

Health and Caregiving



Introducing the Sector

The Health and Caregiving Sector in the Redwood Region is foundational in addressing **persistent workforce shortages, inadequate infrastructure, and deep inequities in care access**, which disproportionately affect rural, Tribal, and underserved communities. Each year, poor health reduces global GDP by 15% (Remes et al., 2020), underscoring that investment in health and caregiving is a strategic lever for improving the social and economic prosperity of communities.

To address these urgent challenges, the North Coast Health Improvement and Information Network (NCHIIN) is leading a strategic effort to **build a more equitable and resilient system**. This initiative, coordinated by Jessica Osborne-Stafsnes, Tina Schaible, and Taffy Stockton, aims to ensure all residents have access to quality care and health-supportive services.

The strategy is outlined in an Activation Plan grounded in three core pillars: **expanding access, building capacity, and innovating policy**. Key tactics include investing in workforce pipelines, adopting telehealth, developing centralized Health Hubs, and upgrading facilities. This work also focuses on strengthening data-driven planning and rural advocacy to secure long-term funding and systemic improvements. Through **cross-sector collaboration** with educational institutions, employers, Tribal health entities, and community organizations, the plan seeks to **embed equity and community voice** into a sustainable framework for the region's health and caregiving ecosystem.

Redwood Region RISE's Health and Caregiving Sector is committed to working with the diverse and dedicated voices in our communities to create a 10-year plan that will align with our core values and diverse regional needs by:

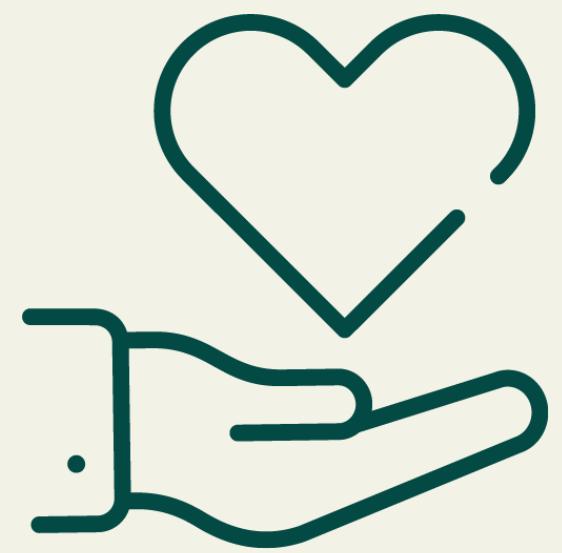
1. Treating health and caregiving as **essential infrastructure for economic prosperity**
2. Addressing the acute shortages of personnel and a need for **diversified labor force** in health and caregiving fields, with both long- and short-term workforce pipeline strategies
3. Recommending economic **investments** that **improve health equity and social determinants of health outcomes** which will lead to a healthier region
4. Looking at **cross-sector opportunities** that will provide essential foundations for economic prosperity and improved health outcomes

Major Employers

Health: Adventist Health (Howard Memorial, Ukiah Valley, Mendocino Coast & Clear Lake), Sutter Health (Coast & Lakeside), Providence Health System, Mendocino Community Health Centers, Open Door Community Health Centers, Mad River Community Hospital, Pelican Bay Prison, United Indian Health Services

Caregiving: Changing Tides, Redwood Coast Regional Center, North Coast Opportunities, First 5, North Coast Children's Services, County In-Home Supportive Services, Area Agency on Aging, Senior Resource Centers

