
The Impact of the COVID Pandemic on Healthcare Professions in Virginia

Healthcare Workforce Data Center

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Over 250,000 healthcare professionals voluntarily participated in the surveys used in this report. Without their efforts, the work of the center would not be possible. The Department of Health Professions, the Healthcare Workforce Data Center, and the relevant Boards express their sincerest appreciation for their ongoing cooperation.

Thank You!

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Executive Summary

The coronavirus pandemic has impacted the Commonwealth, its citizens, and its health professionals in many ways. Governor Ralph Northam and the Virginia State Health Commissioner issued Order of Public Emergency Two, on March 25, 2020, prohibiting elective medical procedures at outpatient surgical hospitals, freestanding endoscopy centers, physicians' offices, and dental, orthodontic, and endodontic offices; the order expired May 1, 2020. Subsequently, the governor issued Executive Order No. 55 ordering Virginians to remain in their homes or places of residence from March 30, 2020 through June 10, 2020. Coupled with these policies, the coronavirus pandemic appears to have altered Americans' healthcare seeking behavior as the number of visit claims nationally was at its lowest in 15 years¹. Further, health utilization and spending was depressed in 2020 despite the increase in the use of telemedicine. All these changes have significant implications for healthcare professionals' employment. This series includes three reports that examined trends, and regional and setting variations, in underemployment and unemployment among licensed healthcare professionals to better understand the effect of the pandemic and inform policies for supporting the healthcare system and professionals.

Report 1 of this series examined trends in underemployment and unemployment among 24 licensed healthcare profession groups in Virginia. It found that rates for different healthcare professions' varied by the level of urgency associated with the services they provide. For instance, dental hygienists, dentists, physical and occupational therapists, and physical and occupational therapy assistants, who provide healthcare that can be delayed for a few months, reported some of the highest underemployment and unemployment rates². Along the same line, healthcare professionals who were integral in providing services related to the pandemic, like physicians and funeral service providers, were least affected.

Report 2 examined differences in underemployment and unemployment rates in the Virginia Performs eight regions for the 24 licensed healthcare professions. It revealed significant geographical variations in the impact of the pandemic in Virginia. Professionals in regions with generally high concentration of healthcare professionals, such as the Central and Northern regions reported the highest rates of underemployment and unemployment during the pandemic whereas those in regions with low concentration of healthcare professionals, such as the Eastern region, were generally less impacted by the pandemic³. Regions with fewer per capita healthcare professionals pre-pandemic were less likely to see health professionals furloughed or laid off during the pandemic. Further, different regions coped with the pandemic's impact differently. Healthcare professionals in the Central and Northern regions were more likely to report involuntary unemployment whereas those in regions like the Southwest were more likely to experience underemployment.

Finally, within each healthcare profession, those working in some settings were more affected by underemployment and unemployment than those working in other settings. Report 3⁴ in the series compared underemployment and unemployment rates for six of the most significantly impacted professions in seven of their most common work settings: solo private practice, group private practice, hospital-based practice (outpatient and inpatient), long-term care facility practice (nursing homes and assisted living facilities), outpatient rehabilitation facility practice, home health, and other healthcare settings. The report found that underemployment and unemployment rates for professionals working in hospitals were some of the lowest. Home health care settings also seem to be less affected or to have recovered with regards to unemployment. Although both solo and group private practices were considerably affected by the pandemic, solo private practices seem to have recovered whereas group private practices appear to still be struggling for certain professions.

¹ <https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/chart-collection/how-have-healthcare-utilization-and-spending-changed-so-far-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/#item-start>

² http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/media/dhpweb/docs/hwdc/Coronavirus_Unemployment.pdf

³ http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/media/dhpweb/docs/hwdc/Regional_Coronavirus_Unemployment.pdf

⁴ http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/media/dhpweb/docs/hwdc/Coronavirus_Unemployment_WorkSetting.pdf

The three reports show that a one-size fits all approach may not be optimal in helping Virginia’s licensed healthcare professionals and healthcare industry recover from the pandemic. Although the current unemployment rate for physicians, funeral service providers, clinical psychologists, licensed professional counselors, and veterinarians regionally and statewide is still 0% as it was before the pandemic, other professions in certain regions and/or settings are reporting rates of 3% to 5%, considerably higher than prior to the pandemic. Fortunately, the reports revealed that most of the impact of the pandemic on underemployment and unemployment is waning, as current year unemployment rates were lower than past year unemployment rates for most professions. As the state recovers, it is important to examine the profession, regional, and setting differences to identify where additional support to overcome the impact of the pandemic might be needed.

