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Research Brief: Health Care Employment Trends in Maine, September 2009

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information

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Health Care Employment Trends in Maine

The health care industry is the largest in Maine with an average of 84,200 jobs in 2008, accounting for 14 percent of wage and salary employment. The industry paid a total of nearly \$3.4 billion in wages, nearly 19 percent of the total wages paid in Maine. Nationally, health care accounted for roughly 12 percent of employment and total wages.

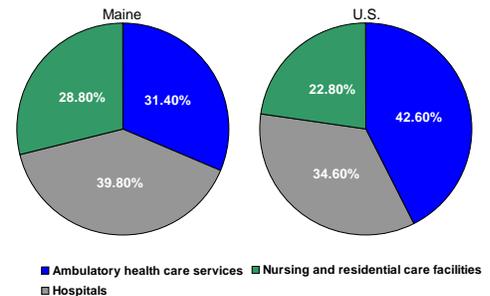
The structure of Maine health care employment is somewhat different from the nation with a larger share of jobs in nursing and residential care, and a smaller share in ambulatory health care services (graph 1). The primary reasons for the high share of jobs in nursing and residential care in Maine are the higher-than-average share of elderly population (7.3 percent vs. 6.2 percent) and the high share of jobs in residential mental health facilities. Compared to the nation, Maine has nearly twice as many jobs in residential mental health facilities relative to its population.

Employment in health care grew over three times the all-industries average between 1998 and 2008 (28 vs. 8 percent). The fastest growth was among hospitals and the slowest growth was in nursing and residential care (graph 2).

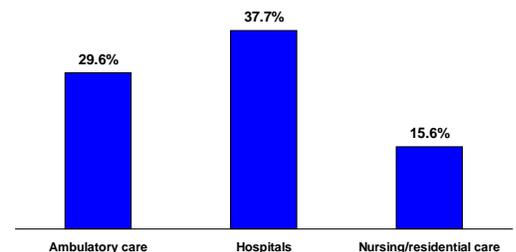
The structure of ambulatory health care services in Maine is similar to the nation, with 66 percent of the 26,471 jobs in offices of physicians, other health practitioners, and offices of dentists in 2008 (graph 3). Between 1998 and 2008 the fastest ambulatory care job growth was among the smaller providers, particularly other health care practitioners, up 79 percent; medical and diagnostic laboratories, up 55 percent; and other ambulatory care, up 35 percent (graph 4). Other health care providers include offices of chiropractors, optometrists, mental health practitioners, specialty therapists and podiatrists.

The structure of Maine nursing and residential care employment differ somewhat from the nation, with a higher share in residential mental health care and a lower share in nursing care compared to the nation (graph 5) though Maine had a higher number of nursing care jobs relative to the size of its population. Between 1998 and 2008, the fastest job growth was among other residential care, up 73 percent; elderly community care, up 53 percent; and residential

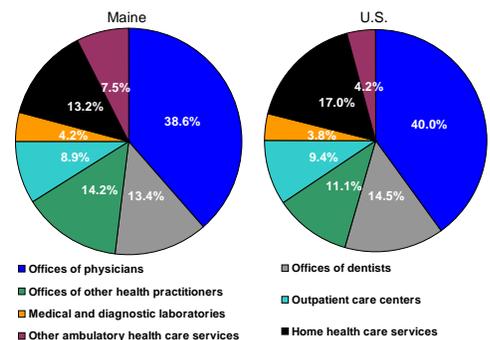
A higher share of Maine health care employment was in nursing and residential care and a lower share in ambulatory care in 2008



Job growth was well above average in each of the three primary health care industries between 1998 and 2008



The structure of ambulatory health care services in Maine was similar to the nation in 2004

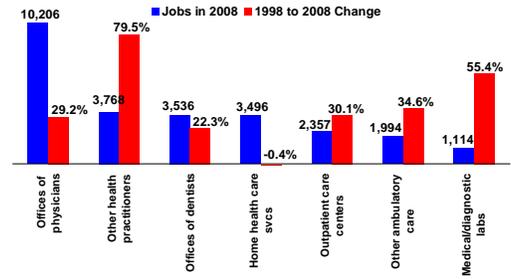


mental health, up 27 percent. The number in of jobs in nursing care facilities declined 4 percent, partly due to the Medicare program shifting to lower cost types of care for the elderly (graph 6).

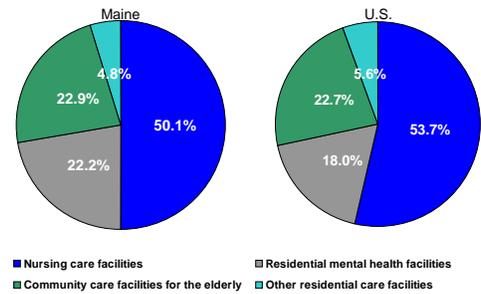
The average wage in the health care industry was \$42,433 in 2008, 17 percent higher than the all-industries average. That was a major contributor lower-than-average overall health care job turnover. In the health care sector, turnover was generally highest in the lowest paying industries (graph 7).

The job outlook for health care is bright. Between 2006 and 2016 the number of health care jobs is expected to rise 17 percent, compared to an average growth rate of 5 percent for all industries. Among occupations, 25 of the 40 with the fastest projected rate of job growth are health care related.

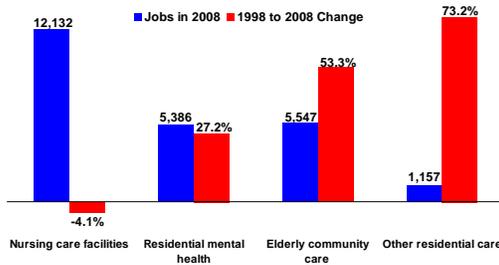
The fastest ambulatory job growth between 1998 and 2008 was generally in the smallest industries



A smaller share of Maine's nursing and residential care jobs were in nursing care and a higher share in residential mental health care in 2008



The number of jobs in nursing care facilities declined between 1998 and 2008, while the smaller residential and community care industries grew rapidly



Job turnover was generally highest in the lowest paying health care industries in Maine in 2008

