

TEXAS TALENT EXPERTS REPORT

HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Vital Signs & Preventative Care
June 2023

PREPARED FOR

**Economic development, workforce
development, and industry leaders**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Texas Healthcare Partnership (CTHP), established in early 2018, is a collaborative initiative led by key healthcare industry executives from Baylor Scott & White Health, Ascension Seton, and St. David's HealthCare. Its mission is to sustain and grow the Central Texas healthcare industry while expanding pathways to good jobs for residents. Workforce Solutions Capital Area provides support in coordinating the partnership.

The CTHP addresses the pressing issue of workforce shortages in the healthcare sector, especially in nursing and various entry-level and middle-skill positions. To tackle these challenges, the CTHP focuses on four key areas:

- K-12 initiatives to attract students to healthcare careers;
- Efforts to increase the number of nursing graduates;
- Strategies to address severe workforce shortages; and
- Optimizing clinical placements to enhance training and hiring opportunities.

Local data and employer input underscore the urgency of the initiative, with the healthcare industry exhibiting the third-highest 10-year growth rate among all Austin metro industries. Projections indicate significant growth in healthcare jobs over the next decade, with an estimated 196,000 positions that will need to be filled.

Why it matters: By fostering collaborations between industry and education and investing in innovative training solutions, the CTHP is helping our region meet the growing demand for skilled healthcare professionals.

- **For workforce development:** By connecting data to workforce service delivery, our region can increase residents' access to higher-paying jobs through in-demand career pathways.
- **For economic development:** Businesses and organizations can better understand the local business climate, particularly industry growth and expansion.
- **For industry:** Businesses can better understand the local employment landscape — who's hiring, the competition for talent in fast-growing industries, and where to look for strategies to attract and retain that talent.

GROW YOUR BUSINESS THROUGH TALENT: Workforce Solutions is uniquely positioned to help employers of all industries directly connect with local job seekers and talent. We're collaborative and can tailor services based on your company's needs. [Get started.](#)

PART 1

BACKGROUND

Strengthening the Workforce through Industry Sector Partnerships

Workforce Solutions Capital Area (WFS) regularly analyzes the regional labor market to identify the most in-demand industries and occupations. Armed with these insights, WFS convenes industry sector partnership — a proven and employer-led workforce development strategy — where industry-specific executives within the Austin labor market work together to influence alignment around common solutions with career awareness, training, hiring, and upskilling.

WFS' healthcare industry sector partnership, the [Central Texas Healthcare Partnership](#) (CTHP), was founded in early 2018 under the leadership of three Central Texas healthcare industry leaders: Baylor Scott & White Health, Ascension Seton, and St. David's HealthCare. The mission of the CTHP is to sustain and grow the Central Texas healthcare industry while expanding pathways to good jobs for residents. WFS staff support to assist with the coordination of the partnership.



Ashley King (right), Director of Healthcare Partnerships at Workforce Solutions Capital Area (WFS), moderates a fireside chat with Beth Vaughn of HCA Healthcare Central/West Texas (left) and Jay Huckabee of Ascension Seton (middle) during WFS' June board of directors' meeting.

In June 2023, WFS convened a fireside chat with healthcare leaders of our major hospital systems and active CTHP contributors, including Beth Vaughn, Assistant Vice President of Academic Partnerships at HCA Healthcare Central/West Texas (which includes St. David's HealthCare), and Jay Huckabee, Market Chief HR Executive at Ascension Seton. Key takeaways from the discussion are included in this report.

PART 2

THE NEED

Severe Healthcare Workforce Shortage Areas

Nursing is experiencing the most severe shortage in healthcare, not just in Austin but across the country. Shortages also exist in entry-level roles, including medical assistants, patient care technicians, and certified nurse aides. Middle-skill jobs (requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree, such as an industry certification) experiencing shortages include radiology technicians, surgical technicians, respiratory therapists, and pharmacy technicians.

WFS Fireside Chat: Key Takeaways

- Vaughn noted a current “tremendous inverse” of nurses to St. David’s patient population, with additional shortages for entry-level patient care technicians and pharmacy technicians.
- Although COVID-era nursing demand is stabilizing thanks to factors such as increased nursing program graduates, Ascension’s Huckabee noted that a growing concern is the difficulty retaining these skilled positions. Huckabee also noted that radiation and surgical technicians are two occupations at Ascension where more certified talent is needed.
- Both Vaughn and Huckabee noted that there is not an area of excess talent in any role in their hospitals.
- As Austin grows, the need for healthcare facilities also increases. All of Austin’s major hospital systems — Ascension Seton, St. David’s HealthCare, and Baylor Scott & White — have significant expansion plans underway or new facilities slated to open in the next five years.

HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY EXPANSIONS & RELOCATIONS

Austin Metro, 2022–2023

ESTABLISHMENT	TYPE	JOBs CREATED	LOCATION
Nomie Health	Healthcare delivery support	30 / New	Austin
Texas Children's Hospital	Hospital, acute care	30 / Expanded	Austin
Ascension Seton Edgar B. Davis	Hospital, acute care	66 / Expanded	Luling
Ascension Seton Medical Center	Hospital, acute care	260 / New	Austin
St. David's Kyle	Hospital, acute care	200 / Expanded	Kyle
St. David's Leander	Hospital, acute care	200 / Expanded	Austin
St. David's North Austin Medical Center	Hospital, acute care, and rehab	200 / Expanded	Austin

Sources: Austin Chamber

PART 3

LABOR MARKET INSIGHTS

There is currently a great need for healthcare talent in Austin that will only increase for both clinical and non-clinical roles. WFS' labor market insights below show the projected growth ahead for the healthcare industry.

HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Austin Metro, as of June 2023

EMPLOYMENT	DEMAND	GROWTH
129K Workers in healthcare and social assistance jobs <i>8.2% of the region's workforce</i>	196K Healthcare jobs will need to be filled in the next 10 years <i>27K more compared to 10-year projections made in 2018</i>	No. 3 Highest 10-year growth rate among all industries
ESTABLISHMENTS	UNFILLED JOBS	TRAINING PATHWAYS
7.5K <i>900 more since 2019</i>	2.7K Unfilled job postings for health care and social assistance jobs for the year through June 2023	67 Programs and 15 training providers in Travis County that train individuals for healthcare careers

Sources: JobsEQ, Lightcast, Texas Workforce Commission Eligible Training Providers

PART 4

THE SOLUTION

"We're all competitors, but at the end of the day, we're here for the community and making sure we're taking care of our patients... We have to solve the challenges of healthcare in this community as a team. We're not going to do it individually."

Jay Huckabee
Market Chief HR Executive, Ascension Seton

The CTHP addresses workforce development needs in the Austin region by bringing together industry and education. With CTHP's leadership, employers are becoming increasingly creative with their marketing and recruitment, including the below innovative approaches:

K-12

To fill the local talent pipeline with students interested in a healthcare career, employers are changing policies to hire graduating high school seniors with no prior experience, allowing them to work in the healthcare setting and get hands-on skills in clinical rotations.

K-12 IMPACTS

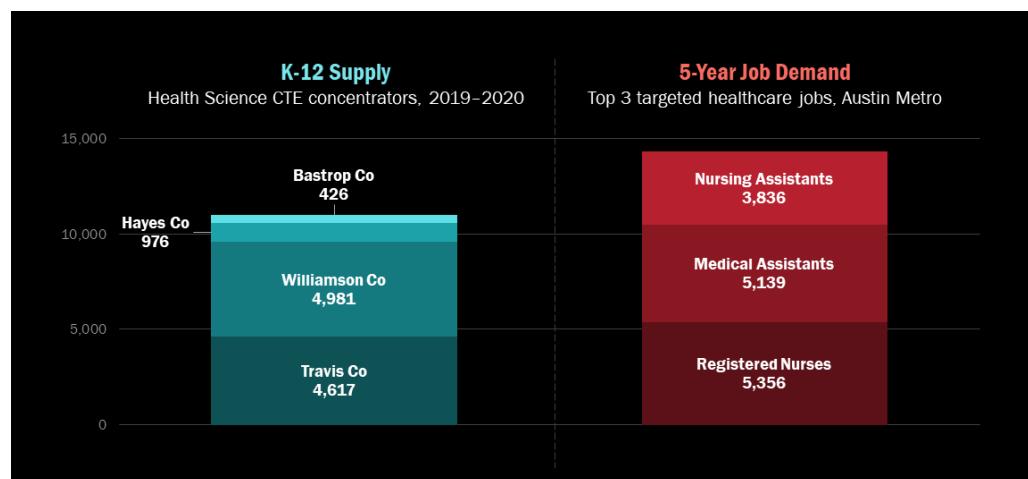
Central Texas Healthcare Partnership, 2022–2023 academic year

340	315	59	5
Student interviews conducted over three hospital interview events organized by CTHP	Clinical observation experiences facilitated	Students accepted in the Annual Nursing Academy, expanding its reach to hold two sessions per year	Speaker Series events hosted, highlighting in-demand healthcare jobs

K-12 TALENT SUPPLY VS. JOB DEMAND

Austin Metro

TAKEAWAY: While the K-12 talent pipeline is a critical solution to fill healthcare gaps, the supply of Health Science CTE concentrators cannot meet the demand for even the projected growth of the top three healthcare occupations.