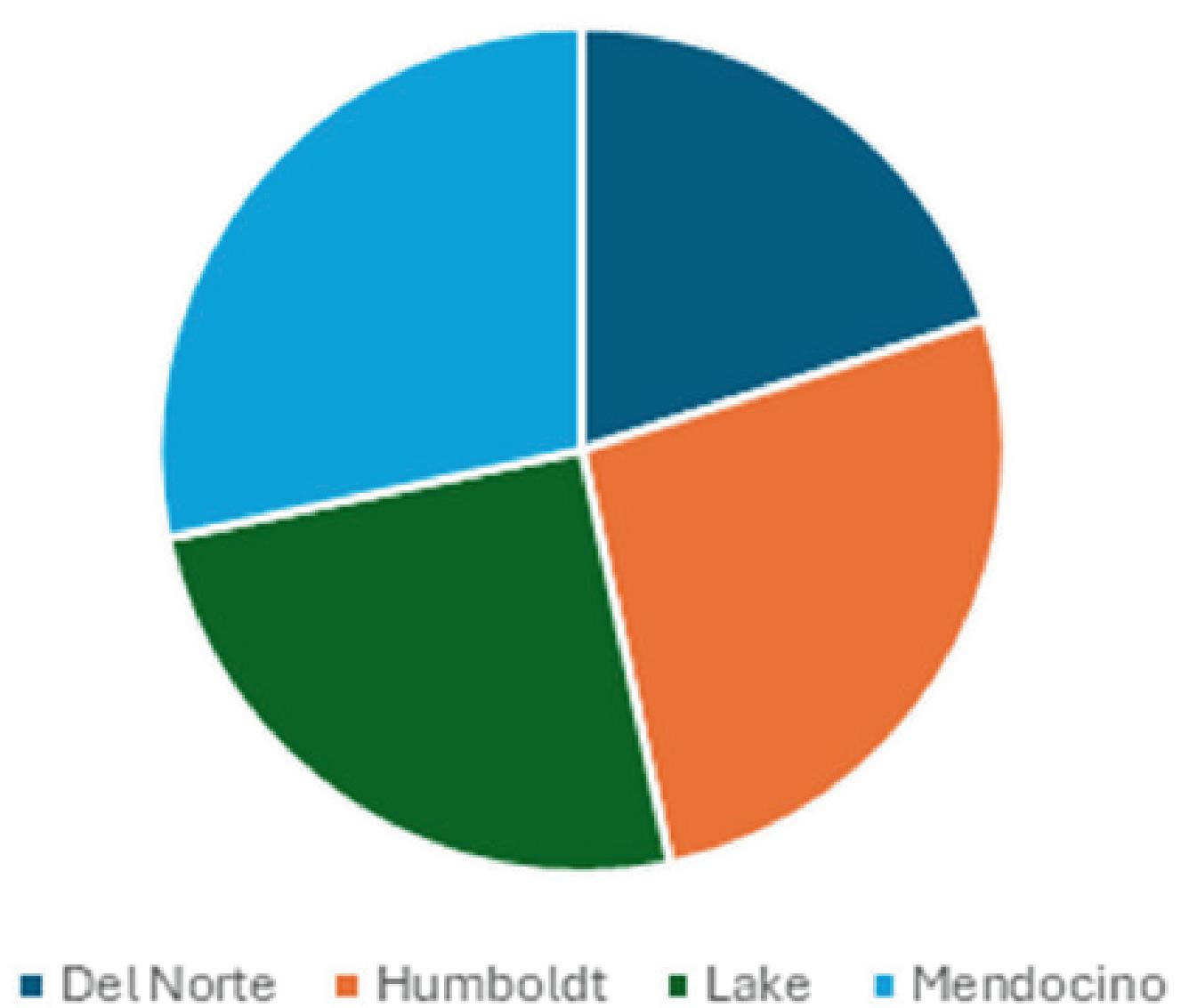
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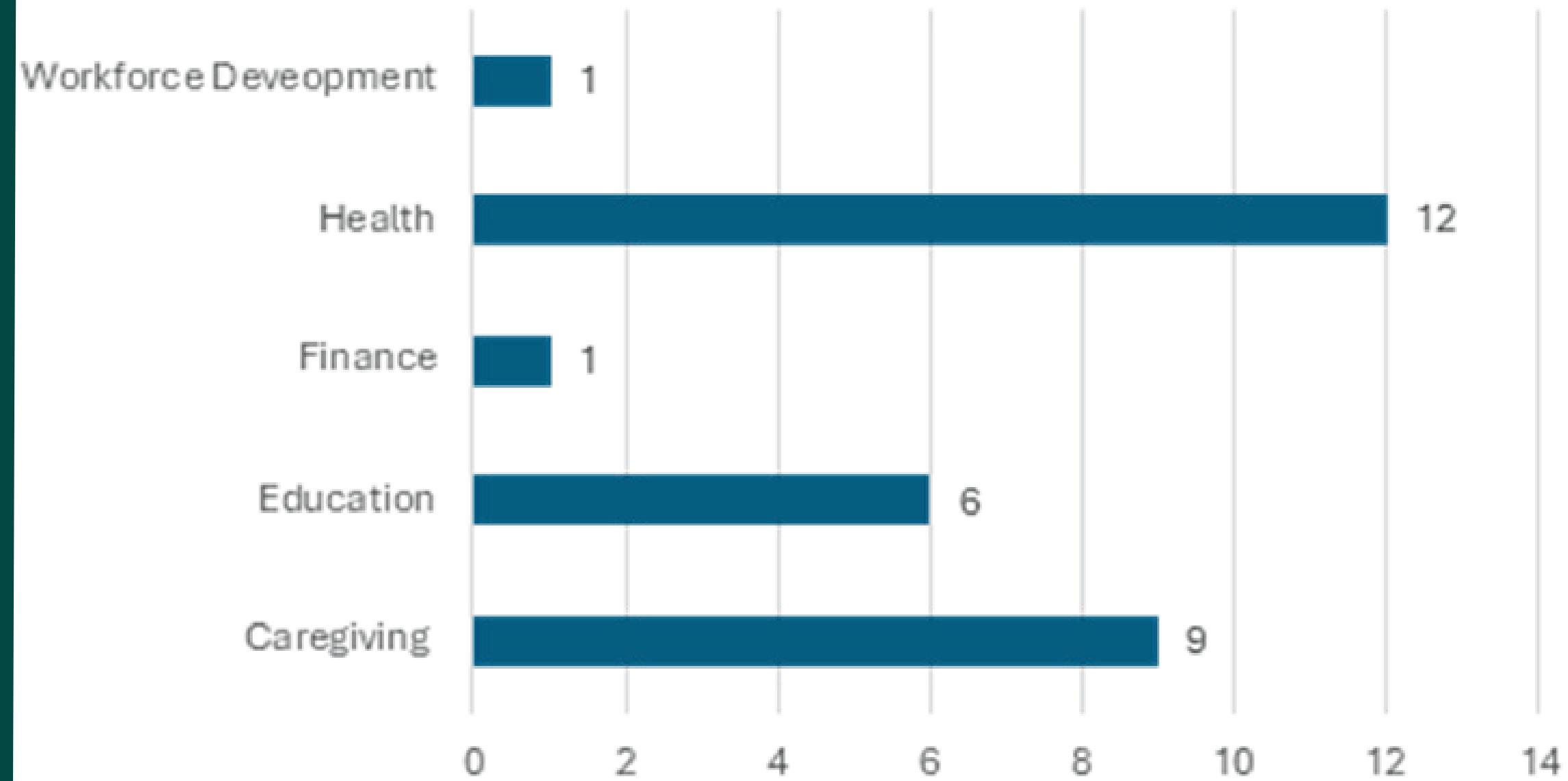
Regional Partners

