



## Health Career Directory

### Polysomnographic Technologist

#### Overview

Polysomnographic technology is a fast growing medical technology because of the growing awareness of the impact of sleep disorders on daily life. Polysomnographic Technologists perform sleep studies to help patients of all ages who suffer from sleep disorders. They work to perform polysomnograms for the diagnosis and treatment of sleep/arousal disorders. This profession includes the management of nasal positive airway pressure titration for obstructive sleep apnea syndrome.

Some of the main duties of a Polysomnographic Technologist include:

- receiving requisitions
- preparing patients for sleep studies
- monitoring patients during studies
- recording results
- monitoring equipment performance

Polysomnographic Technologist is also conducts various tests involving non-invasive techniques including:

- electroencephalography
- electroculography
- electromyography
- electrocardiography
- multiple sleep latency and respiratory tracings
- monitoring patients during procedures
- recording measurements
- formulating technical reports for interpretation by medical staff in clinical diagnosis
- monitoring equipment performance.

This profession is exciting and the employment opportunities are growing throughout the health care industry.

#### Who is suited to become a Polysomnographic Technologist?

Polysomnographic Technologists are most effective when they have the following skills and characteristics:

- 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
- ability to be precise and accurate
- ability to work independently and as part of a team
- ability to manage high levels of stress associated with life threatening situations and medical conditions.
- good computer skills
- physical ability to perform duties of the position
- a clean record, no prior criminal background.

They should enjoy:

- learning about anatomy, physiology, and the impact of sleep disorders
- performing various medical non-invasive techniques
- working in a fast paced health care environment
- a genuine interest in caring for people
- working directly with people who are sick
- working collaboratively with others in a team environment

### **Who employs Polysomnographic Technologists?**

Polysomnographic Technologists work as part of an interdisciplinary team. Sleep studies are usually performed in the evening hours. Therefore Polysomnographic technologists often work at night. Most are employed in the hospital and sleep order clinics, in both rural and urban settings. In BC, they are employed by one of the six Health authorities/employers.

Qualifications to be employed:

- Diploma in a healthcare discipline, such as Respiratory Therapy, Nursing, or Electro-Neurophysiology Technology from an accredited institution.
- Eligible for certification/registration as appropriate with provincial and national certification and registration bodies.
- Registration as a Polysomnographic Technologist with the Board of Registered Polysomnographic Technologists (BRPT).

### **Salary**

Salary Range - \$27.18 - \$33.88 per hours/\$52,360 - \$65,760 annually plus shift premiums for evenings, nights and weekends

### **Required Training and Education to Become a Polysomnographic Technologist**

The one year certificate program is designed to introduce the field of sleep science. This course will introduce the student to the instrumentation and electrical principles and practices that the polysomnographer must understand.

Electrical safety and ancillary equipment faced in a sleep laboratory are covered. In addition, the student will learn about the internal workings and calibration of the polygraph. Furthermore, amplifiers and filters will be emphasized, along with basic tracings and some of the artefacts that may appear and influence one's interpretation of a sleep study.

Please go to the institution of your interest for the complete list of all entry requirements.

### **Career Advancement**

Polysomnographic Technology can be a very rewarding profession. Most sonographers stay in clinical practice for a long time. This is because they enjoy providing one on one care to their patients, and working in a team environment.

## **Resources**

### **Education Programs**

Algonquin College

<http://www.algonquincollege.com/prospective/programCourses.html>

Thompson River University

<http://www.tru.ca/distance/programs/health-science/polysomnography/courses.html>

Michener Institute for Applied Health Sciences

[http://www.michener.ca/ce/postdiploma/sleep\\_med.php](http://www.michener.ca/ce/postdiploma/sleep_med.php)

### **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](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/learning/canada_student_loan/index.shtml)

### **Associations**

Canadian Sleep Society

<http://www.canadiansleepsociety.com/technologists.html>

Board of Registered Polysomnographic Technologists

<http://www.brpt.org/>