



What Is a Hospital Epidemiologist?

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By [Leigh Ann Morgan](#)

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that 13 percent of epidemiologists worked in hospitals in 2010. These health professionals use their knowledge and skills to determine the potential causes of



disease and find out how diseases spread. Epidemiologists typically work according to a routine schedule, but hospital emergencies may make it necessary to work more hours or at different times than usual.

Required Education

At minimum, an epidemiologist needs a master's degree in public health or a related field. Coursework for this [career](#) includes biostatistics, biology and public health.

Advanced courses help students learn to analyze and apply the data they have collected. Some epidemiologists have doctoral degrees or dual degrees in medicine

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and epidemiology. During medical school, they learn how to conduct examinations and diagnose illnesses, giving them valuable skills to use in a hospital setting.

Job Duties

Hospital epidemiologists develop infection control plans to protect patients and health-care workers from infectious diseases. They identify the risks for infection and attempt to eliminate or control these risks. If an outbreak occurs in the hospital, the epidemiologist attempts to determine the source of the infection. A hospital epidemiologist also develops isolation policies for patients with infectious diseases; educates health-care workers about the principles of infection control; monitors the use of antibiotics and the presence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in the hospital; and develops written policies to protect patients from hospital-acquired infections.

Compliance

Hospital epidemiologists also play an important role in complying with mandates from The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, Occupational Safety & Health Administration and state departments of health. Epidemiologists help administrators to prepare for hospital inspections and follow up on any violations. They may also write reports and keep records as required by law.

Certification

The Certification Board of Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc. offers the Certification in Infection Prevention and Control to eligible professionals. CBIC developed this certification to provide a standard for measuring the essential knowledge needed by infection-control practitioners. The certification also recognizes those who have developed the skills necessary to succeed in this field.

The certification exam consists of 150 computer-based questions that cover epidemiological investigation, management and communication, occupational health, identification of infectious diseases, and education and research. Candidates must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree or an active license in a health-care profession such as nursing, respiratory therapy or medical technology. Each candidate must also have experience in preventing and controlling infections.

Salary

The median annual salary for an epidemiologist in a local, state or private hospital was \$72,990 in 2010, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This is slightly less than the median salary for all life scientists, but significantly higher than the \$33,840 median salary for all occupations. The BLS anticipates that employment in this field will grow by 24 percent between 2010 and 2020.

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Epidemiologist Certification

By [Chron Contributor](#) Updated November 04, 2020

Epidemiologists protect the public health by studying the causes of diseases and working to control the spread of disease. Some specialists in disease control have a master's degree or Ph.D. in epidemiology or public health, while others are trained and licensed health professionals working in clinical settings. Either type of training can qualify you for epidemiologist certification if you meet the experience and testing requirements.

Consider the Purpose

The issuing agency for certification in infection control is the Certification Board of Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc., or CBIC for short. The Certification in

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Infection Control credential, or CIC, establishes that you have essential knowledge in the field of disease control. Certification also helps health professionals demonstrate their mastery of the subject matter through qualifying experience and examination. A certified health professional has reached a high level of professionalism and has kept current with new findings. Becoming a board certified epidemiologist verifies your knowledge and credentials.

Look at CIC Certification Requirements

You can apply for epidemiology certification if you have a related bachelor's or graduate degree or hold an active license as a health professional. Registered and practical nurses, medical technologists and physicians are some of the professionals who qualify. In addition, you must be currently employed in a health-related job, and the control and prevention of infection must be a major part of your work. You must demonstrate experience in different areas of epidemiology, including data collection and investigation of outbreaks. The exam is designed for applicants who have at least two years full-time experience, although there is no specific time requirement.

If you attain a public health degree, you'll take classes that will help you prepare for the exam. For example, the graduate program in public health at [Tufts University](#) includes coursework like:

- Data Management
- Infectious Disease Epidemiology
- Health Care Services
- Chronic Disease Epidemiology
- Observational Study Design
- Principles of Epidemiology
- Occupational and Environmental Health

Take the Examination

The certification test for first-time applicants is the computer-based test, or CBT. Apply online on the CBIC website to determine your eligibility to take the CBT and to schedule a testing appointment if you qualify. Take the exam at one of more than 140 Applied Measurement Professional Assessment Centers in the United States and Canada. Centers are available in every U.S. state and the District of Columbia; testing centers also are available abroad. The exam takes three hours to complete and contains 150 multiple-choice questions on up-to-date infection-control practices. If you don't pass, you must wait 90 days before you try again.

Recertification is Required

You must retest every five years to maintain your credential and demonstrate that you have kept current with new procedures. During your fifth year, you may re-certify by taking the online Self-Achievement Recertification Examination, the SARE, or by retaking the computer-based test. If you let the CIC certification lapse, however, you must follow the same procedure as a first-time applicant and take the computer-based test to regain your certification.

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CVICU RN Job Descriptions

By [Chron Contributor](#) Updated March 02, 2021

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Are you looking for the opportunity to serve as an important part of a medical team? Consider becoming a CVICU nurse. The CVICU medical abbreviation stands for Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit Nurse. A CVICU nurse provides critical care to patients with potentially life-threatening heart conditions. They must observe changes in their patients, analyze charts, change bandages, and communicate effectively with doctors and health care professionals. A CVICU nurse are pivotal member of an emergency medical care team and must be able to use specialized skills to prevent disease, help patients recover from surgery, and stabilize critically injured patients.

