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2010-11 EDITIONS OF THE OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK AND THE CAREER GUIDE TO INDUSTRIES AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET

The 2010-11 editions of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* and the *Career Guide to Industries* were released today by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The *Handbook* and the *Career Guide* can be accessed online at www.bls.gov/oco and www.bls.gov/oco/cg, respectively. The print version of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* is expected to be available in the spring of 2010.

Considered the Government's premier source of career information, the *Handbook* and *Career Guide* profile hundreds of occupations and dozens of industries, respectively. Both publications provide comprehensive, up-to-date, and reliable labor market information that has helped millions of people plan their future work lives. In addition, this information has proven invaluable to counselors, students, jobseekers, career changers, education and training officials, and researchers.

These publications reflect the Bureau's latest employment projections, which cover the 2008-18 decade. The 10-year projections of industry and occupational employment are revised every 2 years. They were made available through a news release on December 10, 2009, accessible at www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.toc.htm. Detailed information on the 2008-18 projections appears in five articles in the November 2009 issue of the *Monthly Labor Review*, accessible online at www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/mlrhome.htm. A graphic presentation of the highlights of the projections appears in the Winter 2009-10 *Occupational Outlook Quarterly*, accessible at www.bls.gov/ooq.

The Occupational Outlook Handbook

For more than 50 years, the *Handbook* has proven to be the most reliable source of career guidance. Useful for looking up information on particular occupations or just browsing through possible careers, the *Handbook* profiles nearly 300 occupations that provide most of the jobs in the economy. For each occupation, the *Handbook* highlights key characteristics, such as work environment, job prospects, and education requirements. Each occupation is presented in a standard format which allows comparisons to be performed relatively easy. Excerpts from the 2010-11 edition of the *Handbook* describing physician assistants are presented at the end of this news release.

The Career Guide to Industries

The *Career Guide to Industries*, the *Occupational Outlook Handbook's* companion publication, analyzes employment change from an industry perspective, providing information on 43 industries that cover 3 out of 4 jobs in the economy. For each industry, the *Career Guide* describes the nature of the industry and recent developments, typical working conditions, and key occupations employed in the industry. The *Career Guide* also discusses industry training practices and worker earnings. The "Outlook" section compares the industry's projected percent change in employment with the percent change in the total number of jobs for all industries combined.

“What's New?”...in the 2010-11 Editions

The new editions of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* and *Career Guide to Industries* incorporate several website enhancements and changes in occupational coverage. For example, the online version of the *Handbook* will now include photos associated with each occupation, as well as direct links to O*NET—the Occupational Information Network—a database sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration that has information about different aspects of a job, including tasks performed, knowledge, skills, work activities and more. O*NET can be accessed on the Internet at www.online.onetcenter.org. Within the *Career Guide*, there is one less industry covered—43 instead of 44 in the previous edition—due to classification changes between the 2002 and 2007 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) on which it is based. An overview and discussion of this and other modifications can be found in the "Occupational Information Included in the Handbook" and the "Information in the Career Guide to Industries" sections of each respective publication.

Ordering Information

The print version of the 2010-11 edition of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* is sold by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402, and is expected to be available in the spring of 2010. Ordering and price information will appear online at www.bls.gov/emp/ep_order_information.htm.

Technical documentation about the projections is available online at www.bls.gov/emp/ep_tech_documentation.htm.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Following are excerpts from the 2010-11 edition of the Occupational Outlook Handbook describing physician assistants.

Nature of Work

This section describes the typical tasks and responsibilities of workers.

Physician assistants (PAs) are formally trained to provide diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive healthcare services, as delegated by a physician. Working as members of a healthcare team, they take medical histories, examine and treat patients, order and interpret laboratory tests and X rays, and make diagnoses.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Typical paths to entry and advancement are explained in this section.

Requirements for admission to training programs vary; most applicants have a college degree and some health-related work experience. All states require physician assistants to complete an accredited, formal education program and pass a national exam to obtain a license.

Employment

This section reports the number of jobs in 2008, and key industries in which those jobs were found.

Physician assistants held about 74,800 jobs in 2008. More than 53 percent of jobs for PAs were in the offices of physicians. About 24 percent were in general medical and surgical hospitals, public or private.

Job Outlook

Here, each occupation's projected employment change over the next decade is covered, as well as the various factors expected to affect employment trends.

Employment of physician assistants is expected to grow by 39 percent from 2008 to 2018, much faster than the average for all occupations. Projected rapid job growth reflects the expansion of healthcare industries and an emphasis on cost containment, which results in increasing use of PAs by healthcare establishments.

Earnings

This section discusses typical earnings and how workers are compensated.

The median annual wage of physician assistants was \$81,230 in May 2008. The middle 50 percent of physician assistants earned between \$68,210 and \$97,070. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$51,360, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$110,240.

Related Occupations

Occupations involving similar duties, skills, education and training are discussed in this section.

Occupations with similar educational backgrounds, healthcare experience, and/or responsibilities include audiologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, registered nurses and speech-language pathologists.

Sources of Additional Information

In this section, the *Handbook* lists the mailing addresses of associations, government agencies, unions, and other organizations that can provide occupational information.

For information on a career as a physician assistant, including a list of accredited programs, contact the American Academy of Physician Assistants Information Center, 950 North Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Internet: www.aapa.org.