- Adventist Health NorCal
- Alliance for Rural Community Health
- Blue Lake Rancheria
- CA State Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Cal Poly Humboldt
- Changing Tides Family Services
- College of the Redwoods
- Del Norte Childcare Council
- First 5 (Mendocino)
- Humboldt County Economic Development-GoHumCo
- Humboldt Workforce Coalition
- K'ima:w Medical Center
- Kno'Qoti Native Wellness, Inc.
- Lake County Economic Development Corporation
- Mendocino Community Health Centers
- Mendocino College
- North Coast Health Improvement & Information Network
- North Coast Clinics Network
- North Coast Opportunities
- Open Door Community Health Centers
- Partnership Health Plan
- Redwood Caregiver Resource Center
- Redwood Coast K-16 Education Collaborative
- Redwood Coast Regional Center
- Regional Government Services
- Sutter Coast Hospital
- Tri-County Independent Living
- Ukiah Adult School
- United Indian Health Services

Advisory Council Geographic Representation



Types of Organizations on the Advisory Council





Workforce and Training

Meeting Demand for Living-Wage, High-Growth Careers

A key focus of RRRISE's Health and Caregiving work is assessing the **demand for healthcare and caregiving occupations against the projected workforce supply**. The reports below—developed with support from the Redwood Coast K-16 Collaborative using California's Open Data Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections—highlight several critical trends.

Physical Therapy Assistants, Medical Services Managers, Nurse Practitioners, and Physician Assistants are all projected to grow by over 20% from 2022–2032. In total openings, **Registered Nurses** lead with more than 1,000 projected positions, followed by **Medical and Health Services Managers** with 420. **Behavioral Health** roles are also in high demand, with 310 projected openings for **Substance Use and Mental Health Counselors** and 230 for **Social Workers**.

