

# The Columbus Dispatch

**“There’s never been a better time to start a healthcare career in central Ohio.”**



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by Raquel Foster is regional manager of talent acquisition at Mount Carmel Health System. Dan Massie is director of professional talent acquisition at Nationwide Children’s Hospital. Tom Poole is director of talent acquisition at the Ohio State University Medical Center. David Rutherford is senior advisor of workforce planning and analytics at OhioHealth.

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As central Ohio’s economy keeps expanding and more people move to the area, every part of the local health care industry is also growing to care for these new arrivals.

Collectively, our four hospital systems – Mount Carmel Health System, Nationwide Children’s Hospital, Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center and OhioHealth – have nearly 6,500 open positions. On top of that, at least 6,000 new jobs will be added over the next few years as our hospitals expand to meet growing demand. As a result, every qualified student who’s now in a vocational school or a 1-, 2- or 4-year post-high school training program in a health care related field is well positioned for an immediate job here when they graduate.

We will need staff in direct patient care roles as well as for administrative jobs, like information technology and finance, and in trades such as plumbing, housekeeping, food service, warehousing and HVAC.

Normally, our hospitals compete with one another to hire the best and brightest talent. But we see the growing need to attract more health professionals and to encourage more young people to choose health care careers. None of us can do that alone.

### **Students perform virtual surgery, inflate animal lungs**

In that vein, we have created the Healthcare Career Collaborative of Central Ohio. Led by Aspyr Workforce Innovation, our hospitals have pooled \$100,000 in funds and received a \$200,000 matching grant from the state of Ohio to grow our local health care workforce.

With the money, we hosted our first large-scale hands-on career awareness event for high school and vocational school students in March. It was a huge success, with more than 1,100 participants from across Ohio. These students experienced hands-on activities such as performing virtual reality surgery, cauterizing orange rinds and inflating animal lungs. They talked to health care professionals and representatives from schools and training programs that teach those skills. We look forward to hosting the event again this winter of 2025.

Along with this large event, each of our hospital systems participates in high school career fairs around the region and regularly hosts career days at our care locations. We provide internships in a variety of clinical and business roles, and we offer entry-level jobs to provide immediate experience to young adults, starting at age 16.

Our collaborative has also created the website [healthcarecareersohio.org](http://healthcarecareersohio.org) with useful information for those who want to learn more about health care job opportunities.

The site highlights jobs available, salaries and area schools offering training for them. It also lists the five health care jobs in highest demand in central Ohio and outlines how quickly the necessary training will allow someone to step into one of these roles.

Health care careers are well-paying and well-respected in our community. They can also be stepping stones to even higher-paying jobs.

All four hospital systems offer free advancement programs. We often will pay for certification training and college tuition to improve and expand your skills. It's quite common for early career hospital workers to get their foot in the door with an entry-level position, then let their employer pay for the rest of their education.

Is a health care career right for you or someone you know? Health care professionals are curious and empathetic problem solvers. They embrace new technology and enjoy team environments where they can make a difference in other people's lives.

If this sounds like the right work environment for you or a person you know, take the first step by exploring the careers described on the website. Connect with our hospital systems so you can talk to people who serve in these roles every day.