

Health Workforce Apprenticeships

Renee Fullerton
Health Workforce Council Staff

Sue Skillman
Senior Deputy Director



November 15, 2022





Workforce Board

- Nine governor-appointed members representing business, labor and government
- Advises Governor and Legislature on workforce development policy, coordinates services/programs and evaluates performance
- Staffs Health Workforce Council, separately created policy-development group focused on healthcare workforce



What and whys of apprenticeship

Apprenticeships combine:

- On-the-job training with related classroom instruction
- Supervision of a journey-level professional

Key benefits:

- Apprentices get paid while they learn and develop knowledge, skills, and abilities in a new career field
- Tap into diverse population who may face barriers to traditional educational pathways

- Healthcare roles can be a great fit but need careful consideration of “fit” with laws and rules of a profession
- Several types of health professions have registered apprenticeships in Washington
 - Certified medical assistant (first completers in 2015)
 - Pharmacy technicians
 - Central sterile processing technicians
 - Dental assistants
 - Behavioral health professions



Spotlight on medical assistants

- Certified Medical Assistant credential created by legislation in 2012, left approval of training programs to agency rulemaking
- 2013 agency rules created multiple training pathways
 - Health profession accredited postsecondary/college
 - General accredited postsecondary/college with specific hours/externship requirement
 - **Registered apprenticeship administered by the state**
 - Other training equal to hours/externship requirement



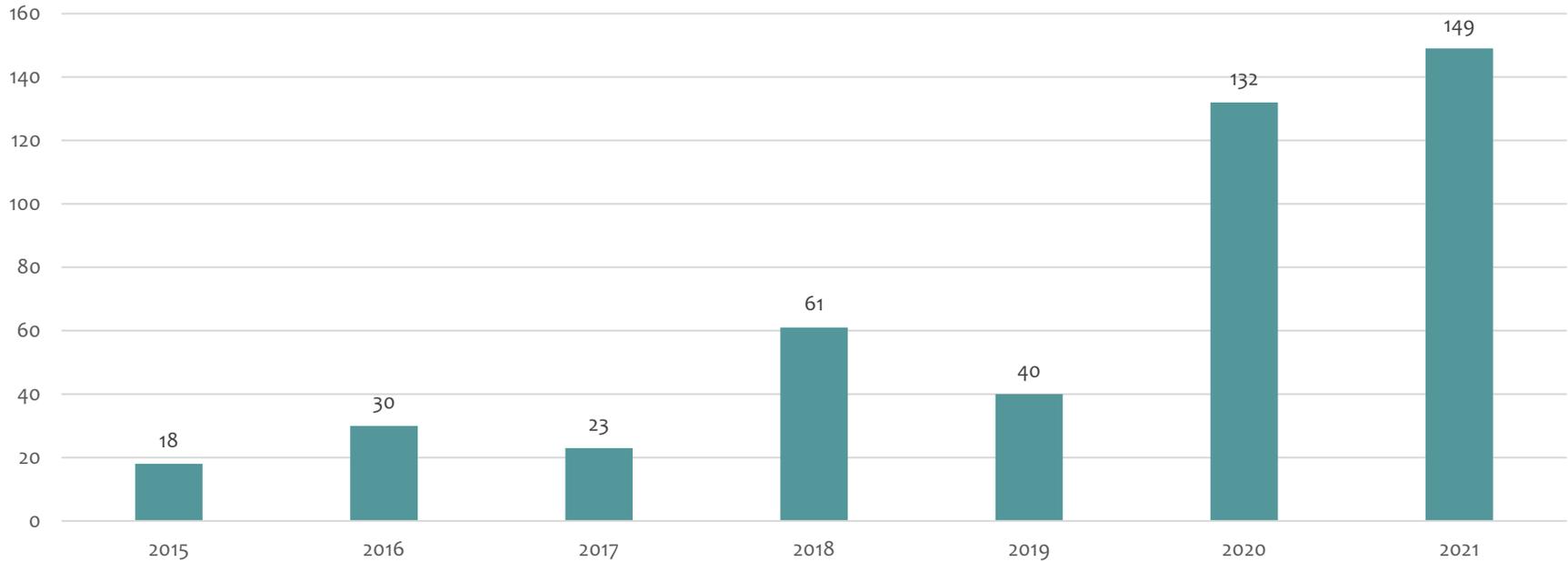
Spotlight on medical assistants

- First registered MA apprenticeship approved by Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council in 2014
 - Taken on by Primary Care Association to support need for medical assistants at federally qualified health centers
 - Expanded to rural health clinics, critical access hospitals, other settings as program grew
- Additional apprenticeships approved in 2019 and 2022
 - Nonprofit labor-management partnership (the Training Fund)
 - Individual federally qualified health center