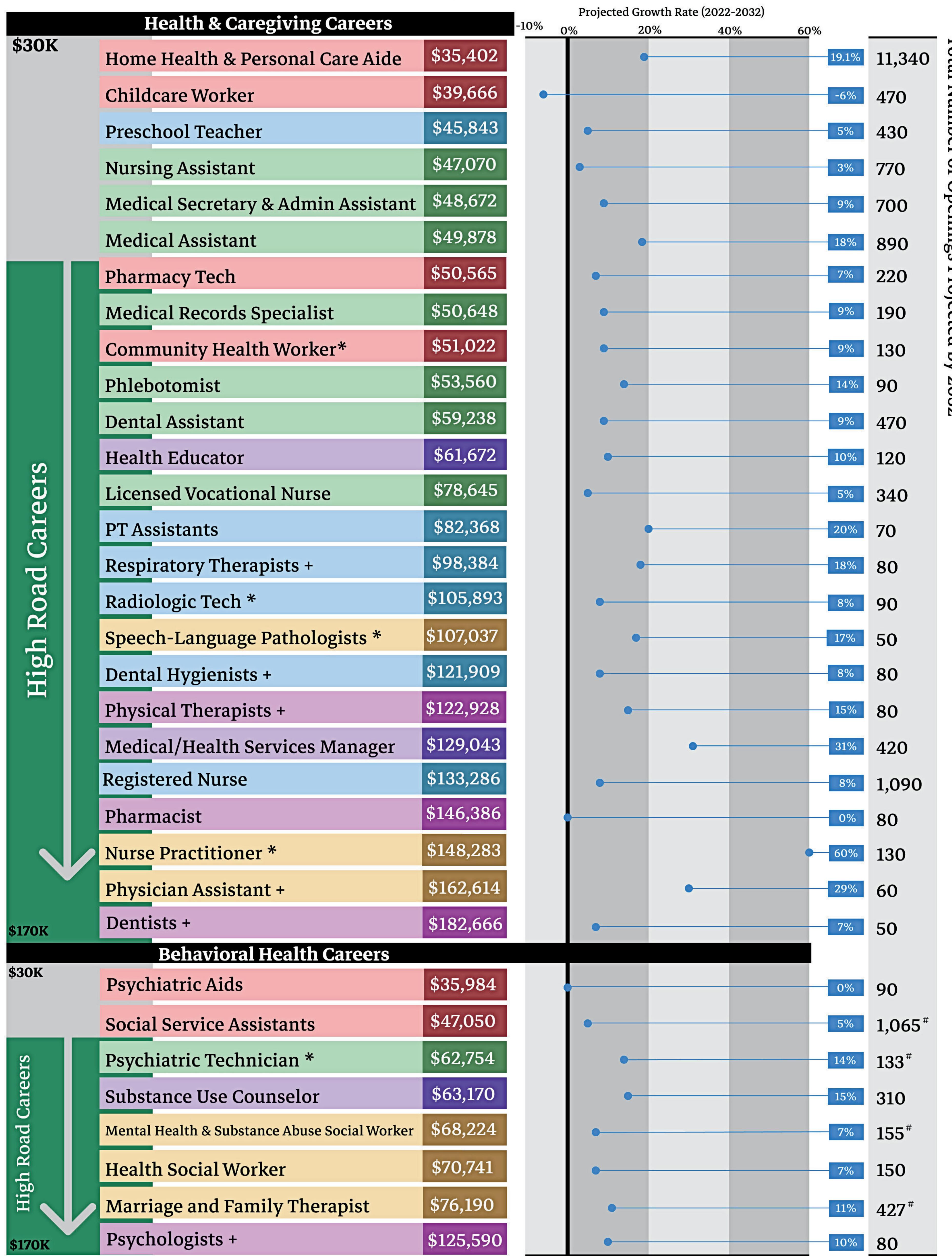
Among high-growth, lower-wage occupations, **Home Health and Personal Care Aides** stand out with over 11,000 anticipated openings by 2032, followed by nearly 900 for **Medical Assistants**. In caregiving, demand for **Childcare Workers** and **Preschool Teachers** remains strong, with 470 and 430 openings projected regionwide, respectively.

It's also important to consider **workforce demographics**. According to recent HCIA data, racial and ethnic disparities persist—particularly among nurses, where Hispanic workers make up 10.7% of the workforce compared to 20% of the overall population.

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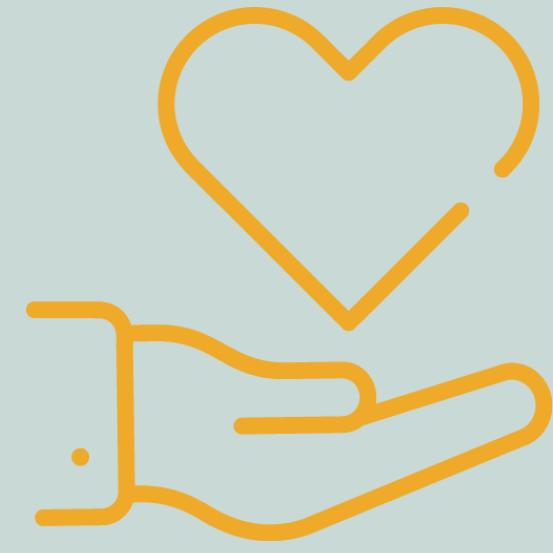


Redwood Region Health & Caregiving Sector: Professions By Median Income



High School Diploma	Certificates	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Professional Degree	* Programs that are planned to be in development locally	+ No Program Locally Available
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The Redwood Region faces **strong healthcare workforce demand**, with over 11,000 projected openings for Home Health Aides and 1,090 for Registered Nurses, supported by local training programs from **K-12 through graduate level**.

