



HEALTH CAREER OPTIONS GUIDE

for internationally educated health professionals

Other Assisting Occupation in Support of Health Services

Professions in this group are also known as:

- autopsy assistant
- blood donor clinic assistant
- cast room technician
- chiropractic assistant
- clinical laboratory helper
- ophthalmic lens grinder
- morgue attendant
- ophthalmic laboratory technician - retail
- optical laboratory assistant
- optometrist assistant
- orthopedic technologist
- rehabilitation assistant
- sterile processing technician
- therapist assistant - medical
- pharmacy assistant



What is an assisting occupation in support of health services?

This diverse group includes workers who provide services and assistance to health care professionals and other health care staff in a variety of settings.

What are the main duties of these workers?

- Orthopedic technicians assist orthopedic surgeons in the treatment of orthopedic diseases and injuries by applying and adjusting casts, splints, bandages and other orthopedic devices. They assist in the application, maintenance and adjustment of traction equipment. They clean and dress wounds, remove casts, sutures, staples and pins. They also instruct patients and their families, and other health care professionals with respect to orthopedic matters.
- Rehabilitation assistants prepare and maintain equipment and supplies. They assist in activities for the rehabilitation of patients as directed by health care professionals and may perform routine office functions.
- Optical/ophthalmic laboratory technicians and assistants operate laboratory equipment to grind, cut, polish and edge lenses for eyeglasses according to prescriptions received and fit lenses into frames; make minor repairs for customers such as replacing frame screws or straightening frames; and maintain and repair optical laboratory equipment or machinery.

- Pharmacy assistants help pharmacists and other pharmacy staff with packaging and labelling of pharmaceutical products and may help in maintaining prescription records and inventories of medications and pharmaceutical products.
- Sterile processing technicians operate and maintain sterilization equipment such as instrument washers, sonic sinks, cart washers and steam autoclaves to clean and disinfect trays, carts, linens, supplies, instrumentation and equipment for re-use according to standardized safety practices. They reassemble equipment and assemble packs of sterile supplies and instruments for delivery to hospital departments.
- Blood donor clinic assistants set up and dismantle equipment; prepare and maintain cleanliness of collection areas; maintain supplies; record information on donors; monitor donors throughout procedure and assist with post-donation care and donor reaction care as assigned under supervision of a registered nurse; and label and process donated blood.
- Morgue attendants assist pathologists at autopsies by laying out surgical instruments; preparing solutions for preservation of specimens; transferring bodies from morgue to examining table; removing organs and tissue specimens, as instructed by attending pathologist, and placing them in preservative solutions; and cleaning and sewing up bodies for release to funeral home.



What personal characteristics or desired traits do I need for this work?

To work in these fields, you need

- Good interpersonal skills and a desire to help others
- Patience and the ability to handle stressful situations
- To be efficient and accurate, yet sensitive to the needs of clients
- Hand-eye coordination and an aptitude for detailed and precise work are necessary
- Physical stamina

Where do assisting occupations work?

They work in hospitals, medical clinics, offices of health care professionals, nursing homes, optical retail stores and laboratories, pharmacies and medical pathology laboratories.

What are typical work conditions for this work?

A work day in this broad range of professions will vary depending on the environment and the nature of the work to be completed. It may involve an 8 or 12 hour shift in a hospital or clinic. It might be a regular 8 hour workday in an office, laboratory or retail venue. You may work either fulltime or part time.

What qualifications do I need for this work?

This is broad group and qualifications will differ by occupation.

- Orthopedic technicians require completion of secondary school

and either several months of on-the-job training or a college orthopedic technologist program.

Employers may require you to be registered with the Canadian Society of Orthopaedic Technologists <http://www.pappin.com/csot/>

- Health care courses or short-term college programs related to the work of medical therapy assistants, such as recreational therapy programs, are available and may be required by employers.

- Pharmacy assistants require completion of secondary school and several months of on-the-job training.
- Sterile processing technicians require completion of secondary school and a six- to nine-month sterile processing college program.
- Completion of secondary school and several months of on-the-job training are usually required for other assisting occupations in this unit group.

What communication skills do I need?

You need:

- Strong oral and written communication skills to work with patients/clients, other medical staff and suppliers
- Knowledge of 2 or more languages would be an asset for many of these professions

What wage may I be paid for this work?

Wage: typical Canadian hourly wage **Low** 12.00 **Median** 17.50 **High** 26.06
http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/LMI_report_bynoc.do?noc=3414&reportOption=wage

Career Outlook

http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/LMI_report_bynoc.do?noc=3414&reportOption=outlook

Are there opportunities for advancement?

Opportunities vary by profession. Experience and additional education may be required for limited advancement

Learn more about the other assisting occupations in support of health services by viewing these sites:

- National occupation code 3414
The government of Canada has given a code to each profession/occupation.
<http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/ProfileQuickSearch.aspx?val1=3414>
- Optometric assistant
<https://opto.ca/what-is-an-optometric-assistant>
- Orthopedic Assistant
<http://www.pappin.com/csot/>
<https://www.norquest.ca/cal/current/program/advanced-education-in-orthopaedics-for-lpns/>
- Blood Donor Clinic Assistant
<http://settlement.org/alternative-jobs/nurse/blood-donor-clinic-assistant/>

References

- Outline from CSMLS webpage, accessed 3/25/2016
<http://altcareers.csmls.org/careers/assayer/>
- Government of Canada, NOC (NOC 3414)
<http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/Welcome.aspx>
- Government of Canada, COPS
<http://occupations.esdc.gc.ca/sppc-cops/occupationssummarydetail.jsp?&tid=124>
- Government of Canada, Job Bank
www.jobbank.gc.ca

