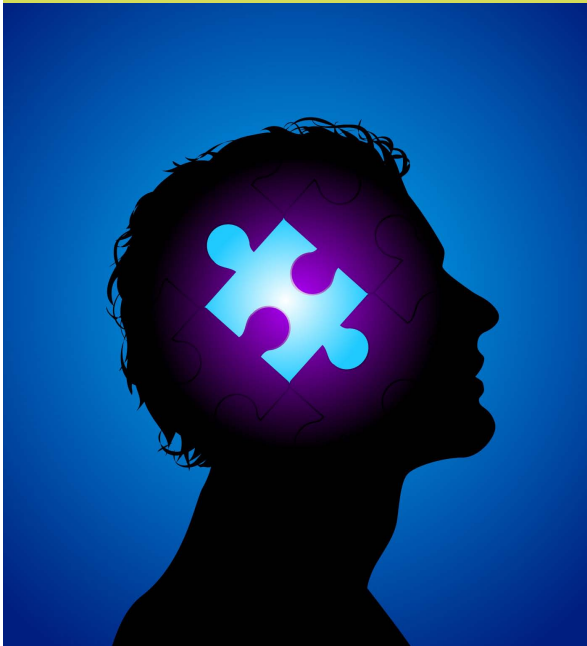




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Industry Snapshots

Psychiatric Technicians

Tools for the Program Developer

This data was prepared for California Community Colleges and those professionals that design college-level coursework and programs.



Industry Background

Mental health workers are essential to creating a healthy urban environment in the Los Angeles County community. Over the last two decades, some of the stigma of mental health problems has been reduced, as a result of the work of special commissions at the federal level, and of reports published in California. New treatment models also have emerged during this period that promise better success in treating mental illnesses. In California, Proposition 63 was passed in 2004 to fund new efforts that support mental health and implement the new treatment model.

Even though Psychiatric Technicians are the only licensed occupation in the mental health industry that does not require a graduate-level degree, they are the mental health professionals that have the most contact with the patient. They are in high demand and play a key role on the mental health team. The Psychiatric Technician is a specialized, more highly-trained vocational nurse who provides care to mentally disordered, emotionally disturbed, and/or developmentally disabled patients, usually in an institutional setting. Psychiatric Technicians work under the direction of other licensed mental health professionals.

Both labor market data and anecdotal reports from employers confirm an acute shortage of Psychiatric Technicians in Los Angeles County. This current shortage and the high number of vacant positions will make it even more difficult to meet the future need and fill the 881 job openings projected for the coming five years. With 169 job openings per year in Los Angeles County, the fewer than 50 Psychiatric Technician graduates coming out of the only local program available do not begin to be able to fill the need.

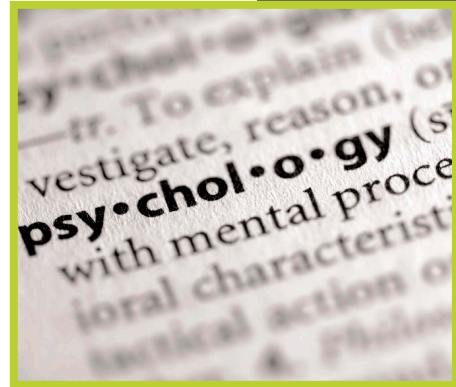
As a licensed position in the State of California, training and education for Psychiatric Technicians consist of 1,530 hours of classroom and clinical practice. Licensed Vocational Nurses can become Psychiatric Technicians with some additional coursework, and Psychiatric Technicians can go on to become registered nurses. Currently, Mt. San Antonio College has the only community college program in Los Angeles County for training Psychiatric Technicians.

Industry Trends

Los Angeles County
2008-2013

Psychiatric Technology Careers in Los Angeles County (2008-2013)

(More detailed job descriptions and occupational information can be accessed at ONET Online <http://online.onetcenter.org/find/>)



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Description	Jobs in L.A. County	Growth in job openings (5 yrs)	2009 Median Hourly Earnings	Licenses/ Certification Required
Psychiatric Technicians http://online.onetcenter.org/link/summary/29-2053.00	3214	10%	\$20.36	California Department of Health, Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians (BVNPT)
Psychiatric Aides http://online.onetcenter.org/link/summary/31-1013.00	324	7%	\$12.48	No license required



Description & Reference Information

The Psychiatric Technician is a specialized, more highly-trained vocational nurse who provides care to mentally disordered, emotionally disturbed, and/or developmentally disabled patients, usually in an institutional setting. The Psychiatric Technician helps patients with their personal hygiene, administers oral and hypodermic medications, measures the patient's general physical condition (by taking pulse, temperature, respiration), observes the patient to detect behavior patterns, intervenes to restrain violent or potentially violent or suicidal patients, leads therapy group sessions, completes various paperwork and records, and issues medications from dispensary and maintains associated records.

Educational Track

Here is the community college offering Psychiatric Technology Programs in Los Angeles County.

College	Degree Programs
Mt San Antonio College	AS Degree – Psychiatric/Mental Health Services Technician

Conclusions and Recommendations

During 2008-2009, the Center of Excellence at Mt. San Antonio College prepared a series of reports on Allied Health Occupations. This report is the last in the series that explored six occupations that are expected to have significant unmet demands for employees in the coming five to ten year period; Psychiatric Technicians represents the greatest and most urgent need. Though Psychiatric Technician programs are highly regulated by the State of California and workers must have state licensure, these programs are well-suited for community colleges (and their students) and offer an opportunity for a valuable partnership to serve the mental health industry.

Recommendations

- Develop additional Community College programs
- Strengthen and support career ladder and pipeline programs
- Increase diversity among Psychiatric Technicians
- Provide alternative educational formats
- Increase Community College participation on WET (Workforce, Education and Training) Planning Committees and Groups