Occupational Title	Total Job Openings
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	11,340
Registered Nurses	1,090
Medical Assistants	890
Nursing Assistants	770
Medical Secretaries	700
Childcare Workers	470
Dental Assistants	460
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	430
Medical and Health Services Managers	420
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	340
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	310
Social Workers, All Other	230
Pharmacy Technicians	220
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	190
Healthcare Social Workers	150
Community Health Workers	130
Nurse Practitioners	130
Health Educators	120

Redwood Region Health & Caregiving Sector: Locally Offered Programs and Degrees

K-12	Available Certificates	College of the Redwoods	Woodland College	Mendocino College	Cal Poly Humboldt
Health-Career Exploration Summer Institute (HESI)	Addiction Studies Medical Assistant Pharmacy Technician Medical Billing & Coding Specialist Phlebotomy Chemical Dependency Counselor Child Development Associate Teacher Child Development Master Teacher Child Development Teacher Addiction & Recovery Counseling Child Development Human Service Worker LVN to RN	Dental Assisting, A.S. Early Childhood Education, A.S. Kinesiology, A.A. Licensed Vocational Nursing, A.S. North Coast Paramedic, A.S. Personal Wellness, A.S. Psychology, A.A. Registered Nurse, A.S. Social Work & Human Services, A.S. Programs in Development Psychiatric Technology Radiologic Technology Respiratory Technology Surgical Technology Healthcare Navigation/ Patient Care Coordination	Biology, A.S.-T Chemical Dependency Counselor, A.S. Early Childhood Education, A.A. Human Services, A.S. Nutrition & Dietetics, A.S.-T Psychology, A.A.-T Social Work & Human Services, A.A.-T	Addiction & Recovery Counseling, A.S. Allied Health, A.S. Health Sciences, A.S. Child Development/ Family Relations, A.S. Early Childhood Education, A.S.-T Kinesiology, A.A.-T Human Services Paraprofessional, A.A. LVN-to-RN Career Ladder, A.S. Physical Therapist Assistant, A.S. Psychology, A.A. Registered Nurse, A.S.	Child Development & Family Relations, B.A. Community Health, B.A. Health & Medical Science, B.S. Kinesiology, B.S. Nursing B.S. Social Work, B.A. Psychology, B.A. Counseling Psychology, M.A. Kinesiology, M.A. School Psychology, M.A. Social Work, M.S.W Programs in Development Speech Language Pathologists Masters of Nursing
Cal Poly Humboldt High School Scholars Program (HSS) <small>For Juniors & Seniors in Humboldt & Del Norte Counties</small>					
Del Norte Health Occupations Program (HOSA)					
Biology and Community Health Pathway					
MCOE Free Summer CNA Program <small>For High School Students, 16+</small>					
MCOE Medical Pathways <small>Medical Assistant, Dental Assistant, Phlebotomy</small>					

