

The State of the Allied Health Workforce in North Carolina

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Presentation to the
Council for Allied Health in North Carolina
Annual Presidents Meeting
May 2, 2007



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Today's Presentation: An Overview

- Why study allied health workforce shortages?
- Challenges in estimating the supply of, and demand for, allied health professionals
- The allied health vacancy tracking project
- Moving forward—challenges and opportunities
- Your questions and input



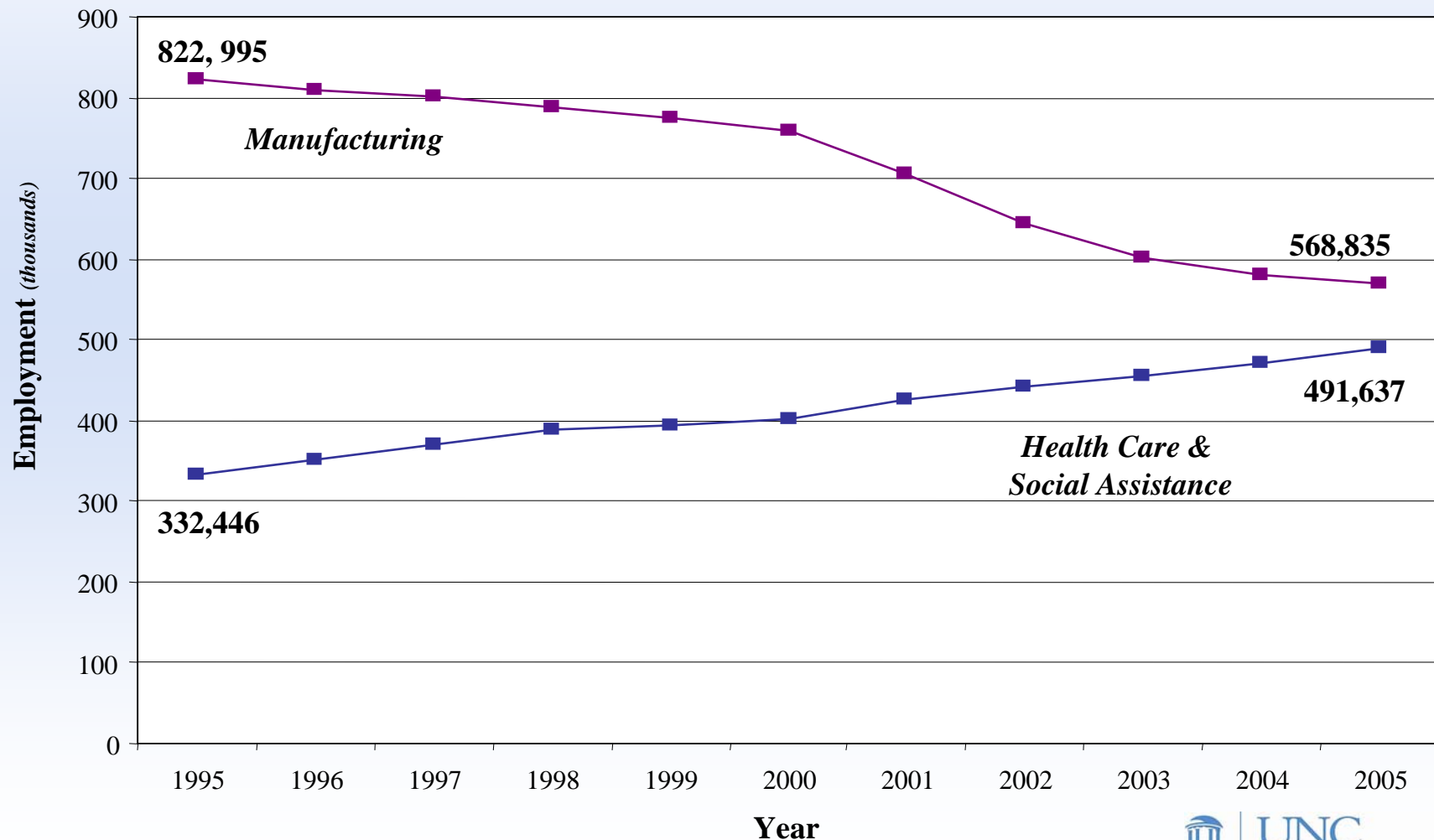
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Why study allied health workforce issues?

