Policymakers have renewed their focus on career technical education

- Recent state and federal policies support CTE training
  - Provide increased funding
  - Focus on career pathways

- Health CTE programs are a prime example
  - Multiple program areas and credentials
  - Opportunities for high-demand, well-paying jobs

- Demand is growing for health workers with some college training

- Two-year institutions—particularly community colleges—play a key role
Community colleges offer many health CTE programs . . .

Note: Includes all health CTE-intending students beginning programs between 2000 and 2009.
... and serve a diverse group of students

Note: Includes all health CTE-intending students beginning programs between 2000 and 2009.
Obtaining a health degree increases earnings by about 50 percent.

Note: Includes students starting health CTE programs between 2003 and 2009. Shows wage increases after completing health credential, net of wage increases of average non-completer over the same time frame.
Economic returns vary across different health credentials

Note: Includes students starting health CTE programs between 2003 and 2009. Shows individual wage increases after completing health credential, net of wage increases of average non-completer over the same time frame.
Completion rates are high but also vary across programs

Note: Shows 6-year completion rates of health credentials for CTE-intending students based on the program in which the student earned the most credits.
Improving outcomes for students in short-term, low-value programs is a key consideration

- Increasing completion rates across programs could improve student outcomes
- Students with low-value credentials can benefit from reenrolling in higher-level, higher-return programs
- Some health programs offer clear training pathways to higher-level credentials
- “Stackables” are multiple credentials obtained over time that build skills and move students along career pathways
A small but growing share of students who earn certificates are obtaining additional credentials.
For students who do earn multiple credentials, the largest gains come from higher-level awards.

Note: Shows increase in wages relative to a student’s own prior earnings and, in the case of those who earn a second or third award, relative to those who completed only one.
Wages rise over time for those who earn multiple credentials

Note: Inflation adjusted median earnings for health CTE students in the California Community Colleges who earn 1 or 2 awards between 2003-2009.
Several factors significantly improve completion of health programs

- Received financial aid during health program
- Persistence in health program (3 consecutive terms)
- Enrolled in health program full-time at least 1 term
- More units per term during health program (per unit)
- Earned 30+ units prior to program
- Higher GPA (per 0.5 points)

Note: Coefficients from a multivariate model of completion that controls for these factors as well as demographic characteristics, program, and college.
Efforts to expand access to health pathways could increase opportunities

- Health CTE success rates are high but could be improved, especially for certain programs and students
- Stackable credentials are not common in health fields, despite their potential
- Targeted outreach could help students move along pathways to higher earnings
- Student support—particularly assistance that allows full-time enrollment—could increase pathway completion
These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.