



HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION

WHAT IS A HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATOR?

- ⦿ Medical and health services managers, also called *healthcare executives* or *healthcare administrators*, plan, direct, and coordinate medical and health services. They might manage an entire facility, a specific clinical area or department, or a medical practice for a group of physicians. Medical and health services managers must direct changes that conform to changes in healthcare laws, regulations, and technology.
- ⦿ Medical and health services managers held about 333,000 jobs in 2014. Most medical and health services managers work in offices in healthcare facilities, including hospitals and nursing homes, and group medical practices.
- ⦿ Medical and health services managers typically need at least a bachelor's degree to enter the occupation. However, master's degrees are common and sometimes preferred by employers. Graduate programs often last between 2 and 3 years and may include up to 1 year of supervised administrative experience in a hospital or healthcare consulting setting.

WHY PURSUE A CAREER IN HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION?

- ◉ ***Make a Difference/Social Mission***
Decisions made by healthcare executives can help improve life for hundreds, even thousands of people every day. Healthcare executives have a sense of social mission—they deeply care about the people they work with and serve.
- ◉ ***Career Opportunities***
Healthcare is the largest industry in the U.S., and the second largest employer, with more than 11 million jobs. Virtually all new private sector jobs over the past 5 years came from healthcare.
- ◉ ***Excellent Earning Potential***
Students of healthcare management have excellent earning potential. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, medical and health services managers earned a median annual salary of \$94,500 in 2015. Senior healthcare executives with more experience and achievements can earn \$200,000 or significantly more.
- ◉ ***Career Flexibility***
In addition to more traditional careers in healthcare management, graduates work in many other areas including: pharmaceutical companies, health insurance companies, management consulting, banks and other financial institutions, long-term care facilities, professional societies and state and Federal agencies.
- ◉ ***Visible and Valued Role in the Community***
Healthcare executives typically are highly respected members of their communities. Hospitals and other healthcare organizations are among the largest employers in many communities and their organizations positively impact the health of the populations they serve.

WHAT MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES MANAGERS DO

Medical and health services managers typically do the following:

- ◉ Work to improve efficiency and quality in delivering healthcare services
- ◉ Develop departmental goals and objectives
- ◉ Ensure that the facility in which they work is up to date on and compliant with new laws and regulations
- ◉ Recruit, train, and supervise staff
- ◉ Manage the finances of the facility, such as patient fees and billing
- ◉ Prepare and monitor budgets and spending to ensure departments operate within allocated funds
- ◉ Represent the facility at investor meetings or on governing boards
- ◉ Keep and organize records of the facility's services
- ◉ Communicate with members of the medical staff and department heads

SAMPLE MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES MANAGERS' TITLES

- ◉ ***Nursing home administrators*** manage staff, admissions, finances, and care of the building, as well as care of the residents in nursing homes. All states require licensure for nursing home administrators; licensing requirements vary by state.
- ◉ ***Clinical managers*** oversee a specific department, such as nursing, surgery, or physical therapy, and have responsibilities based on that specialty. Clinical managers set and carry out policies, goals, and procedures for their departments; evaluate the quality of the staff's work; and develop reports and budgets.
- ◉ ***Health information managers*** are responsible for the maintenance and security of all patient records and data. They must stay up to date with evolving information technology, current or proposed laws about health information systems, and trends in managing large amounts of complex data. Health information managers must ensure that databases are complete, accurate, and accessible only to authorized personnel. They also may supervise the work of [medical records and health information technicians](#).
- ◉ ***Assistant administrators*** work under the top administrator in larger facilities and often handle daily decisions. Assistants might direct activities in clinical areas, such as nursing, surgery, therapy, medical records, or health information. They also handle administrative tasks, such as ensuring that their department has the necessary supplies and that equipment is operational and up to date.

HOW TO BECOME A MEDICAL OR HEALTH SERVICES MANAGER

Education

- Prospective medical and health services managers typically have a degree in health administration, health management, nursing, public health administration, or business administration. Degrees that focus on both management and healthcare combine business-related courses with courses in medical terminology, hospital organization, and health information systems.

Work Experience in a Related Occupation

- Many employers require prospective medical and health services managers to have some work experience in either an administrative or a clinical role in a hospital or other healthcare facility. For example, nursing home administrators usually have years of experience working as a [registered nurse](#).

