

Occupational Earnings of Full-time Healthcare Workers in Civilian Hospitals, 2008

by Elizabeth Dietz
Bureau of Labor Statistics

Originally Posted: February 24, 2010

This article uses National Compensation Survey data to compare earnings among full-time healthcare workers in civilian hospitals with those in the civilian sector as a whole; it also compares earnings of hospital healthcare workers by work level. The findings show that there are significant differences in hourly earnings by work level for many of the healthcare occupations examined in this study.

U.S. hospitals¹ employ about 5.8 million workers² in a complex work environment, providing intensive medical care to treat acute illnesses or injuries for about 35 million patients annually.³ In 2008, hospitals took in revenues of \$1.7 trillion.⁴ Considering the size of the hospital industry in the United States and the projected employment growth of healthcare occupations over the next decade,⁵ an analysis of current wages of hospital healthcare workers is timely. This article uses the 2008 [National Compensation Survey \(NCS\)](#) earnings estimates to discuss earnings differences between full-time workers in civilian hospitals and those in the civilian sector as a whole.⁶ Then, the article analyzes the earnings of full-time civilian hospital healthcare workers by occupation and work level. The article finds that there are significant differences in hourly earnings by work level for many of the healthcare occupations studied.

U.S. hospitals employ workers in a wide variety of occupations that are found in other industries, including such occupations as computer support specialists, human resources managers, accountants and auditors, and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance workers; hospitals also employ workers, in occupations specific to the medical field, such as medical and clinical laboratory technologists, radiation therapists, and diagnostic medical sonographers. Within many of the healthcare occupations, there is a wide range of skills required and differences in on-the-job duties and responsibilities among workers. Also, workers may work full time or part time and be unionized, and there may be institutional differences in the types of jobs offered and pay practices between private industry and State and local government employers. Occupational earnings reflect these factors. Furthermore, earnings are only part of the total compensation of workers; benefits represent about 32 percent of total compensation costs in private hospitals and about 35 percent of such costs in State and local government hospitals.⁷ The value of the benefits package offered may affect the wages workers are willing to accept.

The National Compensation Survey (NCS), which provides comprehensive measures of occupational earnings, compensation cost trends, the incidence of benefits, and benefit plan provisions, publishes a national annual bulletin on the occupational earnings of civilian⁸ workers--defined by the NCS as those who work in private industry and in State and local government establishments. The NCS has published national data on the occupational earnings of hospital workers annually since the 2006 survey year.⁹ The most recent data, for the 2008 survey year, include hourly earnings estimates for all workers, full-time workers, and part-time workers who are employed by hospitals in the civilian sector as a whole, those in private industry, and those in State and local government, by work level.¹⁰ Relative standard errors are available for each estimate.¹¹

Earnings Of Full-time Civilian Healthcare Workers: Hospitals And All Civilian Industries

Full-time healthcare practitioners and technical occupations--professions such as physicians and surgeons, registered nurses, medical technologists and technicians, and therapists--are found throughout the civilian sector, most commonly in hospitals, ambulatory care centers, doctors offices, community centers, schools, nursing homes, and health units in business establishments. As table 1 shows, healthcare practitioners and technical workers in hospitals earned an average of \$29.07 per hour, while those in the civilian sector as a whole earned \$30.23 per hour.

Table 1. Mean hourly earnings for selected healthcare occupations, full-time workers, civilian sector and civilian hospitals, 2008