The Impact of the Coronavirus on Licensed Healthcare Workforce Unemployment in Virginia: Trends

**The Impact of the Coronavirus on Licensed Healthcare Workforce
Unemployment in Virginia: Trends**

The coronavirus pandemic has impacted the healthcare industry in many ways. One impact was that hospitals and patients postponed elective procedures and practitioner visits in the earlier part of 2020. Unfortunately, this had an adverse impact on employment rates in the healthcare industry. Using each profession’s survey data, this report—the first in a series of three—examines three indicators: past year underemployment, past year unemployment, and current year unemployment. For each indicator, the average of previous surveys was compared to the statistics obtained from surveys conducted between April 2020 and March 2021 for 24 licensed healthcare workforce professions. Physician assistants, radiologic technologists, and respiratory therapists complete surveys in odd numbered years so they were not surveyed in 2020 and were excluded from the analysis below. Two indicators—past year underemployment and unemployment—were also not collected for certified nurse aides.

Unemployment and Underemployment by Profession

Professions	Past Year Involuntary Unemployment		Past Year Underemployment		Current Year Involuntary Unemployment	
	Average	2020-21	Average	2020-21	Average	2020-21
Assisted Living Facility	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Audiologists	1%	7%	1%	3%	0%	1%
Certified Nurse Aides	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5%	5%
Dental Hygienists	2%	37%	9%	5%	1%	2%
Dentists	1%	20%	2%	3%	0%	1%
Funeral Service Providers	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Licensed Clinical Psychologists	1%	2%	2%	2%	0%	0%
Licensed Clinical Social Workers	1%	2%	2%	2%	0%	0%
Licensed Practical Nurses	2%	3%	5%	4%	1%	1%
Licensed Professional	1%	2%	2%	3%	0%	0%
Nurse Practitioners	1%	4%	2%	3%	0%	1%
Nursing Home Administrators	3%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Occupational Therapists	1%	9%	3%	6%	0%	1%
Occupational Therapist Assistants	2%	12%	7%	12%	0%	3%
Optometrists	1%	14%	3%	3%	0%	0%
Pharmacists	2%	3%	3%	4%	1%	2%
Pharmacy Technicians	1%	2%	4%	3%	1%	1%
Physical Therapists	1%	13%	2%	7%	0%	1%
Physical Therapy Assistants	2%	17%	6%	9%	0%	3%
Physicians	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%
Registered Nurses	1%	2%	3%	2%	0%	1%
Speech-Language Pathologists	1%	6%	3%	4%	0%	1%
Veterinarian	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%
Veterinary Technicians	1%	2%	2%	2%	0%	1%

Source: Va. Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Past Year Underemployment

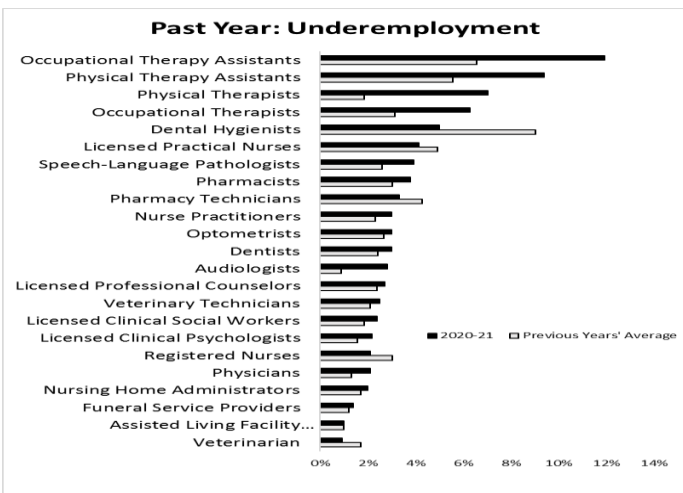
Past year underemployment captures whether survey respondents had a part-time or temporary position but would have preferred a full-time/permanent position in the one-year period before they completed their survey. Compared to previous years' average, underemployment increased for 12 of 23 professions during the pandemic. Other significant findings include:

- Five of the 12 professions saw increases of between two and five percentage points.
- Past year underemployment rates did not change for six of the professions.
- Past year underemployment rates declined slightly for five professions.