Licenses, Certifications, and Registrations

- All states require licensure for nursing home administrators; requirements vary by state. In most states, these administrators must have a bachelor's degree, complete a state-approved training program, and pass a national licensing exam. Some states also require applicants to pass a state-specific exam; others may require applicants to have previous work experience in a healthcare facility. Some states also require licensure for administrators in assisted-living facilities. For information on specific state-by-state licensure requirements, visit the [National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards](#).

IMPORTANT QUALITIES TO HAVE IN HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION

- ◉ **Analytical skills.** Medical and health services managers must understand and follow current regulations and adapt to new laws.
- ◉ **Communication skills.** These managers must effectively communicate policies and procedures with other health professionals and ensure their staff's compliance with new laws and regulations.
- ◉ **Detail oriented.** Medical and health services managers must pay attention to detail. They might be required to organize and maintain scheduling and billing information for very large facilities, such as hospitals.
- ◉ **Interpersonal skills.** Medical and health services managers discuss staffing problems and patient information with other professionals, such as physicians and health insurance representatives.
- ◉ **Leadership skills.** These managers are often responsible for finding creative solutions to staffing or other administrative problems. They must hire, train, motivate, and lead staff.
- ◉ **Technical skills.** Medical and health services managers must stay up to date with advances in healthcare technology and data analytics. For example, they may need to use coding and classification software and electronic health record (EHR) systems as their facility adopts these technologies.

PREPARING FOR GRADUATE STUDY

- ◉ Some training in statistics and economics is often recommended, but most programs will not require a specific degree or combination of prerequisites.
- ◉ The GRE is the most common entrance exam. Programs may also accept the GMAT.
- ◉ A resume, statement of purpose (personal statement), and 2-3 letters of recommendation are common requirements.
- ◉ Some programs may require prior work experience in the public health system or healthcare industry.
- ◉ The application may be submitted to the school directly or through the common application service, [HAMPCAS](#). HAMPCAS opens in September for students wishing to apply for the subsequent academic year.

TYPICAL PROGRAM OF STUDY

The basic curriculum for a healthcare management degree addresses three principal areas:

- ◉ *Study of management theory, concepts, and skills.* Broadly defined, all programs are expected to teach students leadership, financial management, economics, law, organizational behavior, quantitative methods, and planning.
- ◉ *Study of the healthcare industry* including epidemiology, health and human behavior, and medical care organization.
- ◉ *Demonstration of integration of course material* through application of management concepts to the healthcare industry in a major project, paper, or exam.
- ◉ Learn more about the knowledge you will gain while pursuing a healthcare management degree in the [AUPHA Body of Knowledge](https://www.aupha.org/resourcecenter/futurestudents).

CORE CURRICULUM

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN - ANN ARBOR

Students working toward the M.H.S.A. degree take a set of courses designed to provide an in-depth education in the issues, skills, and competencies necessary for leaders in the field of health management and policy.

- Health Services Systems
- Professional Development
- Healthcare Accounting
- Health Policy
- Law or Political Science
- Organizational Theory / Management
- Economics of HMP I
- Economics of HMP II
- Biostatistics
- Quantitative Methods
- Epidemiology
- Principles of Environmental Health Sciences
- Integrative Capstone Course

In addition to the core curriculum, students must take one or two additional required courses depending upon their degree choice.

In addition, students can tailor their elective course choices to their interests and specific career goals. Please view the sample curricula for different degrees and career paths.

SCHOOLS WITH HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

- ◉ [University of Michigan - Ann Arbor](#) - Master of Health Services Administration
- ◉ [Columbia University](#) - Master of Health Administration
- ◉ [Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai](#) - MS in Health Care Delivery Leadership
- ◉ [U.S. Army - Baylor University](#) - Master of Health Administration / MBA
- ◉ [Cornell University](#) - Sloan Program in Health Administration
- ◉ [Johns Hopkins University](#) - Master of Health Administration



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA) Resources for Future Students: <http://www.aupha.org/resourcecenter/futurestudents>
- Healthcare Administration, Management & Policy Centralized Application Service: <http://www.hampcas.org/>
- Find a Health Administration program:
<http://www.aupha.org/resourcecenter/futurestudents/find-a-program>
- Health Administrator Career Profiles:
<http://www.healthmanagementcareers.org/careers.cfm>
- [Healthcare Executives Network](#)

