



Health Career Directory

Nuclear Medicine Technologist

Overview

Nuclear Medicine Technologists use a scanner to create images of various areas of a patient's body. It is primarily a diagnostic specialty and one of the most challenging and exciting branches of medicine. They prepare radioactive drugs and administer them to patients undergoing the scans. The radioactive drugs cause abnormal areas of the body to appear different from the normal areas in the images. It is a way to get medical information that may otherwise be unavailable, require surgery, or necessitate more expensive diagnostic tests.

This profession is exciting and the employment opportunities are growing throughout the health care industry. This occupation pays well. It is also highly stimulating and interesting since no two days are ever the same.

Who is suited to become a Nuclear Medicine Technologist?

Medical Stenographers are most effective when they have the following skills and characteristics:

- ability to be precise and accurate
- good problem-solving and communication skills, both orally and written
- good critical thinking skills, sound judgement, and patience
- compassionate, dependable, ethical, and mature
- ability to organize and establish workload priorities in collaboration with others
- strong social skills and leadership ability
- ability to manage high levels of stress associated with life threatening situations and medical conditions.
- self-discipline and self-directed
- ability to multi-task in a complex and face-paced environment
- physical ability to perform duties of the position
- a clean record, no prior criminal background.

They should enjoy:

- working in a fast paced health care environment
- a genuine interest in caring for people
- working directly with people who are unwell
- working collaboratively with others in a team environment
- using standard and specialized equipment to gather assessments to provide proper care, and the performance of components, assemblies, and systems.

Who employs Nuclear Medicine Technologists?

Nuclear Medicine Technologists work as part of the interdisciplinary team. They work mostly in hospitals, in both rural and urban settings. Some work in physician offices or imaging clinics. In BC, they are employed by one of the six Health authorities/employers. They work shift hours, alternating weekends, and are on call frequently for emergency procedures.

Nuclear Medicine Technologists are very highly sought after health care professionals. In other words, they have no trouble finding work in their field.

Salary

Average Pay Scale - \$32.96 per hour/ \$68,560 annually

Required Training and Education to Become a Nuclear Medicine Technologist

The program is designed to prepare graduates to work as technologists in nuclear medicine departments. The program is a combination of lecture and lab instruction at BCIT. The program also offers clinical experience in the nuclear medicine departments of clinical facilities that are currently associated with the program.

The student spends Levels 1 and 2 of the first year at BCIT. They go to lectures and labs that focus on basic subjects applicable to nuclear medicine technology and patient care. BCIT is equipped with a lab containing facilities and equipment commonly used in nuclear medicine departments. The student spends the summer term of the first year in the nuclear medicine department of a hospital.

In second year, the student spends alternating two-week periods at BCIT and the nuclear medicine department of several Vancouver-area hospitals. The student spends the summer term of their second year in a nuclear medicine department to get more clinical experience.

Note: During the summer terms only, BCIT may assign students to any of the accredited hospitals. Some of these hospitals are away from the Greater Vancouver area.

On successful completion of the two-year (six-term) program, the student receives the BCIT Diploma of Technology in Nuclear Medicine and is ready to write national certification examinations.

Source: <http://www.bcit.ca/study/programs/6700dipl>

Career Advancement

Nuclear medicine can be a very rewarding profession. Most Nuclear Medicine Technologists stay in clinical practice for a long time as they enjoy providing one on one care to their patients, and working in a team environment.

British Columbia Institute of Technology
<http://www.bcit.ca/study/programs/6700dipl>

Financial assistance and bursaries:

For information about Canada student loans and grants, please visit:
http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/learning/canada_student_loan/index.shtml

Association

Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists
<http://www.camrt.ca/>