Past Year Involuntary Unemployment

Past year unemployment captures whether survey respondents have been involuntarily unemployed at any time in the one-year period before they completed their survey. This indicator previously ranged from 0% to 3% for all professions but rose to a high of 37% for dental hygienists between March 2020 and March 2021; this is considerably higher than the highest unemployment rate for all individuals in the state in the same period which was 11% in April 2020. Other significant findings about this measure include:

- Past year involuntary unemployment did not change for three professions
- Six professions saw two digits increase in percentage points, with dental hygienists and dentist seeing the greatest impact.
- The remaining 14 professions saw between one and eight percentage point increase.



Source: Va. Healthcare Workforce Data Center

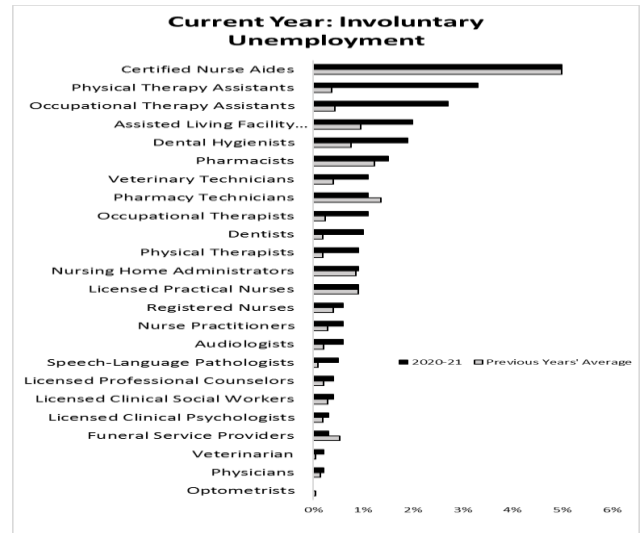


Source: Va. Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Current Year Unemployment

Finally, **current year unemployment** captures the percent of survey respondents who were involuntarily unemployed while completing their survey. The data showed that some of the effects of the pandemic may be easing. Significant findings about current involuntary unemployment include:

- Current year involuntary unemployment did not change for 16 professions.
- It increased between one and three percentage points for eight professions.
- The highest rate of 5% was reported by certified nurse aides who had the same rate on average in the pre-pandemic period.



Source: Va. Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Conclusion

The coronavirus pandemic has had tremendous impact on healthcare professions. The impact appears to vary by the level of electiveness of the services provided. Dental hygienists, dentists, physical and occupational therapists, and physical and occupational therapist assistants were most affected. Providers who were integral in providing services related to the pandemic, like physicians and funeral service providers, were least affected. However, overall, the impact of the pandemic on employment appears to be easing. Current year involuntary unemployment was considerably lower than past year involuntary unemployment. Hopefully this trend persists so that healthcare professions can continue providing the important services they offer to Virginians.

The Regional Impact of the Coronavirus on Licensed Healthcare Workforce Unemployment

The Regional Impact of the Coronavirus on Licensed Healthcare Workforce Unemployment in Virginia

The coronavirus pandemic has had significant impact on the healthcare industry. One way the pandemic impacted the industry was that hospitals and patients postponed elective procedures and practitioner visits during the pandemic. This led to unemployment for some healthcare professionals. Consequently, the unemployment rates reported by different healthcare profession groups allow us to estimate some of the impact of the pandemic on the healthcare industry in Virginia and explore how best to address these impacts. A previous report titled *The Impact of the Coronavirus on Licensed Healthcare Workforce Unemployment in Virginia*⁵ examined trends in the state as a whole for each healthcare profession. However, significant variation exists by regions in the state.

Using Virginia professions' survey data, this second report in this series examines three indicators—past year underemployment, past year unemployment, and current year unemployment—by Virginia Performs Regions. For each indicator, the statistics obtained from surveys conducted during the pandemic, between April 2020 and March 2021, for 23 licensed healthcare workforce professions in each of the eight Virginia Performs regions are reported. Measures of the deviation from the state, i.e., a region's rate minus the state rate summed across all 23 professions, are reported; the higher and more positive the measure is, the more severe the impact of the pandemic was on licensed healthcare professions in the region compared to the state. It should be noted that, because some respondents did not provide the county in which they had worked, the average across the regions may not yield the state's rate; this will likely also affect the deviation measures. Physician assistants, radiologic technologists, and respiratory therapists complete surveys in December of odd numbered years so they were excluded from the analysis below. Certified nurse aides were also excluded because only one of the indicators was collected in that survey. Additional profession-specific data are available [here](#)⁶.

