

Health Career Observer



The Official Newsletter of the WNY R-AHEC

December 2023

Home Health Care

Home health is a nursing specialty in which nurses provide multidimensional home care to patients of all ages. Home health care is a cost efficient way to deliver quality care in the convenience of the client's home. Home health nurses create care plans to achieve goals based on the client's diagnosis. Aides may also be required to travel as they help people with disabilities go to work and stay engaged in their communities.



"Ensuring those diagnosed with a terminal illness are able to pass peacefully, with dignity, in a setting of his/her choosing (mostly in their homes), is such a special mission."

Melissa Sullivan

How Do I Become a Home Health and Personal Care Aide?

**PROJECTED JOB
MARKET GROWTH:
22%
FROM 2022-2032**

Home Health Aides and Personal Care Aides typically need a high school diploma or equivalent, but some positions do not require it. Those working in certified home health or hospice agencies may need to complete formal training or pass a standardized test. Aides also may be required to obtain certification in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

**Average Annual Pay:
\$30,180**

What Does a HHA or PCA Do?



Supports patients and families coping with disabilities, injuries and terminal illness



Assist in patient's plan of care and track disease progression and rehabilitation



Answer questions and offer emotional support



Assess patients and consult with physicians



Keep clients engaged in their social networks and communities



Focus on quality of life and comfort



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A Professional Account

Melissa Sullivan

President & CEO HomeCare & Hospice and Total Senior Care

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

"The most rewarding part of my job is receiving positive feedback from family members or loved ones of patients that have passed on Hospice. The work that HomeCare & Hospice does, ensuring those diagnosed with a terminal illness are able to pass peacefully, with dignity, in a setting of his/her choosing (mostly in their own homes), is such a special mission. Hearing from patient's loved ones on how an HHA, PCA, nurse, physician, social worker, volunteer, etc, touched not only their loved ones, but also them personally, and made a very difficult situation better or easier.....amazing to hear those stories, thoughts, words. Also, I love passing those thoughts on to those doing the work, making sure they know that they've made an impact. The work that they do is so important. I'm so lucky to work here and play a very small role in the bigger mission."

What is the most challenging?

"Many parts of my job are challenging. The things that come to mind are recruiting, retention, and educating. It has become increasingly difficult since the onset of COVID in the healthcare environment, but particularly difficult in HomeCare & Hospice because the work can be very emotionally draining. Educating is also very difficult and important. We want to serve as many patients as possible, and we want to ensure that we can complete the full scope of our work, which is when the patient has been given a terminal diagnosis of six months or less. It is very difficult to provide the fullest extent of what we can do when we bring the patient and their caregivers on too late in their progression. In addition, it's important that people understand just how much a hospice program can provide, not just in certain aspect of quality of life, but also financially."

What do you wish you knew back in school that you know now?

"I had no idea what I wanted to do in high school! I wish someone would've told me that that was ok! Trying to pick a life-long career in high school (or even college) is sometimes impossible! I remember feeling overwhelmed and inadequate when observing classmates pick a career path with such certainty. I majored in finance and business, and I work at not-for-profit organization with a truly amazing mission, which has always been important to me. There are so many opportunities and diverse possibilities in healthcare, many being direct patient care. That wasn't my path, but I feel like I'm still able to play a role in the most important resource we have - our health!"



Click on the image for
Personal Care Aide
Career Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1q8tiQoq0tk>



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account from a
Home Health Aide

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqkPL8skO7U>



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For more information visit the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/home-health-aides-and-personal-care-aides.htm>