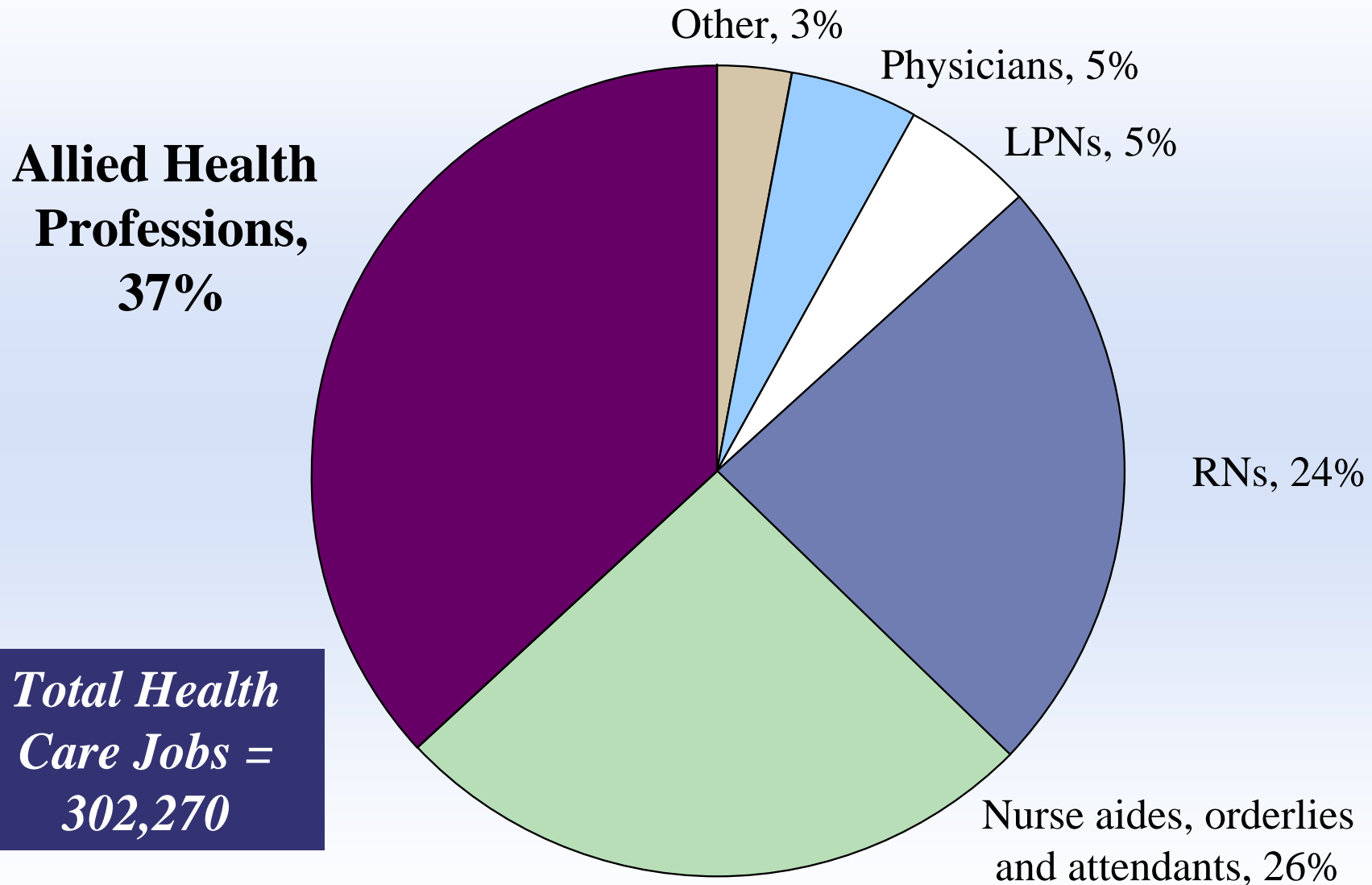


Manufacturing and Health Care & Social Assistance Employment, NC, 1995-2005



Source: North Carolina Employment Security Commission, 2006.

Health Care Jobs in North Carolina, 2005



Note: "Other healthcare occupations" includes: chiropractors, dentists, optometrists, and pharmacists.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics (2005).

URL: <http://www.bls.gov/oes/>.



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Healthcare and Allied Health Jobs Grew, Overall Employment Remained Stagnant

Total State, Healthcare and Allied Health Employment, North Carolina, 1999-2005

	1999	2005	% Growth (1999-2005)
Total N.C. Employment	3,801,670	3,809,690	0.2%
Healthcare Jobs	251,550	302,270	20.2%
Allied Health Jobs	76,590	111,630	45.8%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. Occupational Employment Statistics.
State Cross-Industry Estimates: 1999-2005. URL: <http://www.bls.gov/oes/>. Accessed 06/28/2006.

Hourly and Annual Wages for Selected North Carolina Occupations, 2005

Occupation	Hourly Mean Wage	Annual Mean Wage
Physicians	\$73.60	\$153,072
RNs	\$24.99	\$51,970
LPNs	\$16.80	\$34,940
Allied health professions	\$18.68	\$39,647
All Occupations (North Carolina)	\$16.57	\$34,460

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. Occupational Employment Statistics. State Cross-Industry Estimates: 1999-2005. URL: <http://www.bls.gov/oes/>. Accessed 06/28/2006.

