

Medical Scribe

Inland Empire/Desert Region (Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario Metropolitan Statistical Area)

Introduction

A medical scribe is a healthcare worker that acts as a personal assistant to physicians. Medical scribes document medical information in the Electronic Health Record (EHR) system; they gather patient information and perform other clerical tasks on behalf of a physician. Although formal training is not required to become a medical scribe, individuals may benefit from an understanding of medical terminology.

A 2013 study reported that medical physicians in a community hospital emergency department spent 43% of their time on data entry and only 28% of their time in direct contact with their patients (Hill, Sears & Melanson, 2013). A smaller scale project found that the use of medical scribes increased physician productivity as well as their job satisfaction in an outpatient walk-in urgent care medical clinic (Cleland, 2017). While these outcomes are undoubtedly positive, the lack of standardized training and variability of work experience among medical scribes poses risks to the accuracy of medical records, as well as the delivery of care, which is informed by a patient's medical record (Keith, 2018).

It is important to note that although the role of a medical scribe sounds similar to that of a medical transcriptionist, biller, or coder, it is a different job (Weiss, 2015). Medical transcriptionists do not typically see patients alongside a physician. They often work in a different setting altogether and convert a physician's voice dictation into a written report. Medical billers talk to patients and insurance companies to make sure invoices are paid correctly. Finally, medical coders review patient medical records and ensure that the correct codes are utilized throughout.

Mt. San Jacinto College is currently only Inland Empire/Desert region California Community College that offers medical scribe training. Their Efficient Care Medical Assistant & Scribe Training Program began on April 1, 2019 (Mt. San Jacinto, 2019). The only other community college program in the state is at Shasta College in Redding. They offer a one-semester medical scribe program consisting of 11 total units (Shasta College, 2019).

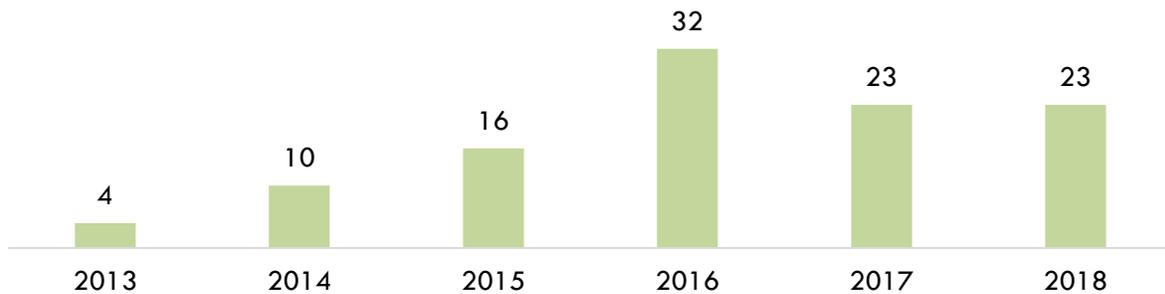
Traditional labor market data does not currently provide sufficient information to quantify workforce demand for medical scribe jobs. This report utilizes employer job posting data to provide a snapshot of demand for medical scribe jobs over the last five years, 2013 to 2018.

Job Postings, Employers, Skills, and Education for Medical Scribes

It is estimated that there were 15,000 to 20,000 medical scribe jobs in the United States in 2014 (Cleland, 2017; Gellert, 2015). The American College of Medical Scribe Specialists suggests that the number of medical scribe jobs has been doubling annually (Gellert, 2015). By 2020, the estimated number of projected medical scribes positions will climb to 100,000 jobs (Cleland, 2017; Gellert, 2015). A United States House Resolution (H.R. 1848) allowed the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to establish a pilot program to increase the number of medical scribes employed in the department. The VA expected to hire 40 medical scribes (20 term employees and 20 contractors) in the fiscal year 2018 (H.R. 1848, 2017).

Due to the lack of traditional labor market data, employer job postings for medical scribe jobs were analyzed in the Inland Empire/Desert region to quantify the demand for these jobs. Over the last five years, (January 2013 to December 2018), there were 108 job advertisements (ads) for medical scribes in the Inland Empire/Desert Region. Exhibit 1 displays the number of job ads posted per year during this timeframe.

Exhibit 1: Job ads by year for medical scribes in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, Jan 2013 – Dec 2018



Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

According to job ads, the top worksite regional cities for medical scribes were San Bernardino, Palm Springs, Moreno Valley, Wildomar, and Temecula. Exhibit 2 displays employers that posted the most job ads during the last six years for medical scribes in the Inland Empire/Desert Region.

Exhibit 2: Employers posting the most job ads for medical scribes in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, Jan 2013 – Dec 2018

Job Title	Employers
Medical Scribe (n=85)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vituity (formerly CEP America) • Scribe Connect • St. Bernardine Medical Center

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Exhibit 3 lists a sample of in-demand specialized and employability skills that employers are seeking when looking for workers to fill medical scribe positions. Specialized skills are occupation-specific skills employers are requesting for industry or job competency. Employability skills are foundational skills that transcend industries and occupations; this category is commonly referred to as “soft skills.” The skills reported in job postings may be utilized as a helpful guide for curriculum development.

Exhibit 3: In-demand skills for medical scribes in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, Jan 2013 – Dec 2018

Job Title	Specialized skills	Employability skills
Medical Scribe (n=89)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Records Retrieval • Electronic Medical Records (EMR) • Medical Terminology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typing • Writing • Detail-Oriented

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Of the 108 Medical Scribe jobs posting over between 2013 and 2018, only 13 job postings mentioned an educational requirement. All employers indicated that they were looking for a candidate with a high school diploma or vocational training. Please note, 88% of medical scribe job postings did not specify a minimum education requirement. Exhibit 4 displays the minimum advertised education requirement requested by employers in online job ads.

Exhibit 4: Online job ads with minimum advertised education requirements for medical scribes in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, Jan 2013 – Dec 2018

Job Title	Minimum Advertised Education Requirement from Job Ads			
	Number of Job Postings (n=)	High school diploma or vocational training	Associate degree	Bachelor’s degree or higher
Medical Scribe	13	100%	-	-

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

* Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Degree/Award or Some Postsecondary Coursework

Wages

Less than five percent of the job ads for medical scribes contained wage information, making it difficult to provide an accurate salary estimate. According to a 2015 article, medical scribe companies, such as ScribeAmerica, hire premedical, pre-nursing, and pre-physician assistant students as medical scribes and pay them an average of \$10 to \$20 per hour (Berger, 2015). The small-scale study conducted by Don Cleland (2017) took place at an urgent care facility in Chico, and the medical scribes that participated were paid \$18.60 per hour, falling near the upper end of the wage above range. According to ZipRecruiter (2019), medical scribes in California can expect to earn \$14.28 per hour. The VA estimated

that the combined annual pay and benefits for a medical scribe would be \$48,000 in 2018 (H.R. 1848, 2017).

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Contact

Michael Goss, Director
Center of Excellence, Inland Empire/Desert Region
michael.goss@chaffey.edu
April 2019