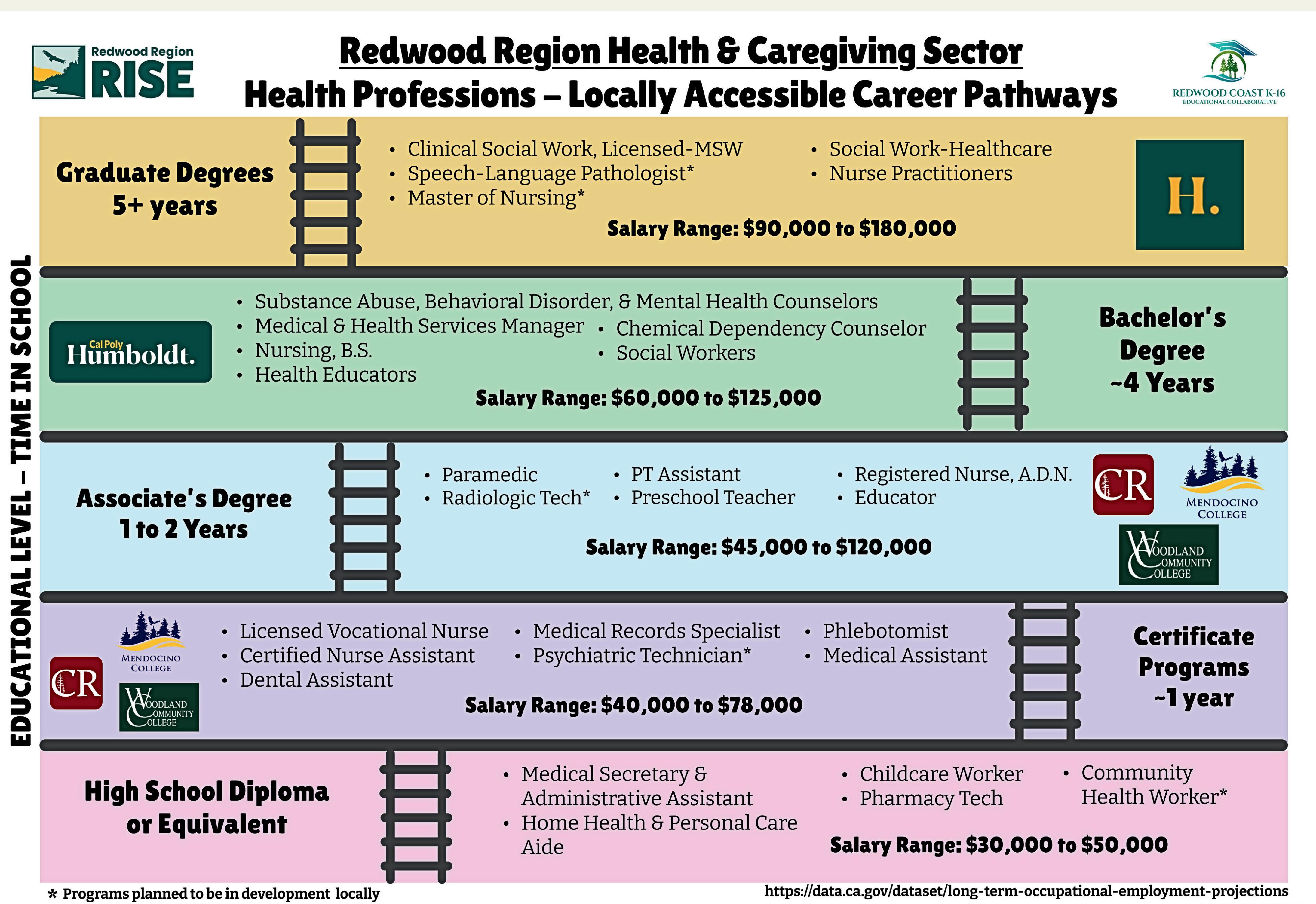
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Career Pathways

The Health and Caregiving sector offers **accessible career pathways** with clear educational progression and strong earning potential. Starting with **certificate programs** that can be completed in about one year, residents can enter the field earning \$40,000 - \$78,000, then advance through **associate and bachelor's degrees** to positions paying \$45,000-\$125,000, and ultimately pursue **graduate degrees** leading to specialized roles with salaries reaching \$90,000-\$180,000.

The career ladder below provides entry points and advancement opportunities across locally available programs.



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High School Pathways

Healthcare career preparation begins at the high school level across the Redwood Region, with established and emerging pathways in all four counties. Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, and Mendocino Counties offer Career Technical Education (CTE) sequences in **patient care, mental health, and health sciences**, with many schools recently expanding their programs through Golden State Pathway funding to provide students with **early exposure to healthcare careers and seamless transitions to postsecondary training**.

Del Norte County	
Del Norte High School	Patient Care, Mental and Behavioral Health
<i>Soon, moving CTE to the County and making pathways open to all regional high schools</i>	
Humboldt County	
McKinleyville High School	Bio/Community Health (2 year CTE sequence)
Pacific View Charter	Healthcare Pathway (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)
Southern Humboldt	Healthcare Pathway (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)
Ferndale High School	Patient Care Pathway (3 year CTE sequence)
Lake County	
Clearlake High School	Healthcare Pathway (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)
Natural High School	Healthcare Pathway (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)
Lakeport Alternative High School	Healthcare Pathway (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)
Middletown High School	Healthcare Pathway (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)
Lake County Office of Education (includes Konocti, Lakeport, Middletown, & Upper Lake)	Healthcare Pathway (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)
Mendocino County	
Ukiah High School	Patient Care Pathway
Ukiah Independent High School	Patient Care Pathway (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)
Ukiah South Valley Continuation	Patient Care Pathway (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)
Willits Charter	Health Science (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)
Willits Unified	Health
Round Valley High School	Patient Care (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)
San Hedrin High School	Health Pathway (just starting with Golden State Pathway funds)