Occupation	All industries	Hospitals only
Healthcare practitioner and technical occupations	\$30.23	\$29.07
Dentists	63.24	(-)
Dentists, general	61.81	(-)
Dietitians and nutritionists	23.48	26.09
Optometrists	54.01	(-)
Pharmacists	51.54	50.45
Physicians and surgeons	76.46	46.99
Anesthesiologists	108.49	(-)
Family and general practitioners	77.95	60.00
Internists, general	74.16	30.89
Pediatricians, general	53.51	69.89
Psychiatrists	74.83	76.58
Surgeons	86.23	(-)
Physician assistants	42.58	41.43
Registered nurses	31.54	31.93
Therapists	31.11	28.57
Audiologists	33.19	(-)
Occupational therapists	34.26	32.19
Physical therapists	33.74	32.88
Radiation therapists	39.99	35.37
Recreational therapists	18.76	19.80
Respiratory therapists	24.96	25.21
Speech-language pathologists	35.01	31.02
Veterinarians	43.30	(-)
Clinical laboratory technologists and technicians	20.43	20.99
Medical and clinical laboratory technologists	24.55	25.30
Medical and clinical laboratory technicians	17.50	17.39
Dental hygienists	31.32	(-)
Diagnostic related technologists and technicians	27.39	26.32
Cardiovascular technologists and technicians	26.50	26.05
Diagnostic medical sonographers	32.17	33.83
Nuclear medicine technologists	36.32	34.20
Radiologic technologists and technicians	26.01	25.28
Emergency medical technicians and paramedics	15.74	20.11
Health diagnosing and treating practitioner support technicians	16.67	17.53
Dietetic technicians	11.05	(-)

A dash (-) indicates that no statistically reliable or otherwise publishable estimate is available for the occupation.

Source: *National Compensation Survey: Occupational Earnings in the United States, 2008*, table 3, "Full-time civilian workers: Mean and median hourly, weekly, and annual earnings and mean weekly and annual hours;" and table 34, "Civilian full-time workers in hospitals: Mean and median hourly, weekly, and annual earnings and mean weekly and annual hours;" on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ncswage2008.htm>.

Occupation	All industries	Hospitals only
Pharmacy technicians	14.89	15.38
Psychiatric technicians	16.89	16.76
Respiratory therapy technicians	22.53	22.52
Surgical technologists	19.32	18.99
Veterinary technologists and technicians	14.32	(-)
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses	19.04	18.45
Medical records and health information technicians	16.48	17.73
Opticians, dispensing	18.14	(-)
Miscellaneous health technologists and technicians	18.50	19.39
Occupational health and safety specialists and technicians	26.99	(-)
Occupational health and safety specialists	26.75	(-)
Miscellaneous healthcare practitioner and technical workers	20.27	22.17
Athletic trainers	18.43	(-)
Healthcare support occupations	12.90	13.34
Nursing, psychiatric, and home health aides	11.53	12.77
Home health aides	10.24	12.20
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	11.71	12.68
Psychiatric aides	12.55	13.32
Occupational therapist assistants and aides	18.73	19.40
Occupational therapist assistants	22.05	19.75
Occupational therapist aides	12.65	(-)
Physical therapist assistants and aides	18.49	15.78
Physical therapist assistants	24.21	19.70
Physical therapist aides	11.88	12.69
Massage therapists	20.03	(-)
Miscellaneous healthcare support occupations	14.45	14.55
Dental assistants	17.24	(-)
Medical assistants	13.70	14.42
Medical equipment preparers	14.80	15.81
Medical transcriptionists	15.04	14.91
Pharmacy aides	11.99	12.02
Veterinary assistants and laboratory animal caretakers	12.56	(-)

A dash (-) indicates that no statistically reliable or otherwise publishable estimate is available for the occupation.

Source: *National Compensation Survey: Occupational Earnings in the United States, 2008*, table 3, "Full-time civilian workers: Mean and median hourly, weekly, and annual earnings and mean weekly and annual hours;" and table 34, "Civilian full-time workers in hospitals: Mean and median hourly, weekly, and annual earnings and mean weekly and annual hours;" on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ncswage2008.htm>.

Full-time physicians and surgeons as a group earned an average of \$76.46 per hour in the civilian economy as a whole. By contrast, full-time physicians and surgeons in hospitals earned an average of \$46.99 per hour, with a median of only \$27.56. These seemingly incongruous findings merit a closer look at the data.

Earnings Of Full-time Physicians And Surgeons And Registered Nurses, In Hospitals

NCS raw data on physicians and surgeons' full-time earnings in hospitals were clustered in two areas--at about \$24 per hour and \$86 per hour--rather than spread in a normal (centralized) distribution around the mean. What is a likely reason for this? In civilian hospitals, the average full-time hourly earnings of general internists was \$30.89 per hour--significantly lower than for general internists in the civilian sector as a whole (\$74.16). The relatively low earnings of full-time general internists employed in civilian hospitals are due in part to the fact that this occupation is heavily populated by residents--medical doctors in their first year of clinical practice, who are working towards a State licensure, or those working towards certification in a medical specialty.¹² Residents typically work long hours compared with other full-time hospital physicians and surgeons. The number of hours worked by hospital residents is discussed more in the section of this article on *work levels*.

