

# Career Pathways in Health Care: Stacking Certificates and Curriculum

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# NN2

- National Network of Health Career Programs in Two-Year Colleges
- [www.NN2.org](http://www.NN2.org)

# Program Objectives

- Differentiate between stand-alone certificates, stackable certificates, bridge programs and post-graduate programs.
- Address the challenges and issues related to implementing new certificate programs.
- Extrapolate new program opportunities with multiple entry and exit points which permit students to enter and advance within a career pathway as their circumstances allow.

# Introduction

- Based upon a Winter 2009 survey of community college presidents (n=120), Kenneth Green reported the following key findings:
  - Enrollments are WAY Up
  - Budgets are down; mid-year cuts common
  - Many campuses experiencing a hiring freeze
  - Online enrollments growing dramatically
  - Presidents believe stimulus plan will aid their colleges and communities
    - 2009 Innovations Conference, March 2009

# Background

- While most community colleges are experiencing a tremendous surge in enrollment in credit courses and programs, demand for short-term non-credit and credit training and certificate programs is soaring.

# Data

- Of the 30 occupations for which the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is predicting the largest growth (2006-2016), 22 do not require a degree.
  - November 2007 Monthly Labor Review, Table 3

	<i>Numeric change (thousands)</i>	<i>Percent change</i>
Professional and related occupations.....	4,970	16.7
Health care practitioners and technical occupations.....	1,423	19.8
Education, training, and library.....	1,265	14.0
Computer and mathematical science.....	822	24.8
Community and social services.....	541	22.7
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	305	11.4
Architecture and engineering.....	268	10.4
Life, physical, and social science.....	203	14.4
Legal.....	145	11.8

Health care practitioners and technical occupations are projected to grow almost twice as fast as the average for all occupations.

Source: <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2007/11/art5full.pdf>

	<i>Numeric change (in thousands)</i>	<i>Percent change</i>
Service occupations.....	4,830	16.7
Food preparation and serving related.....	1,436	12.7
Personal care and service.....	1,094	22.0
Health care support.....	997	26.8
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.....	850	14.8
Protective service.....	453	14.3

Source: <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2007/11/art5full.pdf>

# Data

- More students than ever are skipping the degree, at least for the present, and looking for employment via community colleges' credit and noncredit courses and certificate programs.

# Stand-Alone Programs

- While these educational offerings are avenues to immediate employment, many of them can provide pathways to additional certifications and ultimately degrees to advance students in their career choices.

# Stand-Alone

- CNA/STNA
- Home Health Aides
- HIT:  
Coding/Transcription/Reimbursement
- Pharmacy Technicians
- Phlebotomy Technicians
- Medical Assistants



# Certified Nurse Assistant Program

- Short term (90 hours)
- Relatively inexpensive to offer
- While certain standards must be met to meet state regulations, no national accreditation is mandated.
- Credentials of faculty are less rigorous than for those teaching in an ADN Program.
- Jobs are plentiful with a projected 265,000 openings (BLS, 2007).

# Home Health Aides

- Duties include working with patients with mental health issues, dementia, developmental and/or physical disabilities, nutrition and meal preparation and safety and injury prevention.
- Employment numbers will jump from 787,000 jobs in 2006 to 1,171,000 in 2016, a 48.7% increase (Dohm and Shniper 2007).

# Health Information Technology (HIT)

- As the complexity of health care continues, other specific areas within this field have emerged as sources for employment with no degree needed:
  - Coding
  - Reimbursement
  - Transcription

# HIT

- Employment in this area is projected to increase by 18% with 30,000 workers needed by 2016 (BLS, 2008).
- Other Points to Consider:
  - Stimulus packages related to the electronic medical record
  - Online platforms

# Pharmacy Technicians

- A 32% increase in the number of pharmacy technicians is anticipated, raising employment needs from 285,000 in 2006 to 376,000 in 2016.
- Changes in state regulations for certification
- Can be short-term or multi-course certificate

