

### Healthcare Sales Jobs Report – July 2012

The number of healthcare jobs continues to rise, but will medical  
And pharmaceutical sales jobs keep with the trend?

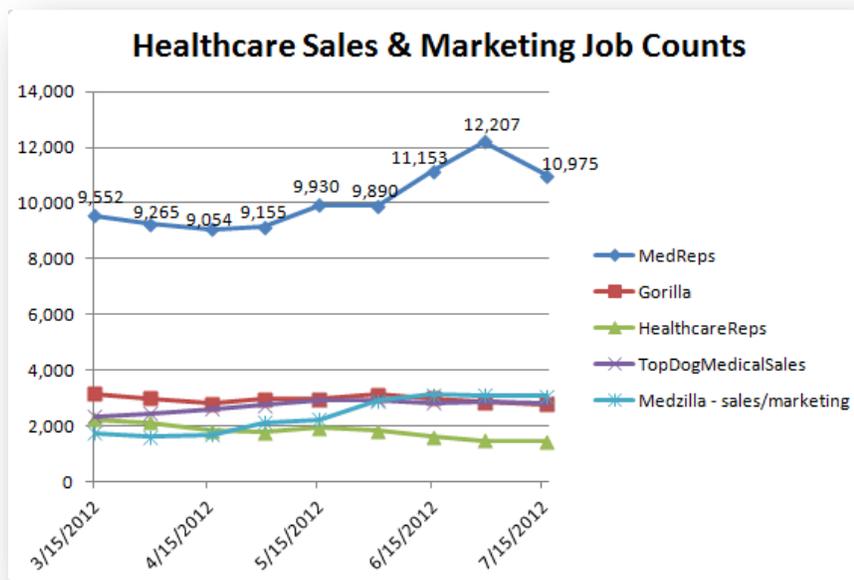
On the first Friday of every month all eyes turn to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The highly anticipated employment situation report answers questions like, “Has the unemployment rate gone up or down?” and “How many new jobs were created?” These national employment numbers serve as an important marker in measuring the overall health of the economy, and when broken down by industry, one can gauge how a given sector is performing.

So how is the healthcare industry doing? According to the recent BLS reports, healthcare continues to add jobs, though the number added fluctuates somewhat unpredictably. In June of 2012, for example, healthcare added 13,000 jobs, a relatively low number compared to the 33,000 added in May of 2012. The overall outlook for healthcare is positive though. Unemployment within the sector hovers around 6.2% compared to the national average of 8.2%, and the demand for healthcare services created by aging Baby Boomers and the Affordable Care Act will drive healthcare job growth into the foreseeable future.

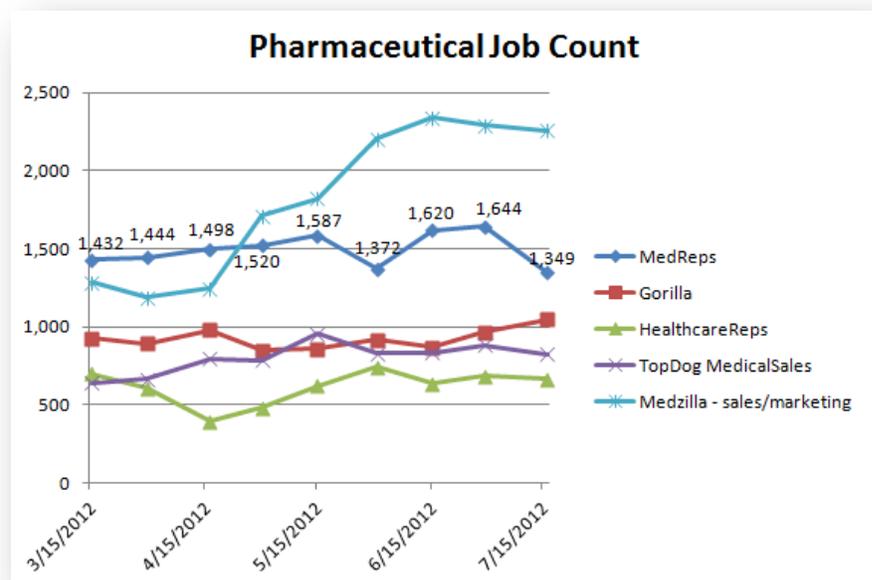
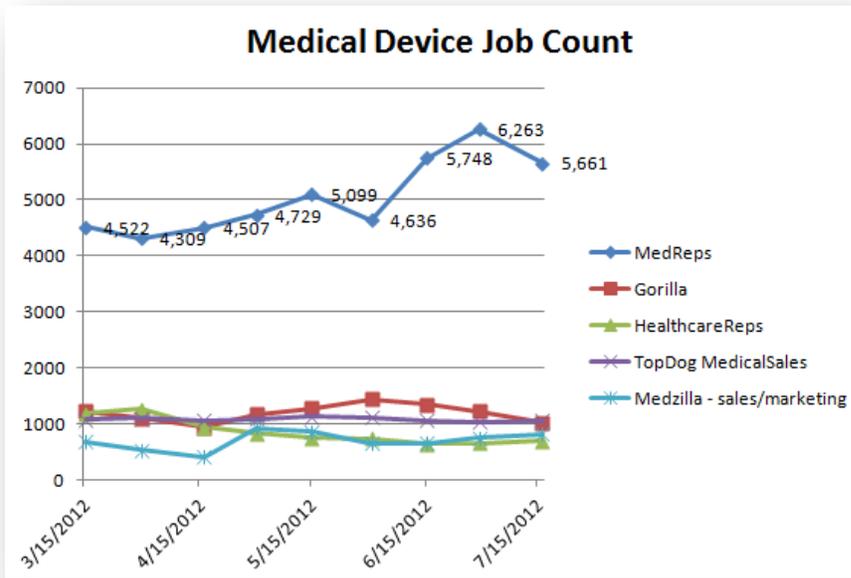
The outlook is certainly good for healthcare, but can the same be said for healthcare sales jobs? It’s no secret that the number of pharmaceutical sales jobs has shrunk considerably in recent years, but is the worst over for pharma reps? And what about medical device and biotech reps? What impact might the recent healthcare legislation have on med rep jobs?