North Carolina's Fastest Growing Occupations % Change in Employment, 2002-2012

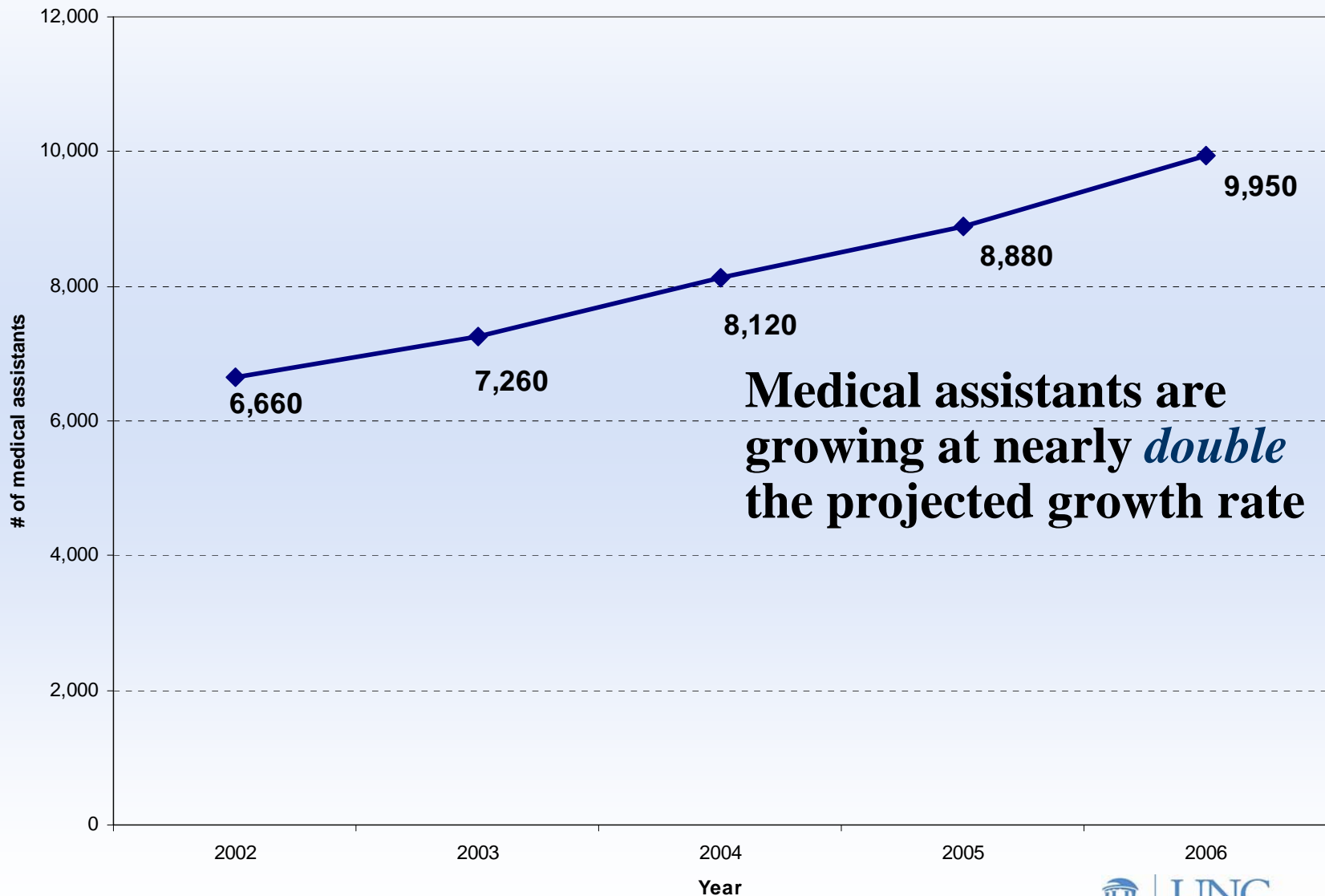
Rank	Occupation	Projected Openings	% Change
1	Medical Assistants	4,950	60.9
2	Occup. Ther. Aides	30	60.0
3	Dental Hygienists	2,590	53.9
4	Dental Assistants	3,120	53.0
5	Social and Human Services Assistants	5,110	48.4
6	Med. Record Tech.	2,620	48.3
7	Phys. Ther. Assist.	720	47.7
8	Fitness Trainers	2,780	47.6
9	Resp. Therapy Tech.	330	47.1
10	Respiratory Therapists	1,170	46.8

<http://eslmi23.esc.state.nc.us/projections/EmploymentOutlook.asp?version=aopengp&AreaType=01&Area=000037&PeriodID=06>



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Medical Assistants Employed in North Carolina, 2002-2006



Source: North Carolina Health Professions Data System with data from the Employment Security Commission.