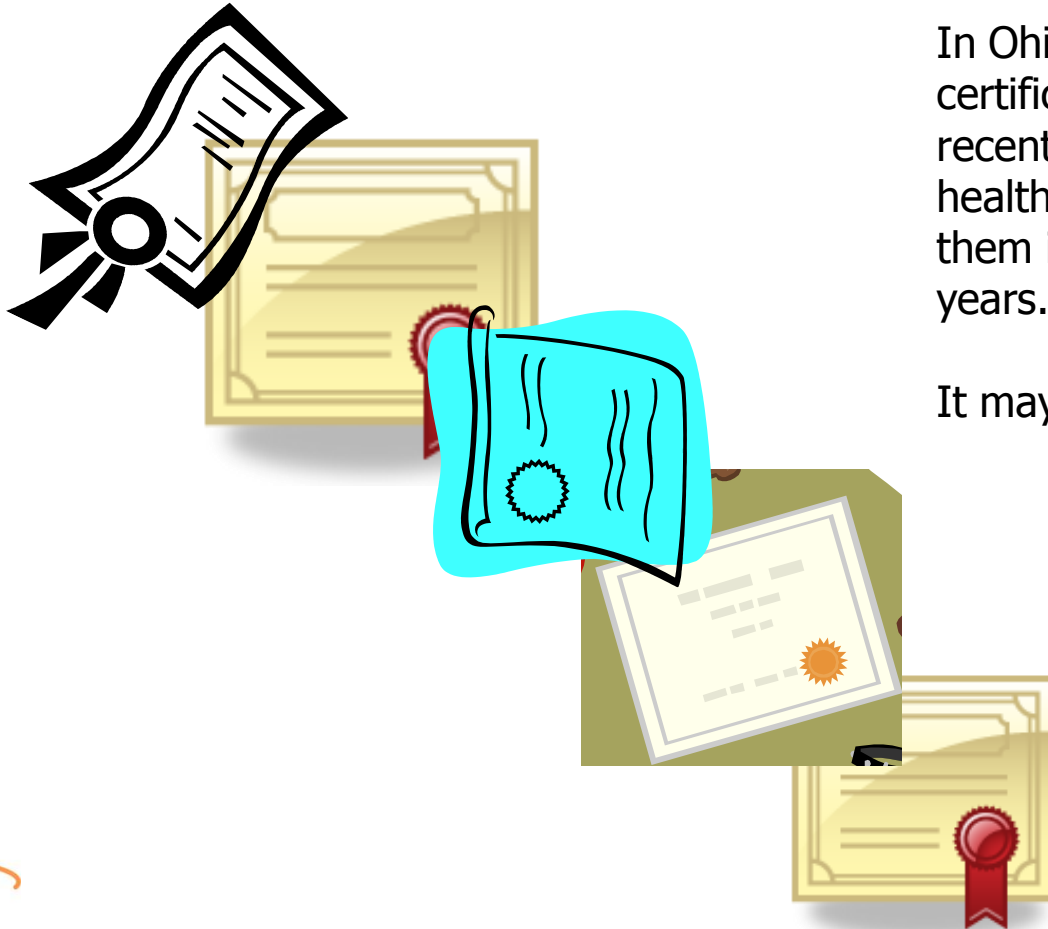
# Phlebotomy Technicians

- This program can lead to a beginning career as a phlebotomist, and it can enhance employment opportunities for EMTs, Medical Assistants and nursing students.
- 170 hours of a combination of lecture/lab/clinical experiences will lead to eligibility for national certification through ASCP.

# Medical Assistants

- One of the fastest growing occupations with 148,000 new job openings or a 35% increase from 2006-2016 (BLS, 2007).
- Other opportunities to offer short-term programs to MAs in specialized areas, such as ophthalmic and podiatric medical assisting.

# Stackable certificates/bridge programs



In Ohio, stackable certificates are defined by recent legislation, although health programs have had them in effect for many years.

It may differ in your state.

## What Are Stackable Certificates?

Ohio is developing a system of stackable certificates to provide a clear and accessible path for individuals seeking to advance their education and prepare themselves for satisfying and productive careers. Stackable certificates will certify that an individual has specific skills needed for the workplace and for postsecondary education.

In addition, the system of stackable certificates will connect pre-college academic work to credit-bearing career and technical coursework that leads ultimately to a college degree. Individuals will be able to earn a certificate and then receive college credit for that certificate, helping the individual complete a college degree.

Under current plans, an individual will be able to earn pre-college and college-level certificates.

- Pre-College Certificates
  - Basic Skills Certificate
  - Advanced Skills Certificate
  - College- and Work-Ready Skills Certificate
- College-Level Certificates certifying technical and occupational skills in occupations in demand statewide and in different regions of the state

Under the current plan, of the pre-college certificates, only the College- and Work-Ready Skills Certificate may lead to college credit. Individuals who earn the College- and Work-Ready Certificates may receive college credit provided they enroll in postsecondary education. An individual who earns any college-level certificate will receive college credit.

# Stackable Certificates in Ohio

- “House Bill 699, 126th General Assembly, directed the chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to create a system of pre-college stackable certificates and college-level certificates and set requirements for the system.”