The Nations 2,542,760 *registered nurses*,¹³ represent the largest healthcare occupation--more than a third of all healthcare professionals.¹⁴ About 60 percent of registered nurses work in hospitals.¹⁵ Registered nurses who work full time in hospitals earned \$31.93 per hour--not significantly different than the average earned by their counterparts the civilian economy as a whole (\$31.54). Like physicians and surgeons, registered nurses are not a homogenous group in terms of their work environment, duties and responsibilities, and the skills and formal education they are required to have and use on the job.¹⁶ Considering the complexity of the hospital environment, richer data can provide more useful information on the earnings of healthcare workers. The NCS provides these data.

Earnings By Work Level Among Full-time Healthcare Workers In Civilian Hospitals

The National Compensation Survey evaluates each surveyed job for *work level*, which is a classification of duties and responsibilities performed by the worker.¹⁷ Work levels are used in pay-grade systems to determine wages and salaries--typically, the higher the work level, the higher the pay grade.¹⁸ As a worker attains more experience on the job or receives additional training or education, the worker can take on greater responsibilities and increase the complexity or difficulty of duties performed on the job--in turn, he or she may be evaluated at a higher work level.

In the NCS, occupations are evaluated for work levels 1 through 15. In the civilian sector, occupations such as chief executives are typically found at the highest work levels; elementary and middle school teachers and paralegals and legal assistants are generally in the mid-range; and waiters and waitresses, crossing guards, and taxi drivers and chauffeurs are at the lowest work levels. Some occupations are found in a wide range of work levels. For example, accountants and auditors worked at levels 5 through 13, and engineers worked at levels 5 through 15.

For the 2008 data on civilian hospital healthcare workers, there was no occupation with publishable estimates above level 13, and no occupation covered all 13 levels. The distribution of occupational estimates by level in table 2 shows that there is generally a correlation of earnings with work level--the higher the work level, the higher the hourly earnings. Many occupations encompass a range of duties and responsibilities, and earnings tend to reflect this. In this sense, earnings data by occupational work level offer more information than occupational earnings data alone.

Table 2. Mean hourly earnings of selected occupations, by work level, full-time, civilian hospital healthcare workers, 2008

Occupation	All levels	Work level												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Healthcare practitioner and technical occupations	\$29.07	(-)	(-)	\$12.89	\$15.37	\$18.73	\$21.66	\$25.53	\$29.99	\$31.83	\$40.12	\$43.74	\$70.31	\$83.80

A dash (-) indicates that no statistically reliable or otherwise publishable estimate is available for the occupation.

Source: *National Compensation Survey: Occupational Earnings in the United States, 2008*, table 34, "Civilian full-time workers in hospitals: Mean and median hourly, weekly, and annual earnings and mean weekly and annual hours" on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ncswage2008.htm>.

