# Does the Healthcare Industry Hire People with Computer Science Degrees?

The number of healthcare Information Technology (IT) jobs available nationwide continues to grow, thanks to a growing emphasis on efficiency and the utility of electronic records. Today, IT professionals represent a significant number of hospital staff members and have become an integral part of hospital leadership and executive management. Their skills help to keep information updated, secure, and yet available to the largest number of nurses, doctors, and patients.

Though the focus sounds like it might only be on information-related IT jobs, it’s worth noting that computer science graduates stand an excellent chance of gaining employment within the health sector. That’s because their ability to create custom solutions for common problems makes them an asset for hospitals who must respond to those problems quickly, efficiently and in a way that does not reduce the quality of the care they provide to patients.

# What Is the Computer Scientist’s Role in a Hosptial?

Computer science graduates would be forgiven for having no real understanding of how their skills work within a healthcare organization. Most coursework taught at today’s universities focuses on the computer science student working in a large corporation, or within a software development company that creates mass productions for consumers. Hospital work is just as intensive and just as demanding, however, and there are a few key ways that computer scientists put their skills to work on behalf of hospital management and the goal of achieving better patient outcomes.

1. Better Software Solutions:  Computer science grads have the skills needed to diagnose software inefficiencies and then solve them using advanced programming knowledge. They’re taught to create custom solutions that solve common ills, and hospitals prize that skill set above many others brought to the table. Most hospitals will assign computer scientists to programming projects that create better back end systems for data management, better patient-facing electronic medical record access points, and better software for diagnosing and treating patients who come to the hospital. Their fluency in web, desktop, and mobile programming further enhances their ability to provide this service to large hospitals and smaller clinics alike.
2. Management of Hospital Hardware:  The key to delivering strong patient outcomes is being up-to-date in terms of not only software, but also hardware. Computer science students understand this innately, and that’s why hospitals also ask them to work on projects that upgrade computers, improve the local network, and make things run a bit more efficiently. They’ll keep up-to-date on new hardware developments and new ways to utilize older hardware, helping the company save both time and money in the long run. Computer science students have an extensive background in explaining new hardware to others as well, and this makes them suitable for training when new systems are implemented.
3. Troubleshooting and Problem-Solving:  [Computer science graduates](http://commonhealth.wbur.org/2012/06/computer-scientist-health-care) have spent a great deal of time learning about technology and learning how to teach others about it. This set of skills will certainly be put to use in today’s healthcare environments. Whether it’s helping to train the hospital on a new software tool that they custom-designed, or simply training employees on new releases of other software packages, they’ll help keep everyone in the loop. Computer science graduates will also troubleshoot problems with their own software or third-party applications, ensuring high levels of productivity for all workers.