

What is Allied Health and Who are Allied Health Care Professionals?

Allied health is defined as those health professions that are non-nurse and non-doctor health care providers, including audiologists and speech language pathologists; physical therapists, occupational therapists and respiratory therapists; diagnostic medical personnel (medical laboratory scientists, cytogenetic technologists, diagnostic molecular scientists, histotechnologists, and pathologists' assistants); imaging specialists (radiographers, nuclear medicine technologists, and sonographers); nutritionists and dietitians; and physician assistants. Others often included in allied health include dental personnel (dental hygienists and dental assistants); emergency medical personnel (EMTs, paramedics); exercise science professionals (athletic trainers, exercise physiologists, kinesiotherapists); health information technologists; health educators (asthma educators, diabetes educators); counselors (genetic counselors, mental health counselors, family therapists); specialists in cancer diagnosis and treatment (medical physicists, medical dosimetrists, and radiation therapists); pharmacy personnel (pharmacy technicians and assistants) and other healthcare providers and support personnel, such as medical assistants and medical scribes. ¹

Some Allied health professions are completed at the bachelor's level, most at the master's level, and some, such as physical therapy, at the doctoral level. Almost all programs require students have a solid background in biology and chemistry and a GPA that suggests further training in a field that is science heavy will be manageable.

The biggest challenge for students who are not sure about what field they would like to pursue is the many different science courses that might be required for each field. In general, students should be prepared to take at least 2 years of biology, a year of chemistry, 1 or 2 courses in a behavioral science (psychology or sociology), several courses in English and Humanities, and most likely at least pre-calculus.

For more information, and to begin exploring your options, please make an appt. to see an advisor as soon as you arrive on campus.

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1. <http://www.asahp.org/what-is>