Occupation	All levels	Work level														
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
Dietitians and nutritionists	26.09	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	25.06	(-)	26.34	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Pharmacists	50.45	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	49.73	49.66	50.81	(-)	(-)
Physicians and surgeons	46.99	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	21.84	23.90	27.67	76.08	88.36
Family and general practitioners	60.00	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	90.00
Psychiatrists	76.58	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	75.49	(-)
Registered nurses	31.93	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	24.06	25.86	30.49	31.46	40.25	44.03	(-)	(-)	(-)
Therapists	28.57	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	21.32	23.63	25.04	29.09	33.35	35.87	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Occupational therapists	32.19	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	31.34	32.82	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Physical therapists	32.88	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	32.08	31.21	34.57	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Recreational therapists	19.80	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	19.59	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Respiratory therapists	25.21	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	21.31	24.63	27.10	29.45	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Clinical laboratory technologists and technicians	20.99	(-)	(-)	13.08	15.11	18.79	22.78	24.81	25.18	29.52	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Medical and clinical laboratory technologists	25.30	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	24.27	25.23	25.14	29.52	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Medical and clinical laboratory technicians	17.39	(-)	(-)	13.08	15.19	18.73	22.36	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Diagnostic related technologists and technicians	26.32	(-)	(-)	(-)	14.21	22.52	23.20	27.13	30.02	39.02	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Cardiovascular technologists and technicians	26.05	(-)	(-)	(-)	13.77	23.19	23.21	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Diagnostic medical sonographers	33.83	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	34.33	(-)	37.88	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Radiologic technologists and technicians	25.28	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	21.86	22.99	26.15	29.47	34.74	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Emergency medical technicians and paramedics	20.11	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	18.94	21.55	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Health diagnosing and treating practitioner support technicians	17.53	(-)	(-)	12.38	14.75	17.92	20.98	21.83	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Pharmacy technicians	15.38	(-)	(-)	(-)	13.93	17.62	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Psychiatric technicians	16.76	(-)	(-)	(-)	13.36	16.22	20.53	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Respiratory therapy technicians	22.52	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	21.95	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Surgical technologists	18.99	(-)	(-)	(-)	17.12	18.14	21.09	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses	18.45	(-)	(-)	(-)	16.44	18.01	19.69	20.99	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Medical records and health information technicians	17.73	(-)	(-)	13.79	15.47	17.27	20.12	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Miscellaneous health technologists and technicians	19.39	(-)	(-)	(-)	16.78	18.17	(-)	22.32	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)

A dash (-) indicates that no statistically reliable or otherwise publishable estimate is available for the occupation.

Source: *National Compensation Survey: Occupational Earnings in the United States, 2008*, table 34, "Civilian full-time workers in hospitals: Mean and median hourly, weekly, and annual earnings and mean weekly and annual hours" on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ncswage2008.htm>.

Occupation	All levels	Work level												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Healthcare support occupations	\$ 13.34	\$ 9.91	\$ 11.38	\$ 12.55	\$ 14.13	\$ 15.71	\$ 18.99	\$ 21.41	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Nursing, psychiatric, and home health aides	12.77	9.92	11.21	12.57	14.01	14.10	16.97	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	12.68	9.92	11.16	12.50	14.23	14.62	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Psychiatric aides	13.32	(-)	12.13	13.25	13.18	13.97	16.97	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Occupational therapist assistants and aides	19.40	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	19.31	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Physical therapist assistants and aides	15.78	(-)	(-)	12.22	13.76	18.91	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Physical therapist assistants	19.70	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	18.91	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Physical therapist aides	12.69	(-)	(-)	12.22	12.25	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Miscellaneous healthcare support occupations	14.55	(-)	12.47	12.51	14.38	16.56	19.21	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Medical assistants	14.42	(-)	(-)	11.68	14.77	13.80	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Medical equipment preparers	15.81	(-)	(-)	13.60	15.28	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Medical transcriptionists	14.91	(-)	(-)	(-)	14.24	17.61	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)

A dash (-) indicates that no statistically reliable or otherwise publishable estimate is available for the occupation.

Source: *National Compensation Survey: Occupational Earnings in the United States, 2008*, table 34, "Civilian full-time workers in hospitals: Mean and median hourly, weekly, and annual earnings and mean weekly and annual hours" on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/nsc/nscswage2008.htm>.

The value of earnings data by work level is perhaps best illustrated for the earnings of registered nurses. A person using the title "registered nurse" must be registered in the State in which he or she works and must have a recognized degree in nursing.¹⁹ Advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) include nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives, clinical nurse specialists, and certified registered nurse anesthetists; APRNs hold a post-graduate degree and specialized certification. Greater levels of education make it possible for registered nurses to take on greater on-the-job duties and responsibilities--thus, to work at higher work levels and earn higher pay rates.