Spotlight on medical assistants

Washington State Certified Medical Assistant Apprenticeship Completions

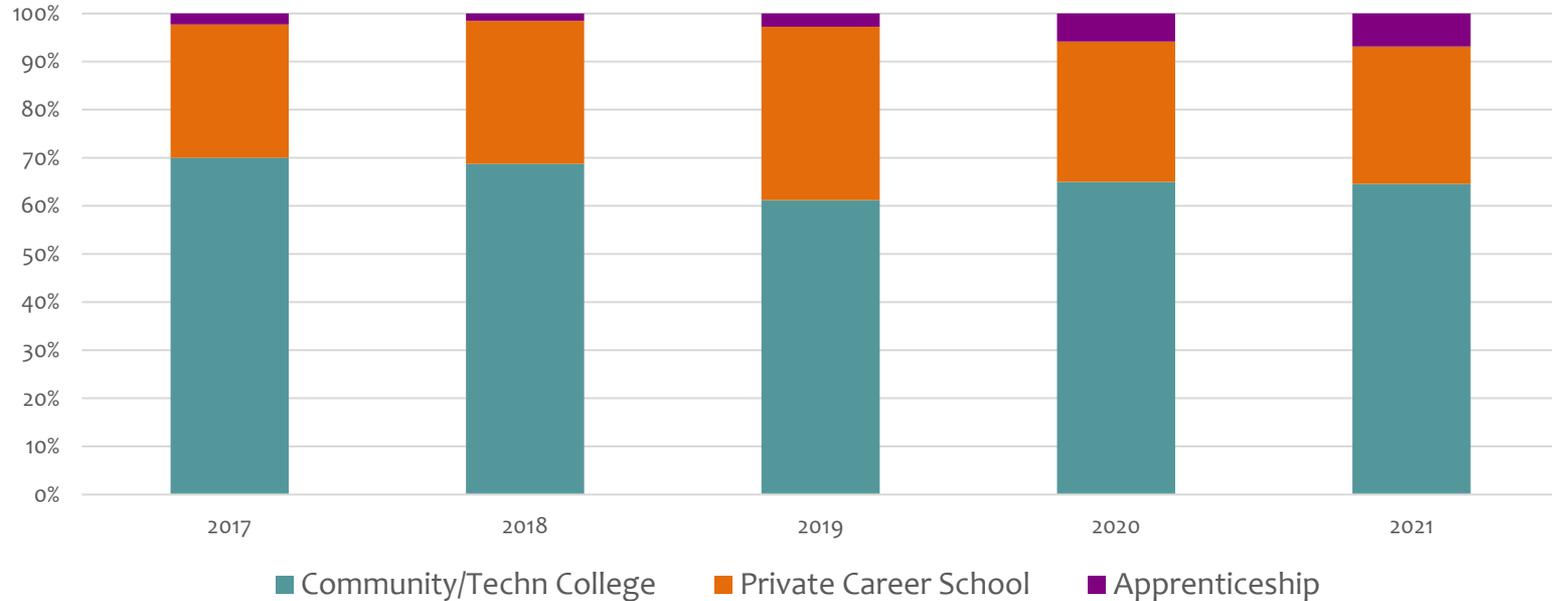


Source: Washington State Department of Labor and Industries



Spotlight on medical assistants

Percentage of total medical assistant program completions by program type



Data Source: The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) 2021; Workforce Board Data Reporting System 2021 for private career school completions, Washington State Department of Labor and Industries



Growth into behavioral health

- Private philanthropy investing in behavioral health workforce development, driving change in Washington
 - Harborview Behavioral Health Institute working with the Training Fund, King County, Washington, to develop behavioral health apprenticeships, Legislative investment to support employer costs
 - Behavioral Health Technicians
 - Peer Counselors
 - Substance Use Disorder Professional (Required a law change to allow apprenticeship)
 - First cohorts started fall 2022

- Legislative investment to Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission, Labor and Industries and Workforce Board to plan and implement a nursing assistant to licensed practical nurse registered apprenticeship
 - Most complicated of healthcare apprenticeships thus far due to need to create education that allows LPNs to continue on to registered nurse (RN) bridge programs
 - Community college nursing programs are key partners in effort
 - Multiple long-term care employers forming consortium to manage apprenticeship program



Apprenticeship observations

- Employers appear to most value apprenticeships that lead to more difficult to access credentials
 - Greater use of medical assistant apprenticeship than dental assisting apprenticeship created by primary care association
 - SUD profession cohort filled the fastest of the three new behavioral health apprenticeships
 - Strong interest in the LPN apprenticeship from health sectors beyond long-term care
- Articulation with educational pathways, alignment with other states may be key to future growth/portability

Employers' perspectives on the use of medical assistant apprenticeships: a qualitative study

Jopson AD, Cummings AG, Frogner BK, Skillman SM.. J Ambul Care Manage. 2022;45(3):191-201.

https://journals.lww.com/ambulatorycaremanagement/Fulltext/2022/07000/Employers__Perspectives_on_the_Use_of_Medical.6.aspx

Benefits identified by employers:

- Stabilized MA workforce
- Staff career development opportunities
- Fostered teaching and learning culture in clinics
- Improved recruitment strategies
- Support for organization's social mission

Challenges identified by employers:

- Clinic receptiveness
- Identifying, training and supporting mentors
- Administrative resources
- Competition with existing education programs

Use of apprenticeship to meet demand for medical assistants in the U.S.

Jopson AD, Skillman SM, Frogner BK. Center for Health Workforce Studies, University of Washington, Sep 2019.
http://familymedicine.uw.edu/chws/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2019/09/Apprenticeship_FR_2019.pdf

Employer interviewees report:

- Multiple reasons for considering apprenticeship to meet their MA workforce needs
- MA apprenticeship programs demonstrated considerable flexibility in structure
- Barriers as well as facilitators that influence the adoption, maintenance, and expansion of MA apprenticeship programs

QUESTIONS?

renee.fullerton@wtb.wa.gov

www.wtb.wa.gov

(360) 870-4647

skillman@uw.edu

Familymedicine.uw.edu/chws

