



# Gap/Asset Analysis of HEALTHCARE CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAMS and Related Services in Northeast Indiana

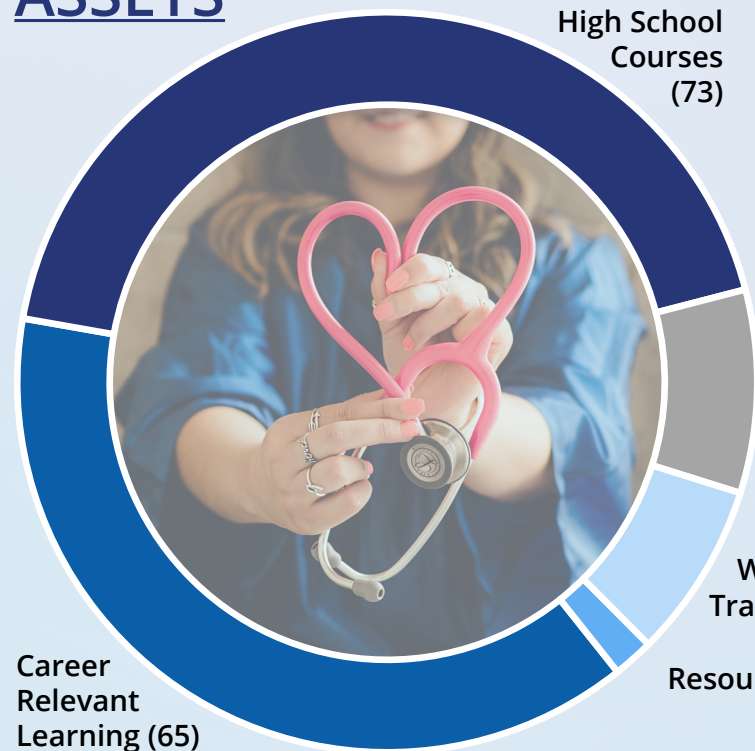
## INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the findings of a comprehensive research effort, funded by an Indiana Department of Education 3E grant, to assess the strength of the K-12 healthcare career development ecosystem in northeast Indiana. The study examined healthcare career exploration, educational engagement, training, and work-based learning (WBL) experiences available to students in grades 7 through 12.

Four hundred seventy-four (474) participants provided information and feedback in the Spring of 2023.

ROLE	PARTICIPANTS	PERCENTAGE
Students	313	66.03%
School Counselors	53	11.18%
Teachers	27	5.70%
Community Service Providers	24	5.06%
K-12 Administrators, including CTE Directors	21	4.43%
Employers	16	3.38%
Postsecondary	12	2.53%
Parents	6	1.27%
WBL Coordinators	2	0.42%

## ASSETS



One hundred sixty-nine (169) programmatic assets supporting healthcare career development for students in grades 7-12 were identified and organized into a database. The database categories are: Career Relevant Learning (65), High School Courses (73), Work-Based Learning (15), Workforce Training (13), and Resources (3). In grades 9-12 there were 5,719 student enrollments in healthcare related career and technical education (CTE) courses during the 2022-2023 school year.

**5,719**  
Student Enrollments

## GAPS

Survey respondents and focus group participants helped determine gaps and challenges in the 7-12 healthcare career development ecosystem. The gaps identified are not common to every participant, but are representative of the larger issues faced by many participants.

### Communication

- Career and college events and experiences available to students in grades 7-12 are not easily accessed or communicated.
- Employers and educators are unsure of the appropriate contact to use when coordinating or providing Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLs) or Career-Relevant Learning Experiences (CRLEs).
- WBLs are often based on a relationship held by one person at a school or institution/organization, creating gaps when the relationship holder leaves.

### Coordination

- There is a need for more personnel support to develop, coordinate, and oversee the work-based learning partnerships for both schools and employers.
- Program providers are not always aware of what other providers are offering and miss opportunities to strengthen collective impact through coordinated efforts.

### Student Preparedness

- Students lack key employability skills needed to be successful in healthcare WBLs.
- Students lack sufficient understanding of the wide variety of careers available in healthcare.
- Students struggle to understand what steps to take to pursue a career in healthcare and how to pay for healthcare related college programs.

### Employer Preparedness

- In many instances employers are not prepared to host high school students and don't know what the students are able or allowed to do.

### Experience Scarcity

- There are not enough relevant and engaging healthcare WBLs and CRLEs available to meet the demand.
- Students do not have access to many of the health science CTE course offerings.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following list aligns with one or more of the gaps. Links to examples of successful models are included in the full report.

- 1 Identify an organization to coordinate career relevant learning opportunities and work-based learning opportunities.
- 2 Expand program capacity and training programs for high school students in key areas aligned to workforce demand.
- 3 Expand student access to engaging healthcare guest speakers.
- 4 Expand student access to high quality job shadowing (observation) opportunities.
- 5 Increase student proficiency in healthcare-specific professional/success skills.
- 6 Create information to clearly define what high school students participating in work based learning experiences can and cannot do in various healthcare settings.
- 7 Develop a startup guide for healthcare employers desiring to launch work-based learning experiences.
- 8 Strengthen the collective impact of community resources through monthly convenings.
- 9 Develop and launch a marketing effort to provide information about healthcare career development at all three levels (explore, engage, experience).
- 10 Verify and update the healthcare asset database twice per year to reflect the most current information.

## CONCLUSION

Northeast Indiana's healthcare career ecosystem is bolstered by many strong programmatic assets and highly engaged organizations. Capitalizing on the connections between schools, employers, and community service providers with intentional focus on the recommendations in this report will help improve and expand pathways.