Past Year Underemployment

Past year underemployment captures whether survey respondents had a part-time or temporary position but would have preferred a full-time/permanent position in the one-year period before they completed their survey. Table 1 presents past year underemployment rates by profession and region. Substantial variations from the state rates are observed. The following map shows the geographical distribution of the summed deviation across the state. Significant findings include:

- Dentists and audiologists had some of the largest regional deviations from the state rate
 - Dentists' past year underemployment rate was 3% at the state level but the rate was as high as 32% in the Valley region and 28% in the Southwest region.

⁵ http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/media/dhpweb/docs/hwdc/Coronavirus_Impact_Healthcare_Unemployment.pdf

⁶ <http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/PublicResources/HealthcareWorkforceDataCenter/Dashboards/ImpactofCOVIDonHealthcareWorkforce/>.

- Audiologists past year underemployment rate was 3% at the state level but 23% in the southwest region.
- Compared to the state, the Southwest region was most impacted by the pandemic with regards to underemployment and the Southside region was the least impacted.

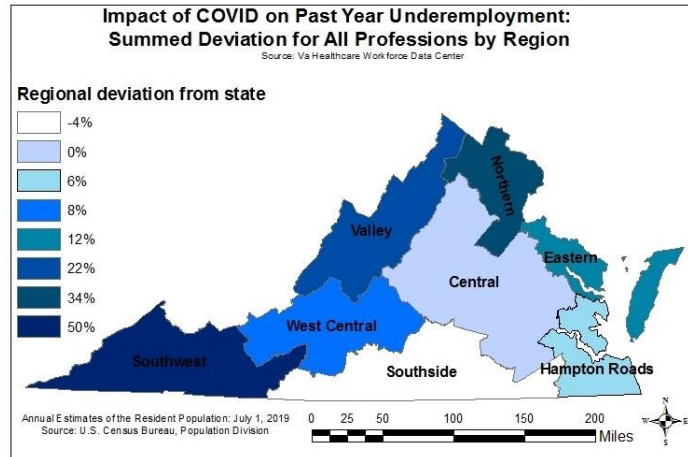


Table 1: Past Year Underemployment by Profession and Region

	Central	Eastern	Hampton	Northern	Southside	Southwest	Valley	West Central	State
Assisted Living Facility Administrators	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%
Audiologists	1%	0%	0%	4%	9%	23%	0%	6%	3%
Dental Hygienists	4%	6%	5%	8%	3%	6%	5%	8%	5%
Dentists	4%	9%	2%	5%	2%	28%	32%	3%	3%
Funeral Service Providers	1%	0%	1%	1%	5%	2%	2%	4%	1%
Licensed Clinical	2%	0%	2%	3%	0%	4%	0%	4%	2%
Licensed Clinical Social	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%	0%	3%	2%	2%
Licensed Practical Nurses	5%	6%	6%	8%	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Licensed Professional Counselors	3%	0%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Nurse Practitioners	3%	2%	4%	4%	1%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Nursing Home Administrators	1%	7%	4%	1%	0%	5%	0%	1%	2%
Occupational Therapists	6%	12%	4%	9%	6%	5%	8%	5%	6%
Occupational Therapy Assistants	6%	15%	16%	17%	8%	14%	12%	11%	12%
Optometrists	5%	0%	3%	5%	3%	2%	0%	2%	3%
Pharmacists	4%	6%	5%	6%	5%	4%	6%	5%	4%
Pharmacy Technicians	3%	6%	5%	6%	2%	3%	3%	4%	3%
Physical Therapists	9%	5%	6%	10%	9%	5%	5%	7%	7%
Physical Therapy Assistants	9%	5%	6%	10%	9%	5%	5%	7%	9%
Physicians	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%
Registered Nurses	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Speech-Language Pathologists	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%
Veterinarian	1%	4%	0%	1%	0%	3%	2%	1%	1%

Veterinary Technicians	3%	0%	5%	3%	0%	6%	3%	2%	2%
Summed Deviation*	0%	12%	6%	34%	-4%	50%	22%	8%	

Source: Va. Healthcare Workforce Data Center

* Summed deviation is a region's rate minus the state rate summed across all 23 professions; the higher and more positive it is, the more severe the impact of the pandemic was on the licensed healthcare professions in the region compared to the state.