Formal training and education aside, more years of experience on the job also makes it possible for registered nurses to assume greater duties and responsibilities. Entry-level registered nurses provide care such as administering prescribed drugs, recording case histories, and taking blood pressure, pulse, and temperature readings. Nurses at higher levels consult with attending physicians to reevaluate medical treatment and may conduct established clinical procedures and provide specialized nursing care--for example, for heart and vascular disease patients. Some nurses may also supervise others on staff to ensure appropriate care for each patient. Certain hospital settings, such as intensive care units, operating and recovery rooms, emergency rooms, childbirth labor and delivery sections, and outpatient units, require specialized knowledge in addition to the formal education required for basic nursing.²⁰

The NCS does not collect demographic data on surveyed workers, such as years of education completed, professional degrees achieved, or years of job experience. However, by assessing the work-level of the job--the actual duties performed and the responsibilities borne by the worker--the earnings estimates by work level take into account the *de facto* results of education, experience, and any other qualities of the worker. Considering all of these factors, it is not surprising that earnings and work levels of registered nurses vary widely. Full-time registered nurses in civilian hospitals earned, on average, \$31.93 per hour, with a range of \$24.06 at level 6 to \$44.03 at level 11.

The average earnings of civilian hospital physicians and surgeons are also made clearer using work-level data. Full-time hospital physicians and surgeons earned an average of \$46.99 per hour, ranging from \$21.84 at level 9 (typically residents) to \$88.36 at level 13 (typically surgeons and specialists). Level-9 hospital physicians and surgeons worked an average of 46.2 hours per week, for weekly earnings of \$1,008. By contrast, level-13 hospital physicians and surgeons worked an average of 40 hours per week, for weekly earnings of \$3,534.

Full-time hospital workers in healthcare support occupations earned an average of \$13.34 per hour, ranging from \$9.91 at level 1 to \$21.41 at level 7. Hourly earnings ranged from \$12.68 per hour for nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants to \$19.70 per hour for physical therapist assistants. Healthcare support occupations generally showed less variation in earnings by work level than healthcare practitioner and technical occupations.

Table 3 lists the hourly earnings of full-time healthcare workers in civilian hospitals at the lowest and highest publishable work levels.²¹ The occupations selected for this table are those in which there was a significant earnings difference between the highest and lowest publishable work levels. This table is included to show that earnings estimates by work level give greater information than earnings estimates by occupation alone.

Table 3. Mean hourly earnings of full-time workers in selected healthcare occupations, highest and lowest publishable work level, civilian hospitals, National Compensation Survey, 2008

Occupation	Lowest level	Highest level
Healthcare practitioner and technical occupations	\$ 12.89 (level 3)	\$ 83.80 (level 13)
Physicians and surgeons	21.84 (level 9)	88.36 (level 13)
Registered nurses	24.06 (level 6)	44.03 (level 11)
Therapists	21.32 (level 5)	35.87 (level 10)
Clinical laboratory technologists and technicians	13.08 (level 3)	29.52 (level 9)
Medical and clinical laboratory technologists	24.27 (level 6)	29.52 (level 9)
Medical and clinical laboratory technicians	13.08 (level 3)	22.36 (level 6)
Diagnostic related technologists and technicians	14.21 (level 4)	39.02 (level 9)
Cardiovascular technologists and technicians	13.77 (level 4)	23.21 (level 6)
Radiologic technologists and technicians	21.86 (level 5)	34.74 (level 9)
Health diagnosing and treating practitioner support technicians	12.38 (level 3)	21.83 (level 7)
Psychiatric technicians	13.36 (level 4)	20.53 (level 6)
Medical records and health information technicians	13.79 (level 3)	20.12 (level 6)
Healthcare support occupations	9.91 (level 1)	21.41 (level 7)
Nursing, psychiatric, and home health aides	9.92 (level 1)	16.97 (level 6)
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	9.92 (level 1)	14.62 (level 5)
Psychiatric aides	12.13 (level 2)	16.97 (level 6)
Physical therapist assistants and aides	12.22 (level 3)	18.91 (level 5)
Miscellaneous healthcare support occupations	12.47 (level 2)	19.21 (level 6)

Source: *National Compensation Survey: Occupational Earnings in the United States, 2008*, table 34, "Civilian full-time workers in hospitals: Mean and median hourly, weekly, and annual earnings and mean weekly and annual hours" on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ncswage2008.htm>.

