

- Healthcare administrators impact the lives of many people by providing health planning services, policy formation and analysis, organizational structure, and asset and risk management.
- Careers in this field require professionalism, leadership skills, and an understanding of the complexities of healthcare delivery with its specialized language, financial structure, and politics.
- Career opportunities include hospital and health system management, medical group administration, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, care management organizations, health information technology firms, supply chain companies, government/policy organizations, health insurers, and consulting.

## Educational Background

- To enter this field you should have strong written and oral communication skills; the ability to develop and present reports; the talent to work well with others; honest and ethical conduct; and significant leadership skills including tact, diplomacy, and flexibility.
- Some entry-level positions only require a bachelor's degree in health administration, but a master's degree is required for most higher-level positions in healthcare administration.
- Three degree pathways are common among students who want to pursue a position in health administration. These programs differ in name, but also in their curriculum. Look for accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME).
  - A *Master of Public Health (MPH)* degree with a specialization in health management or policy is one possibility. The central focus of an MPH is on the description of patterns of disease and on the development, operation, financing, and evaluation of population-based programs and the links between community and health.
  - A *Master of Business Administration (MBA)* is another possibility. An MBA develops students' business management knowledge with an emphasis on accounting, corporate finance, and international business. Generally, however, only a few classes are available in healthcare management.
  - A *Master of Health Administration (MHA)* focuses on the business and policy needs specific to healthcare settings. These programs incorporate the best features of all the programs. A variation on this type of program is the Master of Health Services Administration (MHSA).
- Some schools offer combined programs such as an MPH/MBA or MHA/JD (law degree) or MD/MBA.

## Preparation

- Observation of healthcare management professionals is essential to ensure this is the right field for you.
- Develop a record of interest in healthcare issues. Work experience in public health is a plus.
- Most programs will require the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or the Graduate Management Aptitude Test (GMAT).
- A TOEFL exam will be required if English is not your first language.
- While at Purdue, consider working toward a Certificate in Entrepreneurship and Innovation through the [Burton D. Morgan Center for Entrepreneurship](https://www.purdue.edu/entr/) <https://www.purdue.edu/entr/>.
- Another option is to take part in some of the interdisciplinary applied projects in healthcare through the EPICS program. Also, watch for conferences through the Regenstrief Center for Healthcare Engineering.
  - [EPICS](https://engineering.purdue.edu/EPICS) <https://engineering.purdue.edu/EPICS>
  - [Regenstrief](https://www.purdue.edu/discoverypark/rche/) <https://www.purdue.edu/discoverypark/rche/>
- Some programs do not have any required undergraduate courses. Programs that do have required courses, often look for the following courses and may require at least a grade of a C in these courses:
  - Microeconomics
  - Accounting
  - Statistics
- Other recommended courses for the field could include health economics, health communications, health psychology, medical sociology, medical anthropology, communications, and public health. Strong writing skills will be very helpful in the field as well.
- Most programs have few requirements as they are seeking an academically diverse class.

## Student Organizations

Public Health Student Organization, Caduceus Club, Timmy Foundation, American Society for Healthcare Engineering, Institute of Healthcare Improvement

## Program Information

[Find a Health Administration Program](https://www.aupha.org/resourcecenter/auphaprogramdirectory) <https://www.aupha.org/resourcecenter/auphaprogramdirectory>

## Applying

- Some Health Administration programs accept applications through [HAMPCAS](https://hampcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login) (the Healthcare Administration, Management & Policy Centralized Application Service) <https://hampcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>.
- Other programs will require applying directly to their program.
- Competitive applicants will have:
  - A well-rounded academic background
  - Strong academic performance
  - Leadership, teamwork, and communication skills
  - Volunteer and shadowing/observation experiences
  - Strong positive letters of recommendation
- Early application to programs enhances your chances of being admitted. HAMPCAS opens in early September and it is generally useful to submit your application within a month of the application opening.

## Fee Assistance

- Visit specific school websites to learn if fee assistance is available.
- [GRE Fee Assistance Program](https://www.ets.org/gre/revise/general/about/fees/reductions) <https://www.ets.org/gre/revise/general/about/fees/reductions>
- For GMAT fee waivers contact schools requiring this test to see if they offer fee waivers for this test.

## Employment Outlook

- Since the healthcare industry is one of the largest in the United States, jobs in the healthcare sector continue to grow faster than most other employment sectors with positions available in both urban and rural settings.
- According to the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/medical-and-health-services-managers.htm), medical and health services managers earned an average salary of \$100,980 in 2019. Senior healthcare executives with more experience can earn \$200,000 or more. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/medical-and-health-services-managers.htm>

## Diversity Matters

*The health administration field needs professionals who look just like you, and who share your life experiences. Race or ethnicity, LGBTQ+ identity, disability, age, geographic region, socioeconomic status, social and cultural identity, and nationality all add to a richer experience for all students in the health administration classroom, contribute to the health administration field, and ultimately lead to better outcomes for patients and institutions.*

## Programs in the Region

- [IUPUI MHA](https://fsph.iupui.edu/academics/masters/mha/index.html) Indianapolis, IN <https://fsph.iupui.edu/academics/masters/mha/index.html>
- [Northwestern MS in Healthcare Quality & Patient Safety](http://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/sites/cehs/masters-programs/healthcare-quality-patient-safety/index.html) Chicago, IL <http://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/sites/cehs/masters-programs/healthcare-quality-patient-safety/index.html>
- [University of Michigan Master of Health Services Administration](https://sph.umich.edu/hmp/programs/mhsa.html) Ann Arbor, MI <https://sph.umich.edu/hmp/programs/mhsa.html>
- [University of Memphis MHA](https://www.memphis.edu/sph/programs/mha/index.php) Memphis, TN <https://www.memphis.edu/sph/programs/mha/index.php>
- [Rush University MS in Health System Management](https://www.rushu.rush.edu/college-health-sciences/academic-programs/master-science-health-systems-management) Chicago, IL <https://www.rushu.rush.edu/college-health-sciences/academic-programs/master-science-health-systems-management>

## More Information

- [Association of University Programs in Health Administration](https://www.aupha.org/home) (AUPHA) <https://www.aupha.org/home>
- [American College of Health Care Administrators](https://achca.memberclicks.net/) <https://achca.memberclicks.net/>
- [HAMPCAS](https://hampcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login) <https://hampcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>
- [Explore Health Careers Health Administration](https://explorehealthcareers.org/field/health-administration-management/) <https://explorehealthcareers.org/field/health-administration-management/>

## Other Careers to Consider

Public Health · Human Donation Science · Medical Informatics

## *Preparing for your Giant Leap*

[purdue.edu/preprofessional](https://purdue.edu/preprofessional)