Health and Caregiving



Health and Caregiving Project (California Jobs First)



Lake County Healthcare Education and Regional Training Hub - Redwood Region RISE Catalyst Project

The Lake County Healthcare Education and Regional Training Hub (HEART Hub) will enhance healthcare education through three initiatives: the SPARK Program introducing 4,500-6,000 elementary/middle school students to healthcare careers annually, Healthcare Workforce Development providing certifications and training for high school students and adults, and Community Outreach offering health literacy and safety training.

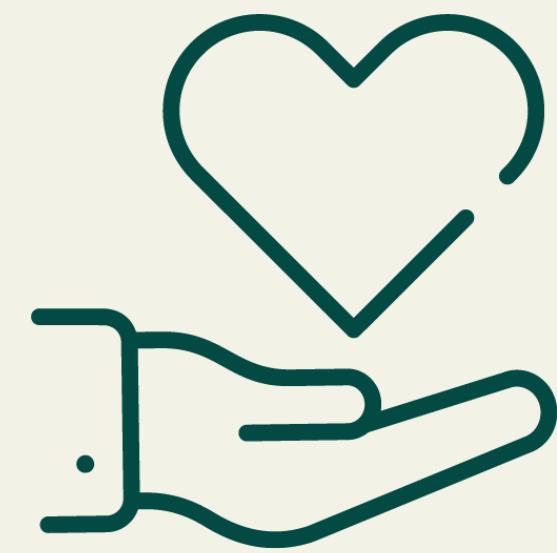
This comprehensive approach addresses workforce shortages while promoting community wellness and health equity in Lake County.

Major Strategies and Tactics

- **Access Expansion:** Workforce pipeline investments, telehealth adoption, and coordinated community-based care delivery.
- **Capacity Building:** Development of Health Hubs, integration into large-scale economic development, and upgraded facilities for both healthcare and caregiving.
- **Policy and Systems Innovation:** Strengthening data-driven planning and rural advocacy to secure long-term funding and regulatory improvements.

Activation Plan - Recent Tactic Ranking





Health & Caregiving Activation Plan At a Glance

Invest in Rural Policy Advocacy

- Identify agencies and individuals who can engage in advocacy, such as elders
- Evaluate lobbying activities and expert resources
- Gauge public sentiment
- Advocacy & social media training
- Develop rural health & caregiving policy platform
- Create a toolkit of advocacy resources (letter templates, social media messages, grassroots campaign, and PSAs)
- Cultivate funding that supports advocacy activities as well as the other Activation Plan activities
- Join public meetings and coordinate meetings with Elected Officials & Legislative Leaders

Invest in Data & Systems Analysis

- Identify priority workforce areas for additional assessment.
- Identify what employees are from out of the area and how to utilize/create local resources instead.
- Assessment of healthcare & caregiving services needed based on demand & payer type
- Continue ongoing review of assessments and recommendations and collaborate with expert guidance to develop a report and recommendations
- Complete assessment and analysis of the number and types of jobs needed for demographic changes
- Dissemination of findings and recommendations
- Continue refinement of Activation Plan and/or development of Strategic Plan to guide implementation

Facility Upgrades & Development

- Explore financial opportunities to expand availability and accessibility of facilities & services
- Creation of Feasibility Studies &/or Business Plans to evaluate site expansion or new site development
- Purchase properties for service expansion
- Develop Architectural Plans, as well as Technology/Equipment Plans
- Evaluate & secure varied funding streams and support sustainable financials beyond grant funds
- Support facility upgrades and construction facilities
- Support Advancement of Collaborative Public-Private-Tribal Partnerships

Invest in Existing SDOH Collaborative

- Assess ongoing initiatives in the region that address health equity & what can be scaled up
- Find representatives from specific interested parties to engage on collaborative efforts
- Hold cross-collaborative convenings
- Expand reach and impact of these existing collaboratives through collaborative funding projects
- Promote CIE for communication between CBOs



Full Activation Plan available at
https://ccrp.humboldt.edu/sites/default/files/redwood_region_rise_health_and_caregiving_activation_plan_final.pdf