Past Year Unemployment

Past year unemployment captures whether survey respondents have been involuntarily unemployed at any time in the one-year period before they completed their survey. Table 2 presents the past year unemployment rates by profession and region. Significant variations from the state average are observed. The following map shows the deviation by state, indicating the Central region deviated most from the state average. Other significant findings include:

- Optometrists' past year unemployment rate was 14% for the state but the rate was as high as 28% and 27% in the Valley and Central regions, respectively. By contrast, the rate was 0% in the Eastern region.
- Compared to the state, the Central Virginia region was the most impacted by past year underemployment followed by the Northern Virginia region.
- The Southwest region had rates most similar to the state, followed by the Eastern region.

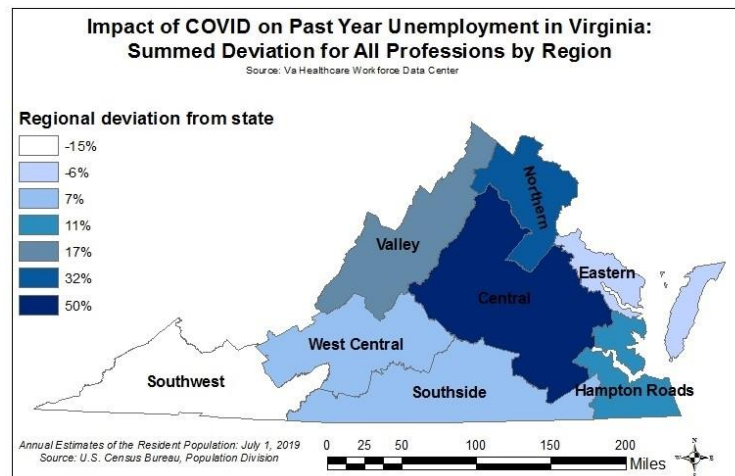


Table 2: Past Year Unemployment by Profession and Region

	Central	Eastern	Hampton	Northern	Southside	Southwest	Valley	West Central	State
Assisted Living Facility Administrators	4%	0%	1%	1%	6%	0%	2%	1%	2%
Audiologists	11%	0%	9%	13%	0%	0%	0%	3%	7%
Dental Hygienists	47%	38%	47%	44%	44%	39%	50%	50%	37%
Dentists	28%	12%	21%	26%	31%	28%	3%	30%	20%
Funeral Service Providers	2%	10%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%
Licensed Clinical	1%	0%	4%	3%	0%	0%	2%	1%	2%
Licensed Clinical Social	4%	0%	2%	2%	6%	4%	4%	2%	2%
Licensed Practical Nurses	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%

	Central	Eastern	Hampton	Northern	Southside	Southwest	Valley	West Central	State
Licensed Professional Counselors	3%	5%	3%	2%	4%	5%	6%	3%	2%
Nurse Practitioners	4%	1%	2%	5%	4%	4%	5%	6%	4%
Nursing Home Administrators	4%	7%	3%	3%	0%	0%	2%	2%	3%
Occupational Therapists	11%	24%	6%	10%	9%	6%	12%	9%	9%
Occupational Therapy Assistants	10%	15%	11%	15%	17%	6%	19%	12%	12%
Optometrists	27%	0%	18%	22%	13%	2%	28%	12%	14%
Pharmacists	3%	3%	3%	3%	1%	3%	4%	1%	3%
Pharmacy Technicians	3%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Physical Therapists	16%	13%	13%	15%	12%	13%	12%	11%	13%
Physical Therapy Assistants	16%	13%	13%	15%	12%	13%	12%	11%	17%
Physicians	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Registered Nurses	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Speech-Language Pathologists	10%	14%	7%	7%	6%	6%	4%	6%	6%
Veterinarian	2%	0%	3%	2%	2%	1%	4%	4%	2%
Veterinary Technicians	4%	0%	2%	3%	0%	15%	3%	2%	2%
Summed Deviation*	50%	-6%	11%	32%	7%	-15%	17%	7%	

Source: Va. Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Current Year Unemployment