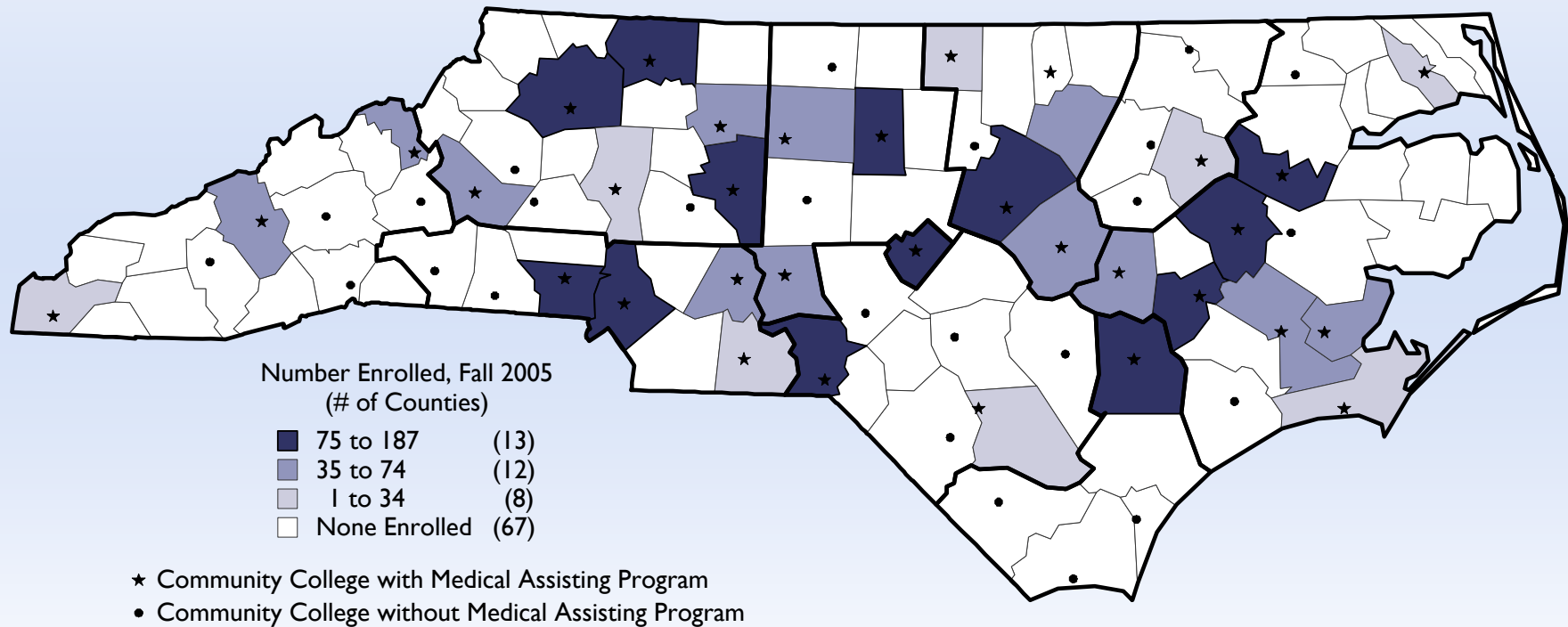


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Profile: Medical Assistants

- Most are employed in physicians' offices, perform administrative and clinical tasks
- Unlicensed and unregulated workers with rapid employment growth
- Multiple pathways to practice: most are high school graduates with on-the-job training
- Average hourly wage: \$11.89, annual wage \$24,740
- Employment in both rural and metro areas
- Often a second career for dislocated workers or individuals who have been out of the labor force
- Profession seeking increased regulation through uniform educational standards and certification

Enrollment in North Carolina Community College System Medical Assistant Programs, 2006



Sources: NC Community College System and NC AHEC, 2007.

Notes: Locations of community colleges and universities are mapped to the ZIP code centroid. Locations and enrollment figures for seven private programs are not included.



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Challenges in Estimating the Supply of, and Demand for, Allied Health Professionals

Challenge 1: Defining allied health

- Open to different interpretations
- Easier to define what is *not* allied health:
 - Nurses: LPNs, RNs, NPs
 - Physicians
 - Chiropractors
 - Podiatrists
 - Optometrists
 - Pharmacists
 - Dentists
 - Aides: psychiatric aides, nursing aides, home health aides, orderlies, attendants



Challenge 2: Enumerating the Allied Health Workforce: How Many and Where?

Validity, Reliability of Data, a *Spectrum*



Low

Medium

High

Optional professional certification

Radiologic Technicians/
Technologists

Mix of licensed and certified professionals

Speech-
Language
Pathology

Licensed professionals

Physical
Therapy



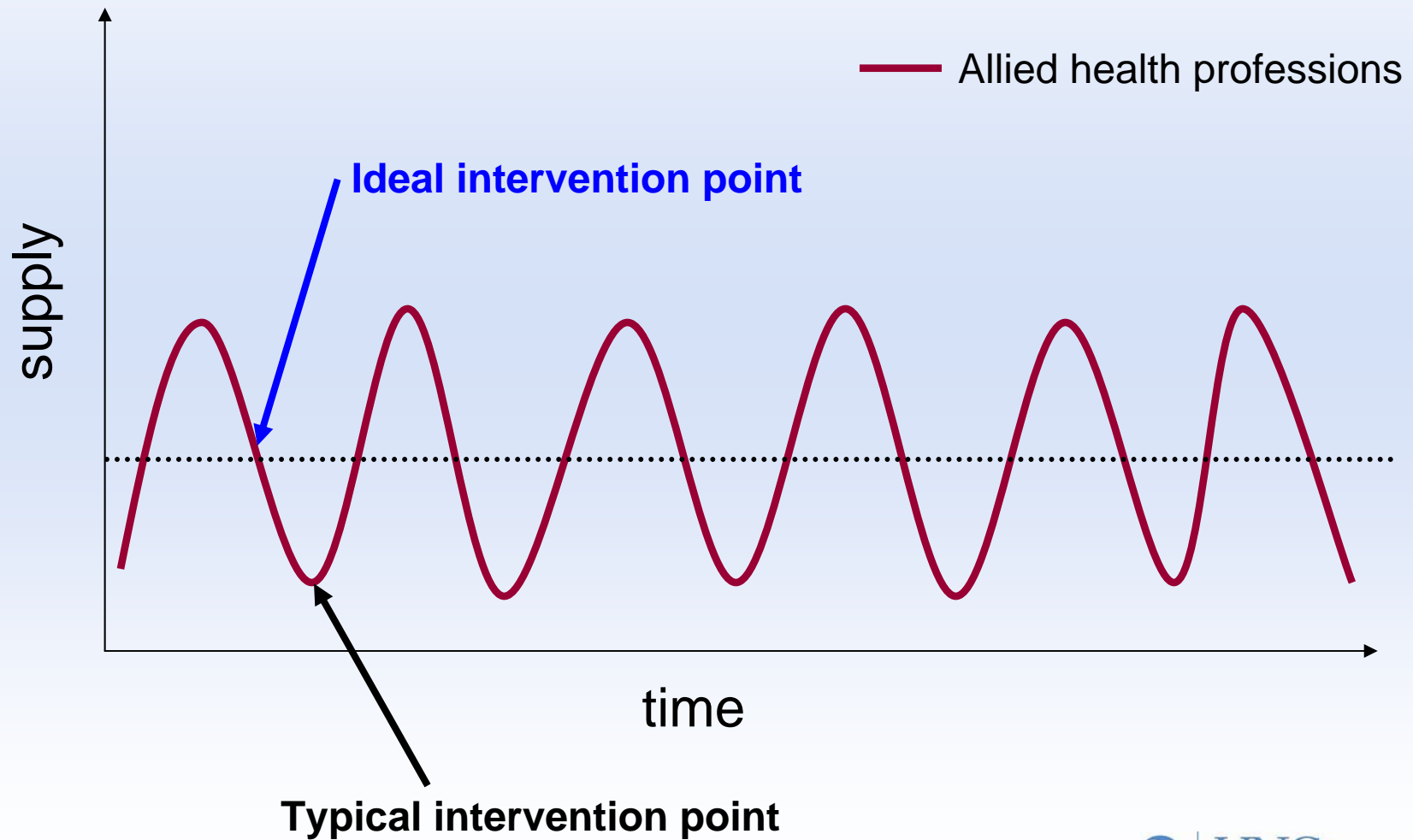
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Challenge 3: What to do about unlicensed allied health professions?