# Stackable/bridge

- **Multicompetency Health (stackable)**
- **LPN to RN (bridge)**
- **Coding programs (stackable and bridge)**
- **Transcription Programs (stackable and bridge)**
- **Massage therapy (stackable and bridge)**
- **Polysomnography (stackable)**

# One example of an approach...

# MULTI-COMPETENCY HEALTH TECHNICIAN (MCH)

## Certificates in MCH:

STNA  
CNA  
Home Health Aide  
Medical Assistant  
EKG Basic/EKG Advanced  
Electroneuordiagnostic Technologist  
Orthopedic Technologist  
Medication Aide  
EMT Basic  
Paramedic  
Coding  
Medical Billing  
Health and Fitness Technology Certificates

MCH Degree =

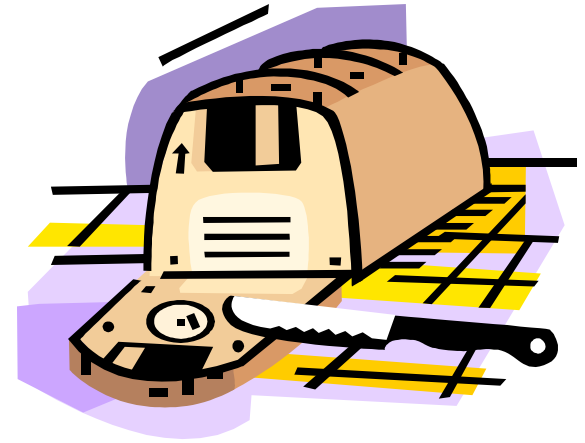
Total hours 103+

Min. 32 hours in  
2 or more  
certificates

Most students  
take only  
certificates

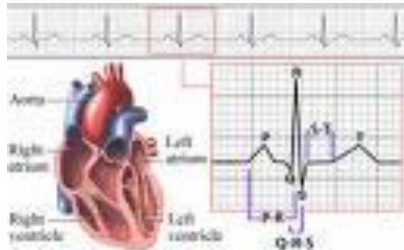
# Bread and butter...

- STNA/CNA (prereqs for several fields at various colleges) (1 course + clinical)
- Medication Aides (1 course + clinical)
- PCA (1 course + clinical)



# Other Examples

- STNA → Medication Aide
- EKG Basic → EKG Advanced
- Orthopedic Technician → Medical Assisting → MCH degree
- END → MCH degree
- STNA → PCT



# Stackable Advantages

- Stackables offer the advantages of
  - Career advancement
  - Higher pay
  - Incremental educational success for at-promise students
  - Students are more likely to go on to complete a degree



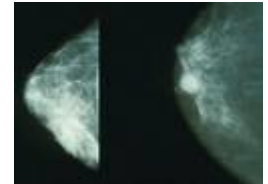
Post-graduate certificates:  
must have previous degree

# Effects of Soft Economy

- Clinical agencies reluctant to accept students:
  - Hiring freeze (or “frost”)
  - Reduced census, reduction of elective admissions
- Graduates have difficult job search
  - Partnership program hiring preferences
  - Obtain needed experience where opportunity arises

# Post Graduate Programs

- Previous degree required
- Often program is for specialty certification
  - Medical Imaging: CT, MRI
  - May have alternative curriculum for “novice” degreed students:
    - Nuclear Medicine
    - Ultrasound
    - Clinical Research Associate



# Post Graduate Programs

## ■ Nursing

- Refresher (re-entry)
  - Board of Nursing regulated
- Peri-operative specialty
- Continuing Education specialty prep

# Innovative Articulation

- Pathways from high school, community college....
  - 2+2 (HS + CC)
  - 2+2+2 (HS + CC + University)
  - Various formulas depending upon place of entry and exit
- More universities are recognizing more than 64 credit transfers

# Example--Nursing

- RN to BSN
  - Very common articulation
  - 3 + 1, in most competitive markets
  - ASU/Maricopa Community College Alliance
    - Transfer up to 75 credit hours
    - Programmatic opportunity, not just articulation
      - Joint advising
      - ASU ID card, use of services
      - Scholarships
      - Joint events

# Example—Allied Health

- Maricopa/NAU Health Sciences
  - Initially, medical imaging degree requirement change began discussion of 3 + 1
  - Opened door to all allied health programs
  - Up to 81 credit transfer
  - Concurrent or post graduate
  - Distance learning
  - Courses offered on community college campus

# Example—Allied Health

- Maricopa/NAU Continued
  - B.S. in Health Sciences with emphasis:
    - Diagnostic Medical Imaging and Therapy
    - Respiratory Care
    - Physical Therapist Assisting
    - Surgical Technology
    - Paramedic Care
    - Medical Assisting

# Other Considerations

- Exhaustion of financial aid
- Accreditation issues (national)
- Credentialing issues (national)
- Licensure issues (statewide)
- Distance learning
- And...

# And...

- Infrastructure of the individual community college (WD vs. Academic side) - must have tremendous cooperation and communication between these two entities for these to work
  - Example: HUC
  - Example: STNA and CNA courses
- May be no clear differentiation between WD and credit side (especially with short-term certificates such as Pharm Tech)

# Thank you!

- This presentation from the NN2 website at:
- <http://www.nn2.org/resourcespublications/aaccstackablesapril09.html>
- Or just go to: [www.nn2.org](http://www.nn2.org) and click on Resources and Publications, AACC

## BirdBreath