Gain Education and Experience

CVICU nurses, like all registered nurses, must obtain a two-year associate's degree or a four-year bachelor's degree in nursing before they start their careers. RNs also need to pass the National Council Licensure Examination, or NCLEX-RN. Some hospitals require different types of nursing courses or programs to become certified in cardiac care before employment.

For example, the [Charlotte Area Health Education Center](#) provides a cardiac vascular nursing certification Preparation course to help nurses prepare for the Cardiac Vascular Nursing Certification Exam. Training courses will help you review the main content areas covered in the exam and discuss test-taking strategies. You'll use this knowledge when you take the exam administered by the [American Nurses Credentialing Center](#). This certification will give you a competitive edge in the field.

Consider the Duties and Responsibilities

CVICU RNs are responsible for the health and safety of patients under their care. They run IVs, observe vital signs, and operate heart monitors. CVICU nurses must always be on their toes. They are called on in emergencies to provide CPR and may

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be asked to operate defibrillators to restart patients' hearts. They need to work closely with doctors and heart specialists to control patients' blood pressure and prevent heart failure.

Look at Work Conditions

CV ICU RNs have intense work conditions. ICU patients require constant surveillance, medication, and medical interventions to survive. Nurses work eight to 12-hour shifts, during the day and at night, and often on weekends and holidays. Aside from stress, CV ICU nurses often sustain work related injuries. They must bend, lift, and squat during their shifts. Many injure their backs, necks, and pull muscles as a result of the constant pressure on their bodies.

Review CVICU Salary

According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), registered nurses earned an average salary of **\$73,300** in 2019. The top 10 percent of wage earners made more than **\$111,220**, while those in the bottom 10 percent took home less than **\$52,080** over this period. Specialize certifications and credentials may boost the CVICU salary potential. You can expect a strong job outlook for this position. BLS projects a seven percent increase in available positions between now and 2029.

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What Is AAPC Certification?

By [Chron Contributor](#) Updated July 13, 2020

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The AAPC, or American Academy of Professional Coders, is an organization that provides training and issues certification to medical insurance coders, medical practice managers and medical auditors. Employers consider AAPC certification a mark of competence in the medical billing and business support field. Several specific types of AAPC certifications exist for medical coders, as well as separate certifications for medical auditors, compliance specialists and practice managers.

AAPC: Medical Coding Certification

The AAPC offers core Certified Professional Coder (CPC) certifications along with many advanced practice specializations. Training programs are available through AAPC that cover medical coding, medical charts, anatomy, physiology, medical terminology and medical billing used in various medical settings.

Example:

- Certified Professional Coder (CPC) for coders in a physician's office
- Certified Outpatient Coding (COC) for coders in outpatient facilities
- Certified Inpatient Coder (CIC) for coders in inpatient care facilities
- Certified Risk Adjustment Coders (CRC) for coders who assist healthcare providers by assigning correct codes denoting disease progression and chronic conditions

There are also 18 specialty certification credentials for distinct medical specialties such as cardiology, surgery, pediatrics and family practice listed on the AAPC website, as of July 2020. Training is geared to expert coders.

Certification Exams for Coders

Candidates for AAPC medical coding certifications must pass 150-question multiple choice exams testing their knowledge of diagnostic, procedural and supply codes

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insurers use for reimbursement . Certification exams test general knowledge of coding. Candidates who wish to take these exams must complete AAPC training or have at least two years of coding experience. The AAPC organization recommends but does not require that all candidates for its exams have an associate degree.

The CIRCC and specialty exams are intended for candidates who have at least two years of experience and knowledge related to specific medical specialties, but there is no experience requirement for the specialty exams.

All AAPC examinations require candidates to become members of the organization, and they can sign up as members and pay membership fees when they register for their exams.

Medical Auditor Certification

The AAPC medical auditing certification is known as the Certified Professional Medical Auditor credential. While there is no set requirement for taking the 150-question multiple choice certification exam, the AAPC recommends two years of experience and an associate's degree. The exam covers knowledge of medical documentation and record-keeping as well as coding and compliance with private and public insurer billing rules.

Medical Compliance Certification

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 requires medical practices to develop internal programs aimed at enforcing compliance with complex Federal healthcare laws. The AAPC offers the Certified Professional Compliance Officer – CPCO – certification to qualify people responsible for such programs.

Since candidates for this examination need to understand practical applications of healthcare laws, the AAPC recommends, but does not require, candidates to have

two years of compliance experience and an associate's degree in health care before taking its 150-question multiple choice exam.

Practice Manager Certification

Medical practice managers need general knowledge of the business end of health care. The topics covered by the AAPC Certified Physician Practice Manager exam include fraud and how to avoid it, quality control, human resource management, marketing and accounting. There are no set or recommended requirements for prior experience, but the AAPC recommends that CPPM exam candidates have an associate's degree. The exam consists of 150 multiple-choice questions.

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