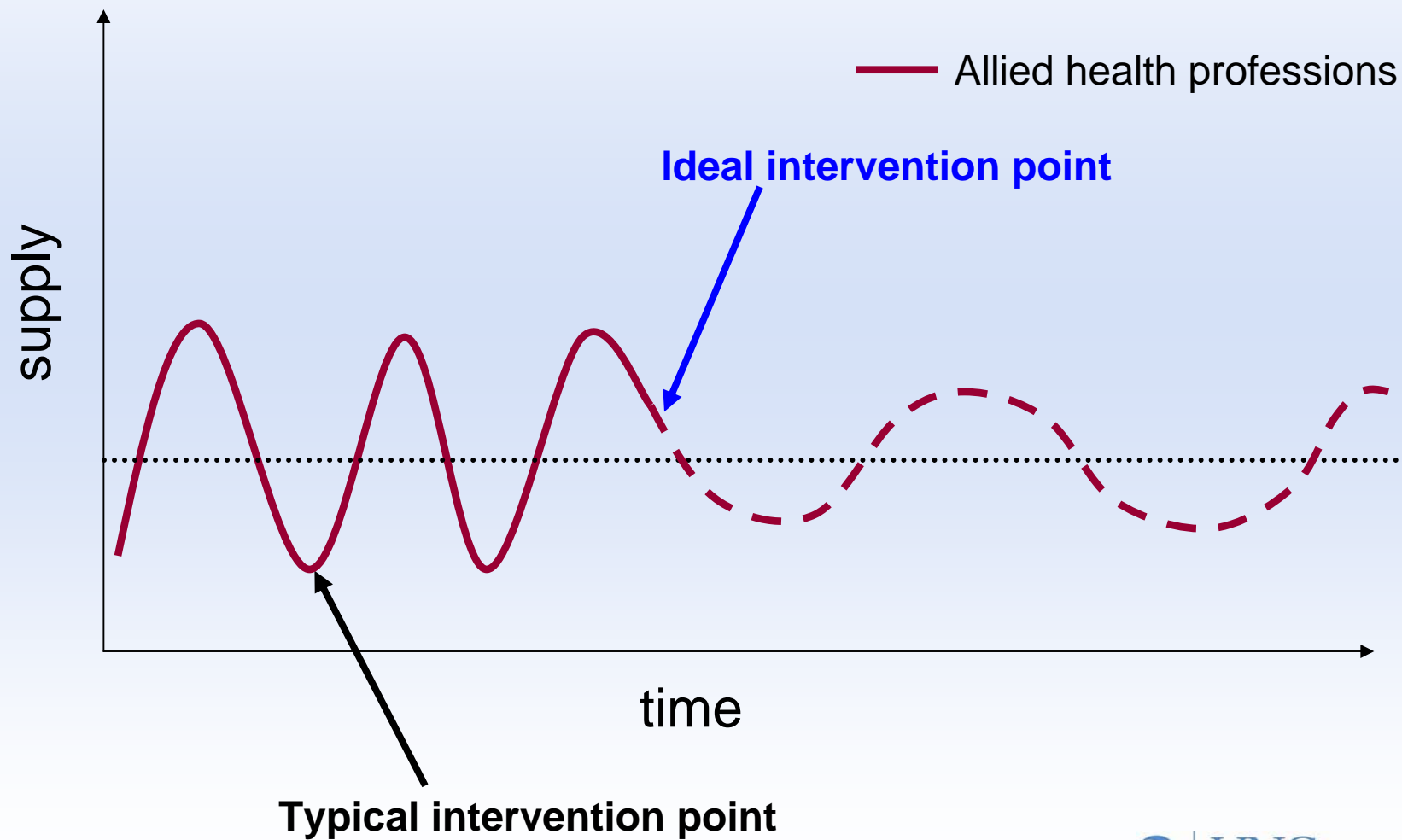
- Amount, type and quality of data available from credentialing and certifying organizations varies.
- Don't know who is in active practice
- Can't fully enumerate workforce or locate them to counties, employment setting etc.



Result: Lurching from Oversupply to Shortage



Goal: Better Data to “Smooth” the Allied Health Supply Cycle



Vacancy Reports

First report published in May 2005,
subsequent report in May 2006. **Most
recent report is hot off the press.**



Vacancy tracking overview

Purpose: Estimate workforce demand for selected allied health professions

Method: Monitor weekly job listings in newspaper and online sources

Data: Latest data collected for twelve professions during 10 week period (September 24-November 26, 2006)

Results:

- Number of vacancies
- Distribution of vacancies by region and profession
- Types of employers advertising vacancies

Media Sources Monitored for Allied Health Vacancies

Newspapers

Asheville Citizen Times
Charlotte Observer
Fayetteville Observer
Greensboro News & Record
Hickory Daily Record
Raleigh News and Observer
Rocky Mount Telegram
The Daily Reflector
Wilmington Star-News
Wilson Daily Times
Winston Salem Journal

Online Sources

Indeed.com Job Search Engine
American Society for Radiologic Tech (ASRT)
NC Occupational Therapy Association (NCOTA)
NC Office of Emergency Medical Services (NCEMS)
NC Physical Therapy Association (NCPTA)
NC Speech, Hearing & Language Association (NCSHLA)
Recreation Therapy Directory



Data collection: Online



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JOB DETAIL:

JOB # 410482

TITLE: CT Technologist I - Radiology-CT Scanning - Pitt County Memorial Hospital

LOCATION: Greenville, North Carolina

CLIENT: University Health System of Eastern Carolina

DESCRIPTION:

Full Time and Part Time available

Qualifications: Minimum of two year AHA-CAHEA-accredited program in Radiologic Technology required. ARRT (R) registered with current certification required.

