

HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS ON US POSTAGE STAMPS
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The Doctors, U.S. #949, 1947

Healthcare is one of the largest industries in the United States accounting for approximately 18% of Gross Domestic Product. Certainly, medical doctors are the heart of the system and the American Medical Association is the organization responsible for the curriculum standards of most American medical education. In 2020, there were almost 1,000,000 active physicians in our nation and most are graduates of medical schools accredited by the American Medical Association. The cost of healthcare in the United States is a major public policy issue.



Nursing, U.S. #1190, 1961

Nurses are a significant component of the healthcare labor force. Although there are different skill levels in nursing, the most common category is the registered nurse (RN). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported May 2020 employment of registered nurses at 2,986,500 with an average annual salary of \$75,330. The states with the highest employment of RNs are California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Pennsylvania. With an aging population and growing demand for healthcare, the employment prospects for RNs are very good. The Occupational Outlook Handbook estimates a 9% growth in the demand for nurses over the 2020-2030 period. The American Nurses Association is the professional organization for the nursing occupation.



Osteopathic Medicine, U.S. #1469, 1972

This commemorative stamp marks the 75th anniversary of the American Osteopathic Association.

Osteopathic medicine is another aspect of the health care industry. The study of osteopathic medicine leads to the Doctor of Osteopathy (DO) and contrasts with the study of allopathic medicine which leads to the Doctor of Medicine (MD) designation. Whereas allopathic medicine relies heavily on treatment with prescription drugs, osteopathic medicine takes a more holistic approach to diagnosis and treatment. Osteopathic providers are heavily concentrated in family medicine and primary care.



Pharmacy, U.S. #1473, 1972

Pharmacy is another important component of a nation's healthcare system. The pharmaceutical industry is responsible for the creation, production, and distribution of a country's prescription and over-the-counter medications. The dispensation of prescription medication requires a licensed pharmacist who has undergone extensive higher education, usually 5 or 6 years of study and training. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports May 2020 employment of pharmacists at 315670, most of whom work at the retail level. The BLS reports a mean annual wage of \$125,460. This stamp, depicting a variety of classical pharmaceutical materials, recognizes the 120th anniversary of the American Pharmaceutical Association.