F: 604-885-6071  
[www.secheltnation.ca/departments/education](http://www.secheltnation.ca/departments/education)

**Secwepemc Cultural Education Society**  
Kamloops, BC  
T: 250-828-9779  
F: 250-326-1127  
[www.secwepemc.org](http://www.secwepemc.org)

**Snuneymuxw First Nation / House of Learning** Nanaimo, BC  
T: 250-740-2300  
F: 250-753-3492  
[www.snuneymuxw.ca/administration/education](http://www.snuneymuxw.ca/administration/education)

**Sto:lo Nation** Chilliwack, BC  
T: 604-824-2672  
F: 604-858-4741  
[www.stolonation.bc.ca](http://www.stolonation.bc.ca)

**Ted Williams Memorial Learning Centre**  
Burns Lake, BC  
T: 250-692-2329  
F: 250-692-1823  
[www.tru.ca/distance/partnerships/partners/all/abouttedwilliams.html](http://www.tru.ca/distance/partnerships/partners/all/abouttedwilliams.html)

**Tl'azt'en Adult Learning Centre**  
Fort St. James, BC  
T: 250-648-3227  
F: 250-648-3288  
[www.tru.ca/distance/partnerships/partners/all/abouttlazten.html](http://www.tru.ca/distance/partnerships/partners/all/abouttlazten.html)

**Ts'zil Learning Centre (Mount Currie Band Council)** Mount Currie, BC  
T: 604-894-2300  
F: 604-894-2302  
[www.lilwat.ca/community/education/tszil-learning-centre.cfm](http://www.lilwat.ca/community/education/tszil-learning-centre.cfm)

**Tsay Keh Dene** Prince George, BC  
T: 250-993-2100  
F: 250-993-2111

**Wah-meesh Learning Centre - Mowachaht/Muchalaht** Gold River, BC  
T: 250-283-2015  
F: 250-283-9279

**Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a** New Aiyansh, BC  
T: 250-633-2292  
F: 250-633-2463  
[www.wwni.bc.ca](http://www.wwni.bc.ca)

## Financial Aid

You've decided what you'd like to study, applied to a great school, and been accepted. Congratulations! Now, how are you going to pay for it?

It's time to find out about the different kinds of financial aid available for First Nations and Aboriginal students in BC. And don't worry if you're not a "straight A" student — there's support available for nearly everyone with the desire and determination to get an education. So while applying for financial aid can be time-consuming, consider it a good investment in your future!

According to some reports, up to \$15 million in scholarships may go unclaimed each year in Canada, simply because no one has applied. Make it your business to take care of your financial future by getting the support you need to continue your education.

**Scholarships** are awarded for high academic performance, leadership, athletic ability, or community service. Scholarships don't need to be repaid, and are meant to help fund your education in recognition of your hard work and achievement. Occasionally, financial need is also considered.

**Bursaries and Grants** are awarded to students who have financial need, though they may also take into account other areas such as community service. Students in unique situations such as those with children or living with a disability may qualify for specialized bursaries. Bursaries don't need to be repaid.

**Student Loans** are available to post-secondary students in BC through the Canada Student Loan Program, and StudentAid BC. Loans are interest-free while students are enrolled in a program, but must be repaid after graduation. Recent graduates in some professions can have their BC student loans forgiven by agreeing to work at a publicly funded facility in BC and in some cases in an underserved area of BC. Check with the financial aid office at your school for more information.

### **Tips for Finding Financial Aid**

If you haven't already applied for Band sponsorship, visit your band office to find out more information. Other means of financial aid such as student loans and lines of credit should be sought after with the help and guidance of your counsellor, financial aid officer and/or program advisor.

Investing time and effort applying for financial aid can pay off! Remember: If you spend one regular work day on your applications and are awarded a \$1000 bursary, that is equal to making \$142/hour!

Be aware of deadlines for applications. Often the beginning and near the end of the winter semesters are popular times for applications to open and close, however some large ones are available in the summer to help prepare you for the following school year.

Update your resume and make sure that your information is current on all your applications. Each public post-secondary institution now has funding to assist students who have urgent unforeseen financial needs. Emergency funding is available for food, shelter medicine, travel or other unanticipated costs.

### ***New Relationship Trust Foundation***

[www.newrelationshiptrust.ca/funding/for-students](http://www.newrelationshiptrust.ca/funding/for-students)

Scholarship and bursary program administered by the New Relationship Trust Foundation on behalf of the First Nations Health Authority, which provides financial support to current post-secondary students pursuing health related studies.

### **First Nations and Aboriginal Specific Funding**

#### ***Aboriginal Learning Links***

[www.aboriginallearning.ca/resources/1/1](http://www.aboriginallearning.ca/resources/1/1)

Aboriginal Learning Links provides organized links to other websites that can help you find information on Financial Support, Child Care, Housing and Career Planning.

#### ***Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada***

<http://bit.ly/1gnKsjH>

The Aboriginal Bursaries Search Tool is a searchable list of 760 bursaries, scholarships and incentives across Canada.

#### ***Aboriginal Multi-Media Society***

[www.ammsa.com/community-access/scholarships](http://www.ammsa.com/community-access/scholarships)

An extensive list of scholarships and bursaries available to Aboriginal students, maintained by Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA) and Windspeaker.