Finally, **current year involuntary unemployment** captures the percent of survey respondents who were involuntarily unemployed while completing their survey. Table 3 presents the current year unemployment rates by profession and region. Although the current unemployment rates indicate significant economic recovery has occurred in the healthcare industry, some regions' rates still vary substantially from the state. The following map shows the deviation by region, indicating the Southside region deviated most from the state. Other significant findings include:

- Funeral service providers, clinical psychologists, licensed professional counselors, physicians, and veterinarians had overcome the detrimental impact of the pandemic on unemployment as their current year unemployment rate was 0% regionally and statewide.
- The highest regional current year unemployment rates was recorded for assistant living facility administrators and occupational therapy assistants in the Southwest Virginia region, both at 5%. State rates were 2% and 3%, respectively, for both professions.
- Compared to the state, the impact of the pandemic with respect to current year involuntary unemployment was highest in the Southside Virginia region and lowest in the Valley and West Central regions.

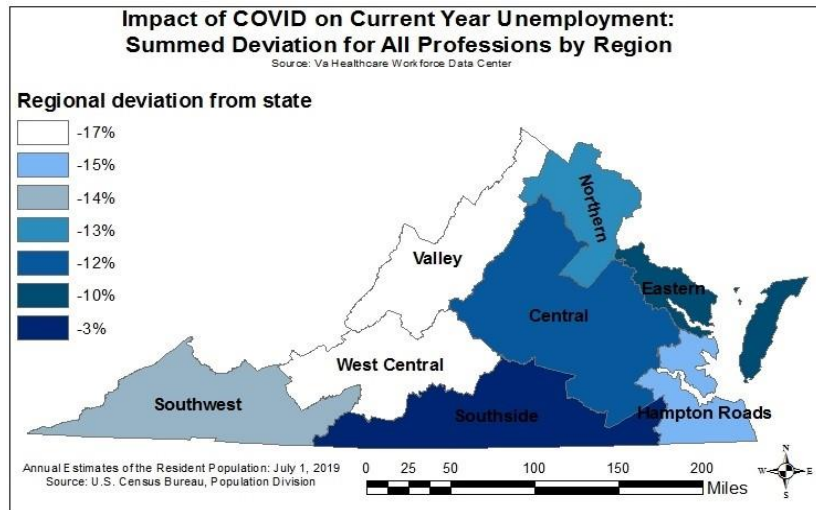


Table 3: Current Year Unemployment by Profession and Region

	Central	Eastern	Hampton	Northern	Southside	Southwest	Valley	West Central	State
Assisted Living Facility Administrators	3%	0%	0%	1%	5%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Audiologists	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Dental Hygienists	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%
Dentists	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Funeral Service Providers	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Licensed Clinical Psychologists	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Licensed Clinical Social	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Licensed Practical Nurses	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Licensed Professional Counselors	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nurse Practitioners	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Nursing Home Administrators	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Occupational Therapists	1%	2%	1%	1%	4%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Occupational Therapy Assistants	2%	4%	3%	2%	5%	1%	2%	0%	3%
Optometrists	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Pharmacists	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Pharmacy Technicians	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Physical Therapists	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Physical Therapy Assistants	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	3%
Physicians	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Registered Nurses	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Speech-Language Pathologists	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Veterinarian	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Veterinary Technicians	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%
Summed Deviation*	-12%	-10%	-15%	-13%	-3%	-14%	-17%	-17%	

Source: Va. Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Conclusion

The coronavirus pandemic has had tremendous impact on healthcare professions in Virginia. Statewide rates obscure significant variations in unemployment rates across the different regions of the state. The current report provides a breakdown of past year underemployment, past year involuntary unemployment, and current involuntary unemployment by Virginia Performs Regions. The current year unemployment rates are lower than past year underemployment and unemployment rates for most professions. In fact, the current unemployment rate for funeral service providers, clinical psychologists, licensed professional counselors, physicians, and veterinarians regionally and statewide was 0%, suggesting significant recovery in the healthcare industry. However, some professions are still grappling with the impact of the epidemic in certain regions and substantial variations are still observed between regions and professions.