The release of the 2008 National Compensation Survey occupational earnings data on workers in hospitals is the third annual presentation of such data, which add greater detail to an already rich source of data. Occupational earnings by work level, a measure unique to the NCS, reveals a wide range in earnings for several healthcare occupations in civilian hospitals. Work-level data provide particular insight into the pay of full-time physicians and surgeons and registered nurses employed by civilian hospitals (private and State and local combined). The NCS also provides earnings estimates of workers in private

hospitals and in State and local government hospitals separately, including those who work part time (a topic that warrants further study.)²² BLS plans to release the 2009 NCS national earnings data in a summer 2010 publication.

Elizabeth Dietz

Economist, Division of Compensation Data Analysis and Planning, Office of Compensation and Working Conditions, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Telephone: (202) 691-5177; E-mail: Dietz.Liz@bls.gov.

End Notes

¹ The term *hospitals* is used throughout the article to denote hospital employers within the scope of the National Compensation Survey (NCS). The NCS collects wage data on workers in hospitals defined under NAICS code 622000, which includes general medical and surgical hospitals, psychiatric and substance abuse hospitals, and specialty hospitals. Under the NCS, Federal government, military, and prison hospitals are excluded.

² Hospitals (NAICS code 622000) employed 5,782,200 employees in August 2009, according to the BLS [Current Employment Statistics](#) survey. This figure includes employment in total private hospitals, State government hospitals, and local government hospitals. See [Employment and Earnings](#), November 2009, table B-12, “[Employees on Nonfarm Payrolls by Detailed Industry](#),” pp. 91, 93, on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/opub/ee/empearn200911.pdf>.

³ American Hospital Association, 2008 survey, “[Fast Facts on U.S. Hospitals](#),” Health Forum LLC, 2009, November 11, 2009 update, on the Internet, at <http://www.aha.org/aha/resource-center/Statistics-and-Studies/fast-facts.html>. The American Hospital Association (AHA) defines *community hospitals* as “all nonfederal, short-term general, and other special hospitals. Other special hospitals include obstetrics and gynecology; eye, ear, nose, and throat; rehabilitation; orthopedic; and other individually described specialty services. Community hospitals include academic medical centers or other teaching hospitals if they are nonfederal short-term hospitals. Excluded are hospitals not accessible by the general public, such as prison hospitals or college infirmaries.” AHA 2008 data show that there are 5,010 community hospitals and 447 nonfederal psychiatric hospitals, for a total of 5,457 hospitals that, in general terms, approximate the NCS scope and definition of hospital employers.

⁴ Gross patient revenues, 2008, [American Hospital Directory, Hospital Statistics](#), available on the Internet at http://www.ahd.com/state_statistics.html, September 24, 2009 update. According to this publication, there were 4,037 *nonfederal, short-term, acute care hospitals* in the United States in 2008.

⁵ [Employment Projections, 2008-18](#), USDL-09-1503 (U.S. Department of Labor), December 11, 2009, Occupational Employment, p. 3, on the Internet at: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecopro.pdf>.

⁶ Differences in earnings between healthcare workers in private industry and those in State and local government hospitals, and differences in earnings between full-time and part-time hospital healthcare workers are surely grounds for additional study; however, this article focuses on the earnings of full-time healthcare workers in civilian hospitals.

⁷ [Employee Costs for Employee Compensation, Historical Listing, March 2004-September 2009](#), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, table 8, “State and local government workers, by industry group: employer costs per hours worked for employee compensation and costs as a percentage of total compensation, 2004-2009,” p.69, Hospitals, December 2008; and table 28, “Private industry workers, hospitals by occupational group: Employer costs per hours worked for employee compensation and costs as a percentage of total compensation, 2004-2009,” p.288, December 2008; on the Internet, at <ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/ocwc/ect/eceqqrtn.pdf>.

⁸ The NCS defines civilian sector workers as those employed in State and local government and those in private industry; it excludes agricultural, Federal, military, household, and self-employed workers.

⁹ [National Compensation Survey: Occupational Earnings in the United States, 2006](#), Bulletin 2590 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 2007), on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ncswage2006.htm>. For [NCS national earnings archives](#), see 2009 National Compensation Survey Publications List, on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ncspubs.htm>.