#### ***Indspire***

[www.indspire.ca/programs/building-brighter-futures](http://www.indspire.ca/programs/building-brighter-futures)

Indspire is a nationally registered non-profit organization devoted to providing the tools necessary for Aboriginal youth to achieve brighter futures.

### **Additional Sources of Financial Aid**

Two other important places to look for scholarship and bursary information and opportunities are 1) your current school and 2) the school that you will be applying/transferring to. Guidance counsellors and financial aid staff can help you apply for a wide range of scholarships and bursaries, ranging from small awards to large entrance scholarships.

Many colleges and universities have financial aid offices with staff available to help you plan and manage your finances. Information about scholarships and bursaries specific to your school or program can often be found on your school's website.

You will be able to find a large variety of scholarships and bursaries that you can begin applying for. In some cases you may be considered for a scholarship automatically and in others you may have to write an essay or attend an interview along with your application. Apply, apply, apply... like life, sometimes all you have to do is ask.

Also check out the following online resources for detailed listings of scholarships and bursaries, as well as other forms of financial aid you may qualify for:

#### ***StudentAid BC***

[www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc)

Information on applying for student loans from the government of BC.

#### ***Education BC, Scholarships and Awards***

[www.bced.gov.bc.ca/awards](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/awards)

Information on government scholarships and awards available to BC students.

#### ***BC Scholarships***

[www.bcscholarships.ca](http://www.bcscholarships.ca)

A listing of scholarships and awards available to US and Canadian students.

#### ***Canada Benefits***

[www.canadabenefits.gc.ca](http://www.canadabenefits.gc.ca)

Find information on a variety of federally-funded awards for students.

#### ***CanLearn***

[www.canlearn.ca/eng/postsec/index.shtml](http://www.canlearn.ca/eng/postsec/index.shtml)

Canada Student Loans and Grants information and instructions for applying.

#### ***Maclean's Scholarship Finder***

[oncampus.macleans.ca/education/scholarship-finder](http://oncampus.macleans.ca/education/scholarship-finder)

A free database of thousands of Canadian scholarships, bursaries and awards.

#### ***Scholarships Canada***

[www.scholarshipscanada.com](http://www.scholarshipscanada.com)

Extensive list of scholarships available to Canadian students, plus tips on developing a successful application, managing your money and more.

#### ***SchoolFinder***

[www.schoolfinder.com/finance](http://www.schoolfinder.com/finance)

Search for scholarships by school, by field of study, or by name.

#### ***Student Awards***

[www.studentawards.com](http://www.studentawards.com)

Information on scholarships, bursaries, student contests, giveaways, and more.

## Online Resources for BC Students

### Career Search Resources

Check out *Career Trek* [www.careertrekbc.ca](http://www.careertrekbc.ca) videos and join Viviana and Brian as they trek over 8200 km across BC and bring 61 featured careers to life. It's the road to your next job!

The *Health Career Directory* [www.healthmatchbc.org/Health-Career-Directory.aspx](http://www.healthmatchbc.org/Health-Career-Directory.aspx) on the Health Match BC website has up-to-date information on many health careers. It's a great tool to explore health career options available to you in BC.

### Education Resources

At *ApplyBC* [www.applybc.ca](http://www.applybc.ca) you'll find online forms to start the application process to any of BC's public post-secondary institutions. Each year ApplyBC helps more than 100,000 prospective students apply to their chosen institution.

*BC Campus* [www.bccampus.ca](http://www.bccampus.ca) is a publicly funded organization that aims to unify BC's post-secondary system and make higher education available to everyone, through the smart use of collaborative information technology services.

*BC Transfer Guide* [www.bctransferguide.ca](http://www.bctransferguide.ca) gives you information about how educational transfers work, what courses you can transfer between institutions, and why students choose the transfer route to reach their educational goals.

*Education Planner* [www.educationplanner.ca](http://www.educationplanner.ca) allows you to compare post-secondary programs in BC. Education Planner helps learners make well-informed decisions about their education and career options.

*MyCreditsBC* [mycreditsbc.ca](http://mycreditsbc.ca) allows students to easily retrieve their unofficial course record from the BC public post-secondary institutions they have attended.

### Aboriginal Student Resources

*Aboriginal Student Transition Handbook* [www.iahla.ca/research/aboriginal-student-transition-handbook](http://www.iahla.ca/research/aboriginal-student-transition-handbook) was created to help answer prospective students' questions and to prepare Aboriginal learners embarking on their post-secondary education. The handbook covers a wide variety of topics including: finding suitable childcare in a urban setting; accessing affordable housing; and meeting people in an unfamiliar city.

*Finding Your Gifts* [www.findingyourgifts.ca](http://www.findingyourgifts.ca) shares stories of the personal experiences of Aboriginal students in post-secondary education. As you plan your own academic journeys, the stories provide insight into when, where and how to access resources; how to develop strategies for success; how to find balance in your life; and how having a strong sense of identity and purpose can carry you through this sometimes challenging pathway to your future.

*The Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology* [www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/student-resources.htm](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/student-resources.htm) website has a page of information specific to the concerns of Aboriginal students, including career resources, education planners, and success stories.

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First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

**First Nations Health Authority**

501-100 Park Royal South

Coast Salish Territory

West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2

[www.fnha.ca](http://www.fnha.ca)

[info@fnha.ca](mailto:info@fnha.ca)