Regions with generally high concentration of healthcare professionals, such as the Central and Northern regions, seem to be most impacted by the pandemic whereas regions with low concentration of healthcare professionals, such as the Eastern region, were generally less impacted by the pandemic. This is because regions with fewer supply of healthcare professionals did not have adequate professionals to start with and therefore professionals in those areas were less likely to be furloughed or laid off during the pandemic. Further, it appears that different regions coped with the pandemic's impact differently. The findings from this report suggest that professionals in the Central and Northern regions were more likely to report involuntary unemployment whereas those in regions like the Southwest were more likely to experience underemployment. However, from what is observed in the current unemployment rates, most of the impact of the pandemic appear to have been temporary. Now that healthcare facilities have resumed providing elective procedures and outpatient visits, the current unemployment rates are 0% for some professions and regions. As the state recovers, it is important to examine the regional differences to identify regions that may need additional support to overcome the impact of the pandemic.

The Impact of the Coronavirus on Licensed Healthcare Workforce Unemployment in Virginia: Differences by Primary Work Setting

The Impact of the Coronavirus on Licensed Healthcare Workforce Unemployment in Virginia: Differences by Primary Work Setting

This is the third report in this series which examines the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on the licensed healthcare workforce in Virginia. The first report in this series titled *The Impact of the Coronavirus on Licensed Healthcare Workforce Unemployment in Virginia*⁷ examined trends in the state as a whole for each healthcare profession. A subsequent report titled *The Impact of the Coronavirus on Licensed Healthcare Workforce Unemployment by Region*⁸ examined regional differences in underemployment and unemployment rates for licensed healthcare professions in Virginia. The current report selects six healthcare professions with some of the highest unemployment rates in Virginia during the initial pandemic period and explores how their underemployment and unemployment rates vary in different primary work settings.

The coronavirus pandemic has had significant impacts on the healthcare industry. One impact was that hospitals and patients postponed elective procedures and practitioner visits in the early part of 2020. With the increases in coronavirus cases and hospitalizations recently, some states have asked hospitals and healthcare centers to postpone elective procedures once again. Although Virginia has not made this decision, looking at the impact of the 2020 postponement of elective procedures, practitioner visits, and the pandemic generally on healthcare professionals' underemployment and unemployment will help to predict the possible impact of such a decision for different healthcare professionals in different healthcare settings.

Using licensees' survey data in selected professions, this report examines three indicators: past year underemployment, past year unemployment, and current year unemployment, for dentists and dental hygienists (data collected in March 2021) and occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, physical therapists, and physical therapy assistants (data collected in December 2020). Specifically, this paper focuses on these healthcare professionals' rate of reporting underemployment and unemployment in some of the most common workplace settings: solo private practice, group private practice, hospital-based practice (outpatient and inpatient), long-term care facility practice (nursing homes and assisted living facilities), outpatient rehabilitation facility practice, home health, and other healthcare settings. The following table shows the distribution of the professionals by primary work setting.

Primary Work Setting by Profession

	Dentists	Dental Hygienists	Occupational Therapists	Occupational Therapy Assistants	Physical Therapists	Physical Therapy Assistants
Solo private practice	2,507	2,681	98	19	470	89
Group private practice	787	622	268	46	1,135	219
Hospital	64	21	734	78	1,429	321

⁷ http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/media/dhpweb/docs/hwdc/Coronavirus_Impact_Healthcare_Unemployment.pdf

⁸ http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/media/dhpweb/docs/hwdc/Regional_Coronavirus_Unemployment.pdf

	Dentists	Dental Hygienists	Occupational Therapists	Occupational Therapy Assistants	Physical Therapists	Physical Therapy Assistants
Long-term care	8	N/A	131	124	143	205
Outpatient rehabilitation	N/A	N/A	315	58	994	526
Home health	N/A	N/A	461	205	834	695
Other	615	682	1,752	922	1,554	987
Total	3,981	4,006	3,759	1,452	6,559	3,042

Source: Va. Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Past Year Underemployment

Past year underemployment captures whether survey respondents had a part-time or temporary position but would have preferred a full-time/permanent position in the one-year period before they completed their survey. Past year underemployment varied considerably between settings; the overall rate for each profession conceals these differences. Some of the key findings regarding past year unemployment include:

- Dentists working in group private practices and other settings reported higher rates of past year underemployment compared to those working in hospitals and solo private practices.
- Occupational and physical therapists working in hospitals reported the lowest rates of past year underemployment.
- By contrast, dental hygienists working in hospitals reported the highest rate of underemployment.
- Occupational therapists working in group private practices and outpatient rehabilitation centers had the highest underemployment rates.