Minimum two years previous Radiology experience. Additional education may be substituted for two years work experience.

(tw)

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none

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Data collection: Newspapers

CERTIFIED Medical Assistant.

 **As seen in The Fayetteville Observer**

CERTIFIED Medical Assistant. Experienced in X-rays needed for busy practice. Fax resume 910-221-0099.



Professions Included in Latest Report

Based on a survey of Council members, twelve professions were selected for monitoring:

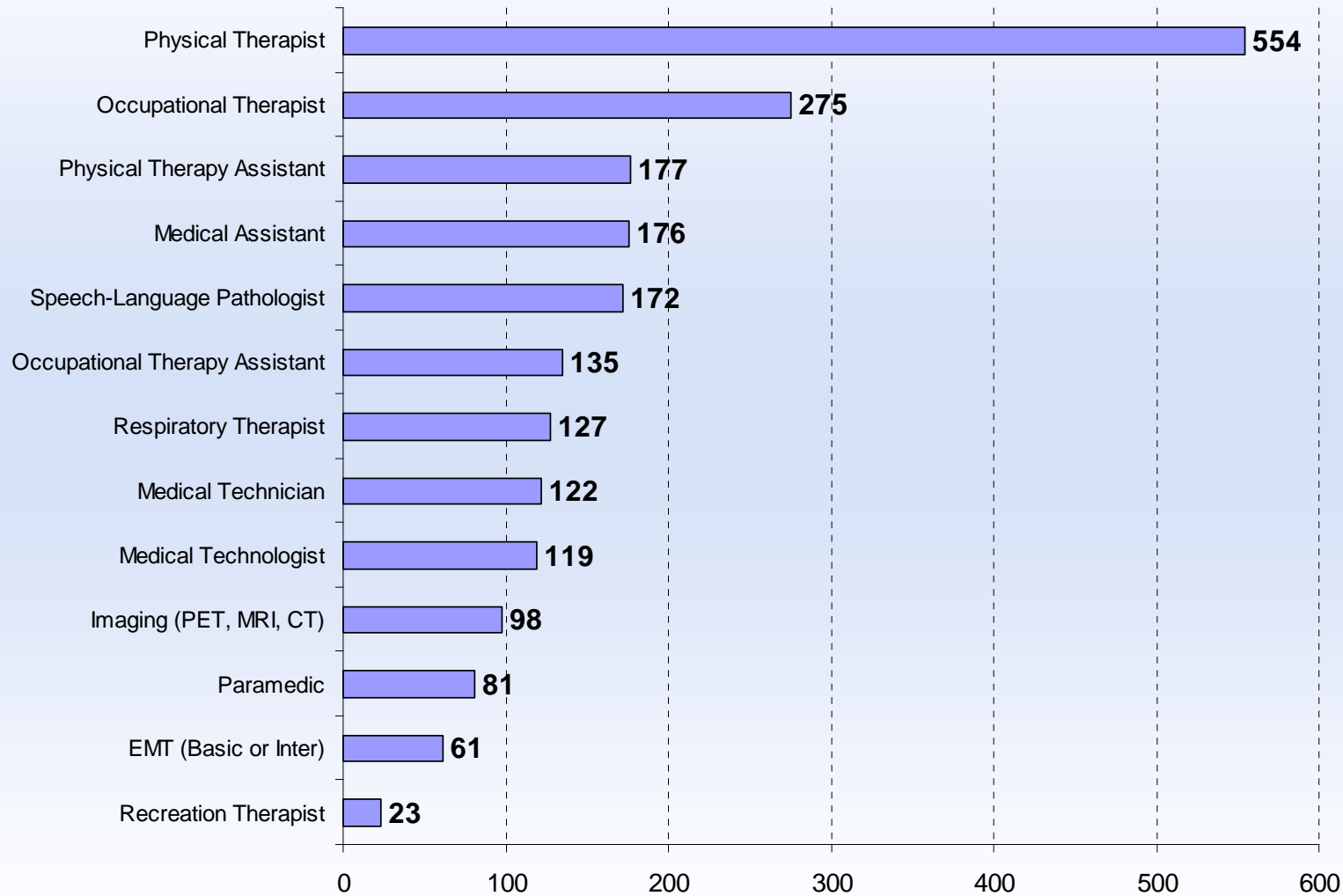
1. Medical Technologist
2. Medical Laboratory Technician
3. Occupational Therapist
4. Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant
5. Emergency Medical Technician (Basic, Intermediate, Paramedic)
6. Imaging Professions (PET, MRI, CT)
7. Physical Therapist
8. Physical Therapy Assistant
9. Recreation Therapist
10. Respiratory Therapist
11. Speech Language Pathologist
12. Speech Language Pathology Assistant



