

INTRODUCTION TO THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Fifth Edition

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Dedication

This *Fifth Edition* of
Introduction to the Health Professions is dedicated
with appreciation and gratitude to many, but especially to:

The great teachers who channel their energies
into preparing students for health careers.
We salute you.

Those dedicated and caring students who
have chosen careers of service to humanity
and are sharing their talents with others.

We wish you great success.

Our dear friend, Jim Keating,
who many years ago started the writing careers of two of the authors
and continues to support and encourage their endeavors.

Much love to you, Jim.

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have given help and support in so many ways.
You are greatly valued.

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Acknowledgments

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The contents of the text material for each profession were largely obtained from government sources, especially *Occupational Outlook, 2007–2008*, the Department of Labor. We also obtained information from the organizations representing each profession, as well as various documents through the Internet and selected reports in current journals, magazines, and newspapers. We used some literature from college catalogs and other professional literature.

We do appreciate the contributions of myriad groups of scientists, organizations, and others whose combined efforts provided us with national health objectives for the next 10 years (*Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health*, Department of Health and Human Services). It reflects the scientific advances of the past 20 years and provides insight into trends and opportunities for improvement in the coming decades.

Last, but certainly not least, we thank the teachers and students whose expressed wishes for this kind of information has propelled us to the *Fifth Edition*. We truly hope that it will satisfy your need for information regarding the various health professions available to you and the challenges that await you.

Please let us know your thoughts and wishes so that we can serve you even better with the next edition.

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Preface

We are pleased to provide you with this expanded and revised *Fifth Edition of Introduction to the Health Professions*. We'd like to thank the teachers for their continued use of the book and hope that this edition continues to meet their needs. As you have seen, the health field is very fluid, and in this edition we have tried to include as much new information as space would permit.

We kept the existing two major categories in place with the necessary upgrades and we have made changes as follows.

The first category contains updated information on the following:

- Increased number of individuals who are uninsured and grass roots efforts—cities and states—initiating universal health care for their citizens.
- Policy recommendations by healthcare organizations and consumer groups to expand federally supported healthcare coverage of children.
- Increased demand for healthcare workers because of the change in demographics of the population with a shift to greater numbers above 85 years and fewer numbers in younger age groups resulting in a shortage of healthcare workers.
- Expanded options for supportive living for the aging population including assisted living, community-based and consumer-directed programs.
- Current thinking on Medicare coverage including preventive care and prescription drug coverage.
- Higher costs of health care.

As presented in the previous editions, the changes that have occurred in each profession are modified from the latest *Occupational Outlook* (U.S. Department of Labor, 2007–2008).

A brief analysis of the changes in the chapters on health professions is as follows:

The chapters on clinical laboratory technology, dentistry, dietetics, health-related professions, medicine, occupational therapy, optometry, pharmacy, physician assistants, psychology, and respiratory care practitioners (7–8, 10–13, 18–19, 21, 24, and 30) are revised and updated, especially sections on work description, education and legal requirements, employment trends, and earnings. Information has been deleted from some of these chapters because it is no longer applicable.

The chapters on communication impairments, emergency medical services, imaging modalities, miscellaneous technologists and technicians, miscellaneous therapists and assistants, nursing, physical therapy, social workers, and veterinary medicine (9, 14–17, 20, 22–23, 29) have been completely rewritten including the deletion or addition of some para-health professions.

All the chapters pertaining to health information personnel, health services administration, federal and state regulators, and health education (25–28) have been updated according to the latest *Occupational Outlook*, especially information regarding educational and

certification requirements, salaries, and anticipated job growth. Other revisions cover the changes in roles and responsibilities in health careers in accordance with changes in healthcare delivery systems. An example is the use of electronic medical records.

The progress of technology and demands of the population reflect the need for more health services and additional training of health workers in many fields. Students will need to upgrade their own education to meet the requirements of the changing scene.