Past Year Underemployment by Primary Work Setting and Profession

	Dentists	Dental Hygienists	Occupational Therapists	Occupational Therapy Assistants	Physical Therapists	Physical Therapy Assistants
Solo private practice	3%	7%	19%	21%	8%	8%
Group private practice	6%	4%	15%	33%	13%	9%
Hospital	2%	10%	4%	17%	6%	10%
Long-term care	0%	N/A	14%	12%	14%	13%
Outpatient rehabilitation	N/A	N/A	6%	29%	10%	12%
Home health	N/A	N/A	11%	18%	7%	12%
Other	18%	5%	5%	9%	20%	10%
Total	3%	5%	6%	12%	7%	9%

Source: Va. Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Past Year Unemployment

Past year unemployment captures whether survey respondents have been involuntarily unemployed at any time in the one-year period before they completed their survey. In prior years, this indicator previously ranged from 0% to 3% for all professions but rose to a high of 37% for dental hygienists. However, that 37% is the average across settings and, as seen in the next table, past year unemployment was as high as 49% for dental

hygienists working in solo and group private practices. Other significant findings about past year involuntary unemployment include:

- Dentists in long-term care settings had the highest past year unemployment rate, 63%. Over 30% of those who worked in solo and group private practices also were unemployed at some point in the year before the survey.
- Occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, physical therapists, and physical therapy assistants who worked in solo and group private practices had some of the highest past year unemployment rates.
- Physical therapists working in long-term care settings reported the highest past year unemployment rate.

Past Year Unemployment by Primary Work Setting and Profession

	Dentists	Dental Hygienists	Occupational Therapists	Occupational Therapy Assistants	Physical Therapists	Physical Therapy Assistants
Solo private practice	31%	50%	26%	21%	17%	22%
Group private practice	34%	49%	16%	26%	17%	24%
Hospital	3%	0%	12%	10%	14%	20%
Long-term care	63%	N/A	12%	10%	22%	15%
Outpatient rehabilitation	N/A	N/A	11%	12%	18%	22%
Home health	N/A	N/A	9%	11%	11%	13%
Other	13%	24%	8%	12%	12%	21%
Total	20%	37%	9%	12%	13%	17%

Source: Va. Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Current Year Unemployment

Finally, **current year unemployment** captures the percent of survey respondents who were involuntarily unemployed when completing their survey. The total rates for each profession showed that some of the effects of the pandemic may be easing. However, these rates conceal significant variations between different work settings. For the six professions, the current year unemployment rates for those working in solo private practices and hospitals are equal or less than the total rates. Although the current unemployment rates in solo private practice and hospital settings suggest that these settings have recovered from the effects of the pandemic, the same cannot be said of group private practices for occupational and physical therapy assistants. Other significant findings about current involuntary unemployment include:

- Occupational therapy assistants in outpatient rehabilitation centers have a current unemployment rate of 7%, considerably higher than the 3% across all settings.
- Dental hygienists and physical therapy assistants in other settings reported the highest current unemployment rates.

Current Year Unemployment by Primary Work Setting and Profession

	Dentists	Dental Hygienists	Occupational Therapists	Occupational Therapy Assistants	Physical Therapists	Physical Therapy Assistants
Solo private practice	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%
Group private practice	1%	0%	1%	6%	1%	4%
Hospital	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Long-term care	14%	N/A	0%	1%	0%	4%
Outpatient rehabilitation	N/A	N/A	1%	7%	1%	3%
Home health	N/A	N/A	1%	2%	0%	2%
Other	3%	6%	2%	3%	2%	5%
Total	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%

Source: Va. Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Conclusion

The coronavirus pandemic has had tremendous impact on healthcare professions. The impact appears to vary both by profession and by the primary work setting of the different professions. For certain professions, their work settings have recovered but not others. Generally, hospitals seem to have recovered from the effects of the pandemic. Home health care settings also seem to be less affected or appears to have recovered with regards to unemployment; in most instances, the underemployment and unemployment rates for professionals working in home health settings are lower or the same as the rate across all settings. In the few cases in which it was higher, it was still not the setting with the highest rates. Although both solo and group private practices were considerably affected by the pandemic, solo private practices seem to have recovered whereas group private practices appear to still be struggling for certain professions. With the recent surge in the coronavirus pandemic, it is critical to identify healthcare work settings that may need additional support for their employees struggling with underemployment and unemployment. It is also important to ensure that the healthcare work settings that have recovered do not regress; all efforts are needed to help all Virginia's healthcare workforce settings recover from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.