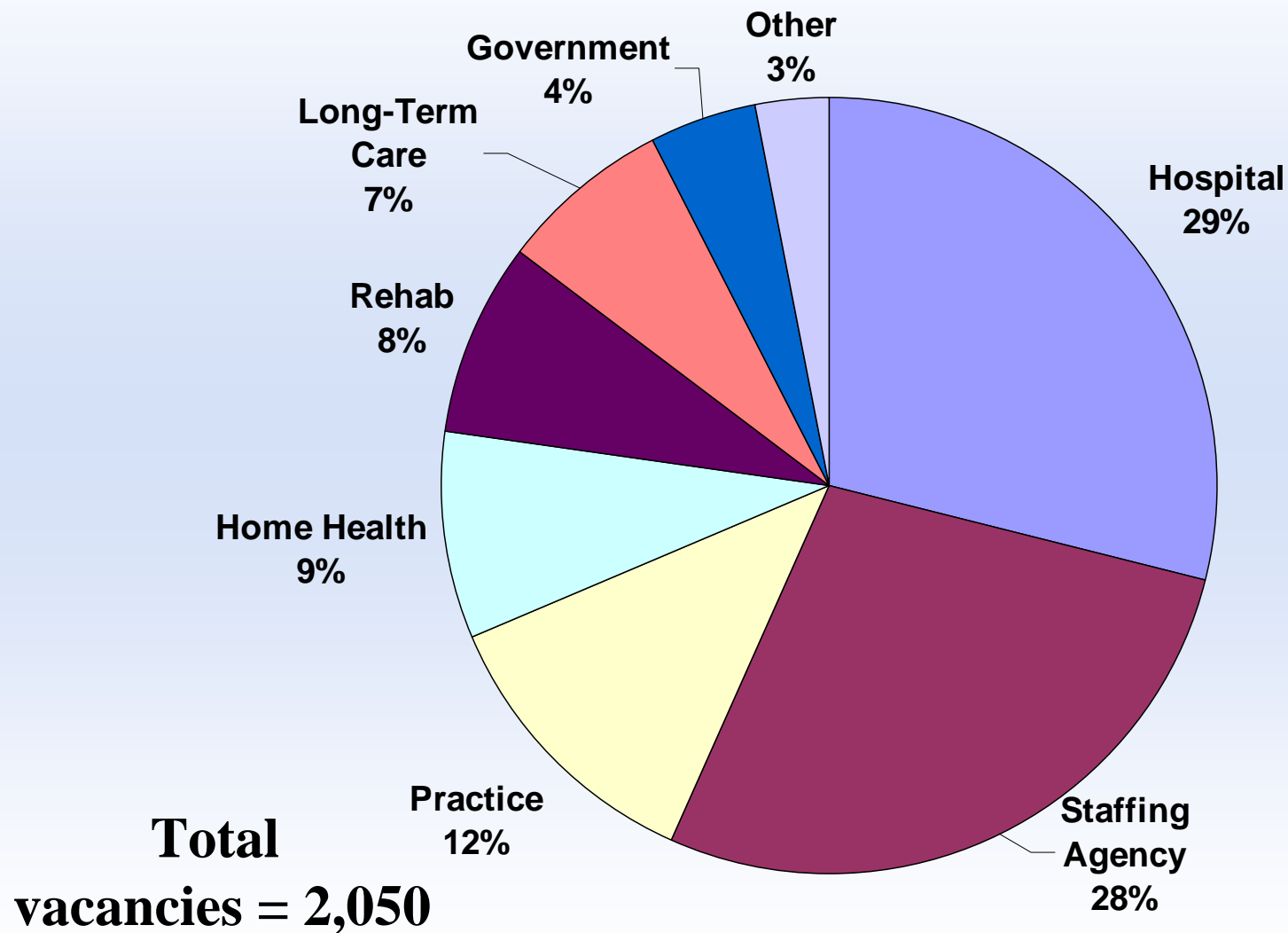
Methodological Limitations

- Advertisements may not reflect true frequency or distribution of vacancies across the state
- Data need to be viewed as a *barometer* of demand and not a definitive index because the data:
 - Do not capture vacancies advertised through all media such as employer-specific listings
 - Were collected during a single period and may not reflect seasonal variation in workforce demand
- Data were de-duplicated to try to capture *positions* versus vacancy *advertisements*

Vacancies by Profession



Vacancies by Employment Setting



Note: 70 vacancy advertisements were missing setting. Other includes "other", laboratories, schools and universities

Vacancy index

Need to adjust raw vacancy numbers to account for different workforce size of allied health professions