Sources: JobsEQ, WE CAN TX

Nursing

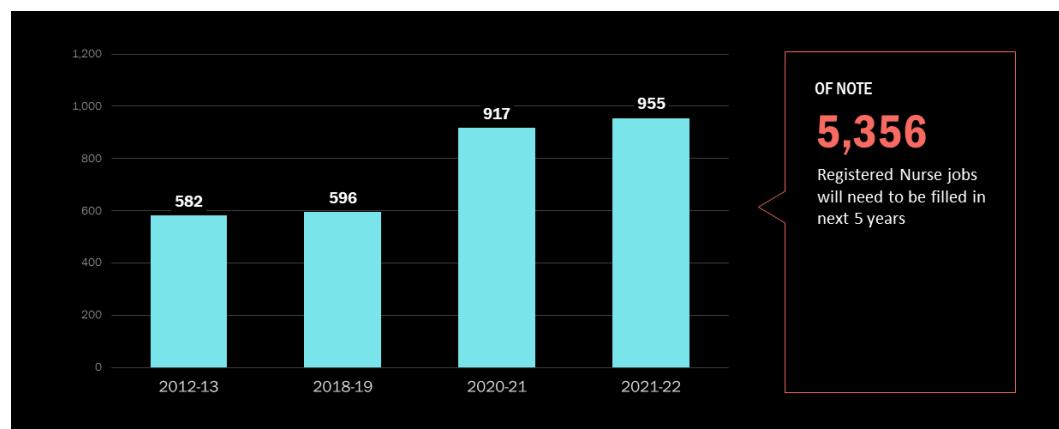
Hospital employers are recruiting nursing students for internships and paying them to fill patient care technicians and other roles while they receive their training. Students can count these work hours towards their clinical hours needed for graduation.

Employers then hire the intern full-time once they complete their training.

NURSING GRADUATES

Austin Metro, 10-Year History

TAKEAWAY: With the CTHP's leadership, Austin has **almost doubled** the number of nursing graduates in the last three years, with a continued rise expected.



Sources: Central Texas Healthcare Partnership, JobsEQ

Severe Shortage Careers

To address workforce gaps and increase graduates, employers are taking advantage of earn-and-learn strategies, securing the skills for in-demand roles and creating career pathways through apprenticeships and on-the-job training.

Apprenticeship is an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway where companies can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, related classroom instruction, and a nationally recognized, portable credential.

WFS CONTINUES TO GROW HEALTHCARE APPRENTICESHIPS to fill the workforce needs in this critical industry. From September 2019 through May 2023, the Austin healthcare industry has enrolled and hired **220** apprentices since beginning apprenticeship expansion for medical assistants, patient care technicians, and MRI technicians. [Learn more.](#)

Clinical Placements

The CTHP has found the region cannot increase admission and graduate numbers without additional clinical placement needs. Working with the local hospitals to maximize opportunities, the CTHP has created rotation-to-hire practices to hire students trained in Austin.

Clinical placements are required hands-on hours that healthcare students need to graduate from their respective programs. Most health science programs require some form of clinical placement to ensure proper training and check off competencies to ensure quality patient care. During their clinical placements, students are exposed to various clinical settings to help them determine their specialty to apply for post-graduation.

CLINICAL PLACEMENT IMPACTS

Central Texas Healthcare Partnership, 2022–2023 academic year

30%

Increase in clinical rotations

62%

Increase in clinical placement training hours

About Workforce Solutions Capital Area (WFS):

WFS is the leadership and governing body for the Austin-Travis County workforce system. We are responsible for the data-driven planning, oversight, and evaluation of workforce development activities in Austin-Travis County. Simply put, we connect local people to the most in-demand industries with quality jobs.

By understanding where local employers see the greatest need for talent, WFS is helping focus our community's workforce development efforts to build the talent pool while addressing affordability and equity concerns through immediate economic advancement opportunities. We are proud to continue researching and sharing labor market information to drive workforce investment where it is needed most.

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