#### The current state of medical and pharmaceutical sales jobs

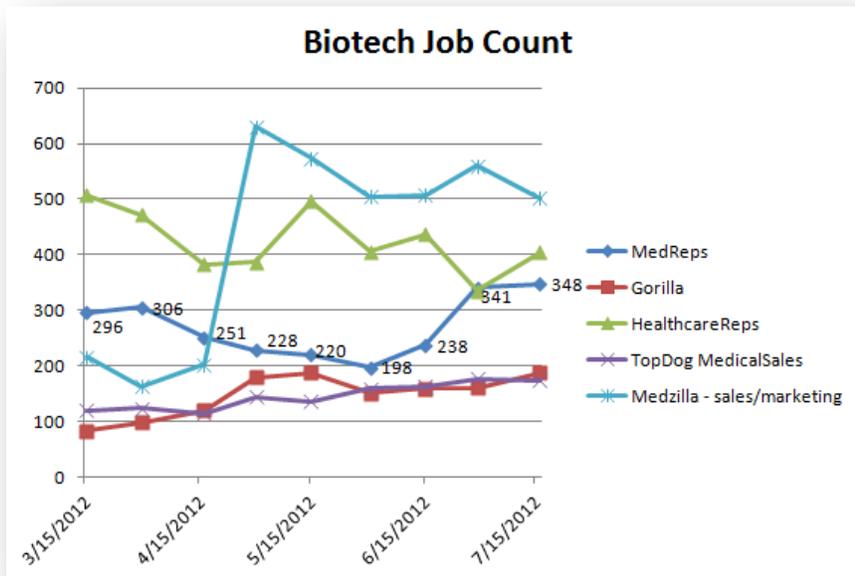
A tally of healthcare sales job counts on several job boards suggests a positive outlook for medical and pharmaceutical sales jobs. The industry’s leading job board, MedReps.com, has seen a consistent lift in the number of healthcare sales and marketing jobs on the site, recently hitting a record high job count at 12,200 jobs before leveling back out at nearly 11,000 jobs. Other job boards in the space have also seen healthcare sales job counts either holding steady or trending upward.



A closer look at job counts by sector over the same time period suggests similar trends. The medical device sales job count on MedReps.com spiked in recent months and held steady on other job boards, giving the impression that the medical device sales job market is stable, if not growing. The number of pharmaceutical sales jobs rose dramatically on Medzilla but stayed relatively flat on the other job sites with the exclusion of MedReps.com, which saw two distinct dips during the 4 month period. The takeaway? Pharma rep jobs are not as prevalent as med device jobs, but the market is not as grim as many believe.



The trend for biotech sales jobs was difficult to interpret, with Medzilla seeing a spike in April with an overall lift for the 4-month period, and HealthcareReps experiencing erratic ups and downs. MedReps.com trended down in April and May but finished the period with more biotech sales jobs than it started with. Buzz that the biotech industry is about to explode may be true, but the job count numbers are not proving it just yet.



### The future of medical device and pharmaceutical sales jobs

This snapshot of job counts in recent months suggests things are looking up for those seeking medical and pharmaceutical sales jobs. However, the Supreme Court's ruling to uphold the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) has the potential to impact medical and pharmaceutical sales jobs.

PPACA will be partially funded by a 2.3% excise tax on medical device manufacturers. The tax is projected to raise \$20 billion over 5 years. Executives at many medical device companies say they will be forced to consider layoffs to offset the impact of the tax. Companies such as Stryker have already announced a planned 5% reduction of its workforce, citing the device tax as the reason.

Medical device reps shouldn't despair, however. While the Supreme Court upheld PPACA, lobbyists for the industry are still working hard to influence the Senate to repeal the excise tax. But even if the tax does go into effect as planned on January 1, 2013, some say the potential impact may have been exaggerated by the industry, and those with medical device sales jobs shouldn't worry.

Pharma reps are worried for a different reason. While pharmaceutical companies are also being asked to shoulder part of the cost of healthcare reform, more concerning for those with pharmaceutical sales jobs is the Physician Payments Sunshine Act, which was passed along with PPACA. This legislation requires pharmaceutical and medical device companies to disclose payments over \$10 made to physicians for consulting, research, speaking engagements, travel and entertainment.

These new regulations, though yet to be implemented, already have many physicians hesitant to take meetings with pharma reps, who have a reputation for bringing food and gifts to physician offices. Physicians do not want to be viewed by the public as having been “bought” by a pharma company. This legislation is less likely to be repealed than the excise tax, though the logistics of the regulations may further delay enforcement. Furthermore, the Sunshine Act may not impact the number of pharmaceutical sales jobs as much as it could affect how those with pharmaceutical sales jobs conduct business.

### **Conclusion**

The positive outlook for healthcare jobs is certain, but the future of medical and pharmaceutical sales jobs is not so clear cut. If climbing job counts on healthcare sales job boards are any indication, the short-term outlook is positive. However, pending implementation of certain aspects of PPACA could influence the long-term outlook. Smart medical sales professionals will seek out sales training and work hard to increase their numbers in order to make themselves invaluable to their employers, all while keeping their eyes on the job market so they will be ready to act if necessary. With the right plan in place, smart medical sales job seekers will emerge more successful than ever.