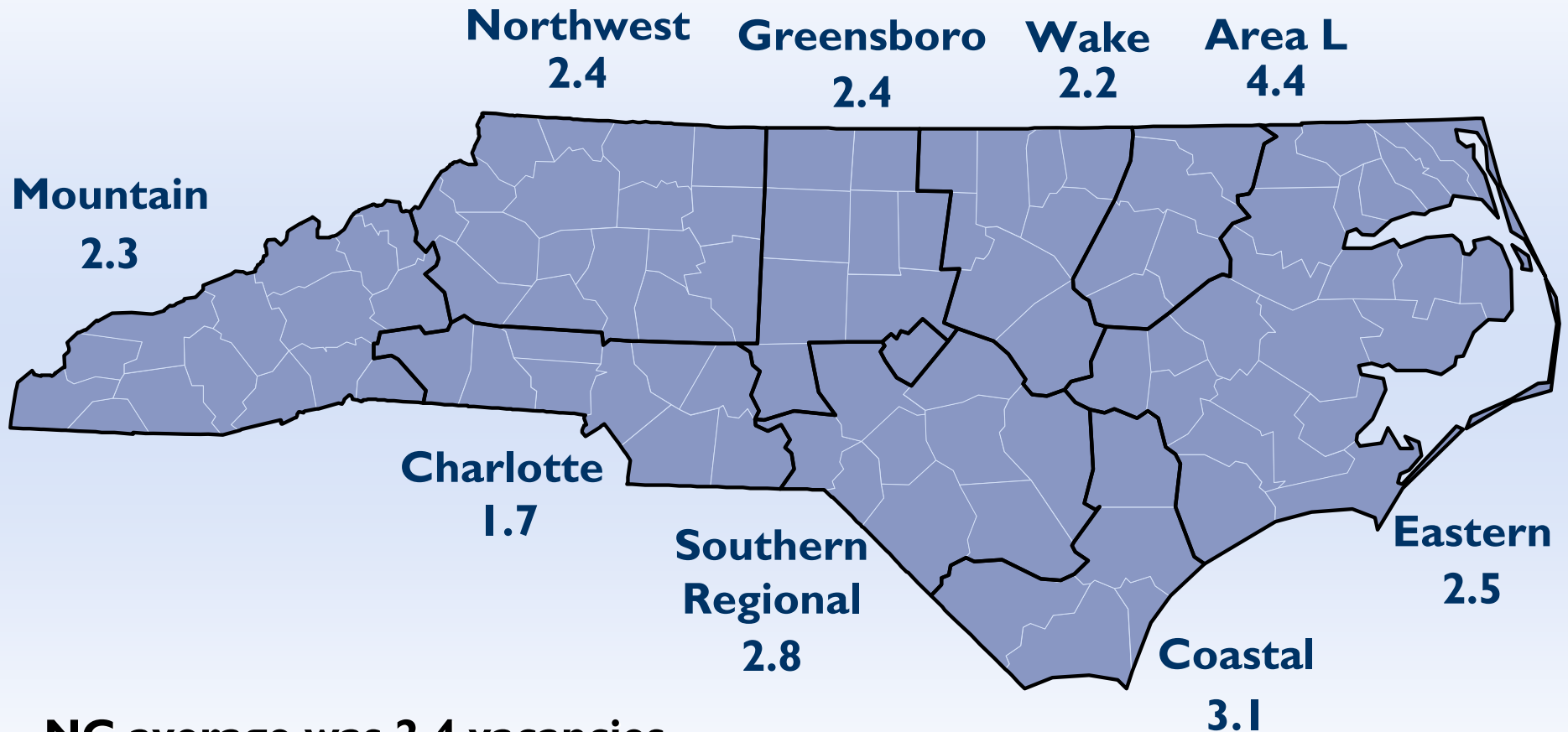
Profession	Workforce Size	Vacant	Vacancy Index
Occupational Therapy Assistant	888	135	15.2
Physical Therapist	3,749	554	14.8
Occupational Therapist	1,990	275	13.8
Physical Therapist Assistant	1,859	177	9.5
Speech-Language Pathologist	2,710	172	6.3
Imaging (PET, MRI, CT)	1,853	98	5.3
Recreation Therapist	450	23	5.1
Respiratory Therapist	3,413	127	3.7
Medical Technologist	4,250	119	2.8
Medical Technician	4,950	122	2.5
EMT (Basic, Inter, Paramedic)	6,790	142	2.1
Medical Assistant	9,950	176	1.8

Excludes listings missing employer location (N=22).



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Vacancy Advertisements per 10,000 Population by AHEC Region, North Carolina, Fall 2006



**NC average was 2.4 vacancies
per 10,000 population**

Source: North Carolina Health Professions Data System, Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2006.
Notes: North Carolina newspaper and online listings for select allied health professions tracked from September 24 to November 26 (N=2,120). Sample excludes listings missing employer location (N=22).

Summary of Issues: What Do We Know?

- Allied health employment increasingly important economic sector
- Allied health employment will increase and the state faces high vacancy rates in some professions
- Vacancy rates are generally higher in rural, eastern North Carolina
- Potential investment in educating allied health workers pay large and immediate dividends due to high retention rates
- Increasing number of allied health workers has potential to increase access to employment *and* improve access to health care services



Moving Forward: Challenges and Opportunities



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Challenges to Moving Forward

- Existing system is fragmented, limited collaboration exists between policy makers, educators, employers and others charged with monitoring, planning and implementing workforce development strategies at the local and state level.
- Despite workforce shortages and employer needs for workers, educational system struggles to meet need:
 - Too few *qualified* applicants
 - Attrition
 - Faculty shortages
 - Lack of clinical placements
 - Cost of allied health education is high



Future Opportunities

- Better collaboration between health workforce researchers, educators, employers and local workforce development boards
- Re-envision workforce development efforts to target specific health care professions and/or regions of the state for workforce development
- Initiative currently underway with leadership out of the Governor's Office/Dept. of Commerce: The allied health **sector strategy** aims to increase allied health sector competitiveness and employment opportunities



Allied Health Sector Strategy

- NC was one of 5 states chosen to participate by The National Governors Association
- Focus on identifying regions and professions in the state facing allied health workforce shortages and encourage industry-led partnerships to address them
- **Intermediate goal:** re-envision workforce development system that involves more collaboration between stakeholders
- **Ultimate goals:** increase employment, address workforce shortages, raise skill levels, identify and respond to employer needs.....improve access to health care?

June 15th Conference: Please come!

The Impact of Health Care and the Allied Health Workforce on North Carolina's Economy

Symposium designed to:

1. Discuss relationship between economic development and allied health workforce development efforts underway in NC
2. Describe challenges confronting allied health educators and employers
3. Identify best practices used to meet these challenges

Announcement: New grant opportunity to support sector strategies in allied health

Time: 8:30-2:30

Location: Friday Center, Chapel Hill

Registration: through Greensboro AHEC



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