¹⁰ See tables 34, 35, and 36, respectively, of [National Compensation Survey: Occupational Earnings in the United States, 2008](#), Bulletin 2720 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, August 2009), on the Internet, at http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ncswage2008.htm#Wage_Tables.

¹¹ See [relative standard error \(RSE\)](#) table 34 in [National Compensation Survey: Occupational Earnings in the United States, 2008](#), Bulletin 2720 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, August 2009), on the Internet, at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ncswage2008.htm#RSE>. (There are no RSE tables 35 and 36 because the relative standard errors are included in data tables 35 and 36, respectively.)

¹² For more information on medical residency, see [Becoming a Physician](#) on the American Medical Association Web site at <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/education-careers/becoming-physician.shtml>.

¹³ [Occupational Employment Statistics \(OES\)](#) data show that a total of 2,542,760 registered nurses worked in nonfarm establishments throughout the United States in May 2008. See: <http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes291111.htm>.

- 14 Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey data show that in May 2008 there were 7,076,800 employed in healthcare practitioner and technical occupations. See [Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2008](http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes290000.htm): <http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes290000.htm>.
- 15 The May 2008 Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey data show that 1,458,520 registered nurses work in general medical and surgical hospitals (NAICS code 622100); see [Healthcare Practitioner and Technical Occupations](http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/naics4_622100.htm#b29-0000), on the Internet at http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/naics4_622100.htm#b29-0000; 33,100 were employed in psychiatric and substance abuse hospitals (NAICS code 622200); see the page at http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/naics4_622200.htm#b29-0000; and 43,820 in specialty hospitals (NAICS code 622300); see the page at http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/naics4_622300.htm#b29-0000; for a total of 1,535,440 in all hospitals (NAICS code 622000). Registered nurses working in hospitals make up approximately 60 percent of all registered nurses ((1,535,440/2,542,760)*100=60). For more information, see that page at <http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes291111.htm>. There are some differences in the scope of the NCS and the OES, which affect the proportion noted here. See the [technical notes](#) of the May 2008 Occupational Employment Survey annual wage survey at http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes_tec.htm.
- 16 According to SOC code 29-1111 (posted October 21, 2001; 2000 edition of the SOC), registered nurses assess patient health problems and needs, develop and implement nursing care plans, and maintain medical records. Administer nursing care to ill, injured, convalescent, or disabled patients. May advise patients on health maintenance and disease prevention or provide case management. Licensing or registration required. Include advance practice nurses such as: nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse midwives, and certified registered nurse anesthetists. Advanced practice nursing is practiced by registered nurses who have specialized formal, post-basic education and who function in highly autonomous and specialized roles. See Standard Occupational Classification, “[29-1141 Registered Nurses](#),” on the Internet at http://www.bls.gov/soc/soc_291141.htm.
- 17 For detail on job leveling, see [National Compensation Survey: Guide for Evaluating Your Firm's Jobs and Pay](#), (Bureau of Labor Statistics, October 2003), on the Internet, at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/sp/ncbr0004.pdf>.
- 18 See “[Basics of Grade Structures](#),” by David Creelman, 2004, posted on the Internet at <http://www.speedeeo.com/Library/BasicsofSalaryGrades.pdf>.
- 19 To become a registered nurse, an individual must graduate from a State-approved school of nursing--either a 4-year university program, a 2-year associate degree program, or a 3-year diploma program--and pass a State licensing examination called the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). See American Nursing Association, *Nursing World*, “[Nursing Education](#),” on the Internet at <http://www.nursingworld.org/EspeciallyForYou/StudentNurses/Education.aspx> (accessed January 28, 2010).
- 20 see [National Compensation Survey: Guide for Evaluating Your Firm's Jobs and Pay](#), (Bureau of Labor Statistics, October 2003), on the Internet, at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/sp/ncbr0004.pdf>.
- 21 Among occupations with two or more published estimates by work level.
- 22 See tables 34, 35, and 36 in [National Compensation Survey: Occupational Earnings in the United States, 2008](#), Bulletin 2720 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, August 2009), on the Internet, at http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ncswage2008.htm#Wage_Tables.