

## HEALTH CARE JOBS IN ALASKA CONTINUE TO INCREASE



In the state of Alaska, over the past two decades, employment in the health services industry has leaped with no signs of it slowing down anytime soon. This statement was made by a panel of state officials to the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce back on November 28. The panel could not provide a definitive reason as to why the increase is occurring but they did suggest that the aging of the state's population could be a major factor. In 2010, there was roughly \$7.5 billion spent on health care, with employment in the industry hitting 31,800 according to Pat Carr of the state's Department of Health and Social Services. Dan Robinson, the senior economist of the state's Division of Research and Analysis, was also on the panel. He said that health care employment increased by 58 percent between the years of 1990 and 2000. During this same time frame, employment in Alaska also increased by 19 percent. From the years 2001-2010, employment within the health services industry grew by 51 percent, when employment in Alaska grew by 12 percent overall. As the remainder of the country struggled through a recession in 2008 and 2009, Alaska saw a steep rise in health care jobs, which kept the state's job growth on a positive course. From 2008 to 2009, the state of Alaska was able to show a growth of 2,300 jobs. Inside of that number 4,000 jobs were added in the health care industry. Should there have been no growth in the number of jobs within the health care industry, Alaska would have seen a loss of total jobs around 1,700 in 2008 and 2009. Jobs in the health care industry in Alaska account for 12 percent of the state's total workforce, which comes out to around one in nine jobs. The labor department of the state claims that the industry's jobs will continue to grow, with the forecast for 2008 to 2018 showing an increase of 27 percent. This number can be compared to the overall growth for the state, which is estimated at 11 percent. As mentioned previously, the aging of the Alaskan population is a major factor in the increasing numbers within the industry. Senior citizens usually need more medical care than younger citizens, so more and more employees within the health care field are needed to meet with the demand. From 1996 to 2006, the state's over 65 population increased by 50 percent. Other experts claim that the state's younger citizens still outnumber the majority of other states in the country. Another reason for the increase in health care jobs is the development of the state's health care infrastructure and technology. In years past, the state was underdeveloped in the medical field, forcing thousands of residents to go out of state to acquire medical care. In some of the rural areas of the state, numbers for doctors and other physicians are still underdeveloped.

<https://blog.granted.com/>