

Genetic Counselor



What do they do?

Genetic Counselors determine risk factors for disorders and hereditary diseases. They do this by analyzing patient histories, genetic testing, and risk calculation. Genetic Counselors also educate the family on their risk factors as well as how to cope with a diagnosis.

Where do they work?

Hospitals, universities, laboratories, and private clinics are common locations in which genetic counselors work.

Pay:

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average yearly income for Genetic Counselors is \$72,090.



Education:

To become a Genetic Counselor one must complete a master's degree in genetic counseling. Master's programs for genetic counseling are very competitive.

Genetic Counselor Training:

M.S. Degree at UW-Madison, WI:

www.med.wisc.edu

M.S. Degree at Northwestern University, IL:

www.cgm.northwestern.edu

M.S. Degree at University of Minnesota:

www.cbs.umn.edu

High School students interested in becoming a Genetic Counselor should take classes in chemistry, biology, genetics, and psychology. It is also strongly recommended to seek out both volunteer and internship experiences.

Accreditation:

The Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling is a specialized program accreditation board for educational training programs which grant master's degrees or higher in genetic counseling.

www.gceducation.org



Certification & License:

The American Board of Genetic Counseling certifies and recertifies Genetic Counselors. Exams of certification are offered annually and are maintained with continuing education based on a five-year period.

www.abgc.net

In addition to a master's degree, some states require licensing to become a Genetic Counselor, according to the National Society of Genetic Counselors, Wisconsin does not require a license.



Professional Associations:

Genetic Counselors could choose to join any of the following professional associations:

The American College of Medical Genetics (ACMG):

www.acmg.net

American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG):

www.achg.net

National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC):

www.achg.net



Room for Advancement:

Genetic Counselors can advance their career by becoming professors, publish articles for academic journals, give presentations in the community or speak with government officials.

Job Outlook:

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for Genetic Counselors are expected to grow 29 percent from 2014 to 2024 which is faster than average for all occupations.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2016-17 Edition*, Genetic Counselors, www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/genetic-counselors.htm