Workforce Activities

- Develop a Comprehensive Regional Asset Map & Workforce Pipeline Inventory
- Align Curriculum with Regional Workforce Needs
- Expand Access to Healthcare Education & Training
- Establish and Strengthen Regional Health Education Hubs
- Build Equitable Pathways from K-16 to Career
- Increase Support for Underrepresented and Priority Populations
- Promote Career Awareness and Engagement
- Improve Clinical Training Infrastructure and Placement Capacity
- Strengthen Recruitment and Retention Programs
- Identify and Leverage Funding Opportunities

Telehealth Activities

- Research benefits and opportunities of Telehealth
- Pilot potential telehealth and asynchronous strategies and evaluate outcomes (Virtual primary medical care and Ascend behavioral health)
- Create messaging and marketing materials for a variety of constituents
- Roll-out Healthcare Organization Campaign
- Roll-out Provider Education Campaign
- Roll-out Patient Education Campaign

Hub Models

- Secure Funding
- Build Project Team
- Define Hub Model
- Assess Existing Infrastructure
- Conduct Feasibility Study
- Evaluate Pricing Models
- Develop Business Plan Options
- Engage Stakeholders
- Launch Pilot Hub Program
- Create Development Toolkit

Investment from Large Scale Development

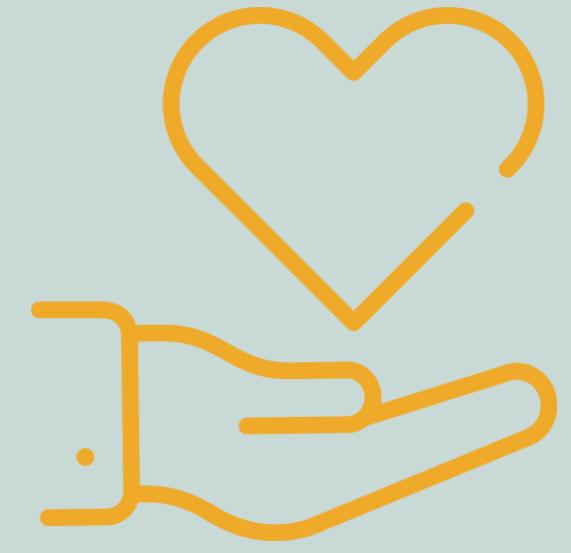
- Collaborate with large employers, especially the new industries (offshore wind) being developed
- Conduct a feasibility study to assess possible strategies (including community benefit funding set-aside or special tax districts) to generate revenues for expanded childcare and healthcare
- Study successful models of big business developing direct services or contracted services (health & childcare) for their employees and/or co-locating services on-site for their employees
- Dissemination of Assessment Findings and Strategy Recommendations
- Meetings or Key Informant Interviews to evaluate buy-in from large employers for potential models

Top Ranking Tactics

- Cultivate, Maximize, and Expand Workforce Pipeline Programs**
- Invest in Data & Systems Analysis**
- Explore and Advance Hub Models**
- Invest in Rural Policy Advocacy**
 - Socialize and Promote Telehealth Adoption
 - Require investment as part of large-scale development processes



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Additional RRRISE-Aligned Investment Projects

The **College of the Redwoods** is expanding their **registered nursing program** from 60 slots per cohort to 100 slots per cohort in Humboldt and Del Norte starting this year. Although this expansion will help to meet the current and ever-growing need for RNs, this will put additional strain on the already over-burdened healthcare providers, who are now tasked with being the clinical training resource for these RN students.

To prevent and combat these issues, the RRRISE Health & Caregiving Advisory Council has brainstormed strategies that we could implement if there were sufficient funding and resources:

Regional Clinical Placement Consortium focused initially on Nursing to meet the needs of educators & employers that includes:

- An assessment of training activities & capacity for clinical sites,
- Feasibility for utility of a clinical placement software,
- Financial support for preceptors,
- Analysis & support for retention of students from regional academic programs, and
- Collaborative development of degrees, courses & curriculum to optimize the workforce and skillsets needed by employers.



Other Health & Caregiving Projects:

- Culturally Responsive Workforce Development Programs including programs such as Trauma Informed Care trainings and expansion of the Indigenous Wellness Initiatives and Maternal Health Education, Residency and Training Programs.
- Launch & Expansion of regional recruitment and retention collaboratives, such as Incubate and Home in Humboldt and the Childcare Stabilization Fund recruitment and retention bonuses.
- Development of a Rural Health & Caregiving Policy Platform & corresponding advocacy activities to address major barriers and challenges of the sector (Ex: wages, Medicaid, telehealth, zoning, employer-sponsored childcare)

New projects are always emerging, and we're poised to be responsive to regional needs.