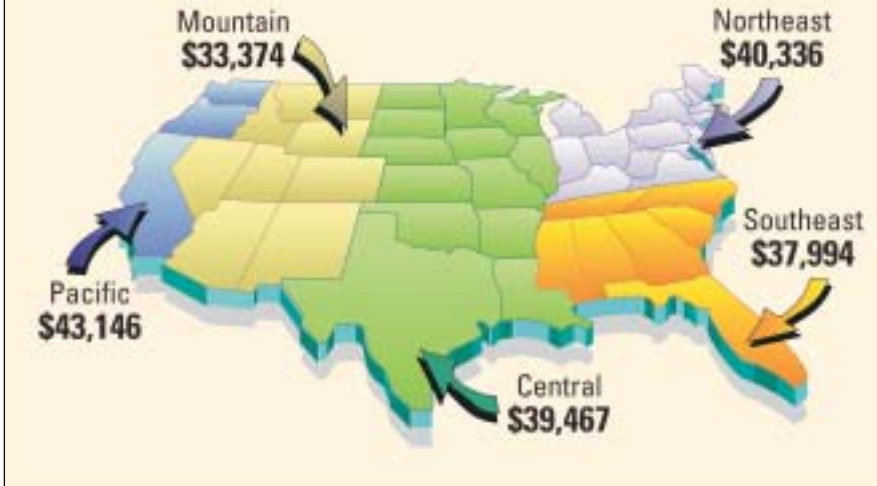


HPN Pay Survey: CS salaries top \$40K mark

It looks like it's true after all that a rising tide floats all boats. At least it does in the case of central service workers' annual salaries. With more than four out of five central service workers reporting that they enjoyed a pay hike in 2003, the average annual salary for CS personnel rose above \$40,000, according to an exclusive *Healthcare Purchasing News* survey of CS professionals. The survey, completed via email early last month, showed that the average CS staff member, including managers, now earns \$40,787. One-hundred and twenty-four CS workers of all job titles responded to the *HPN* poll. CS supervisors and CS managers made up the majority (62.2 percent) of all survey respondents, with respondents who have the job title CS directors (11.8 percent) and CS technician (13.4 percent), plus 12.6 percent in the ubiquitous "other" category filling out the answers.

Aside from pure pay issues, the survey revealed a profile of sorts of today's central service worker. CS workers are overwhelmingly female (67 percent of respondents), about 48 years old, mostly well-educated (55 percent possess some level of a college degree versus 45 percent with only a high school education), and are certified by the International Association of Healthcare Central Service Materiel Management (51 percent). The typical CS employee works in a 300-bed not-for-profit hospital (77 percent) in an urban setting (46 percent), and reports to either the director of materials management (34 percent) or the operating room director (32 percent). The average CS worker responding to the survey has performed central service work for approxi-

Salary by Region



mately 15 years, including more than 13 years at their current facility. About one in five survey respondents are registered nurses, with the remainder spread among several other categories such as storeroom manager (17 percent) and purchasing manager (15 percent).

With facilities spread across the entire country, it's not surprising that there is little pay parity among CS workers, but the gap between management and non-management personnel sheds some light on the actual economic value in

Salary by Type of Facility



getting ahead. At the top of the pay level are CS directors with an average salary of \$50,745, followed by CS managers (\$43,714) and CS supervisors (\$36,206). CS technicians bring up the rear with an average salary of \$24,139 according to the *HPN* survey.

Possibly underscoring the underrated nature of central service work, only a minority of CS workers were rewarded with bonuses this year. According to the survey, just 18 percent of respondents took home bonuses, with those checks averaging \$1,800.

Explaining the gender gap

But undoubtedly the sharpest disparity in pay comes in the CS gender gap. While men made up just one-third of survey participants, males earned an average of \$48,660 compared with \$38,304 for their female colleagues. A gap that large needs some amplification, so a look behind the

Salary by Number of Beds



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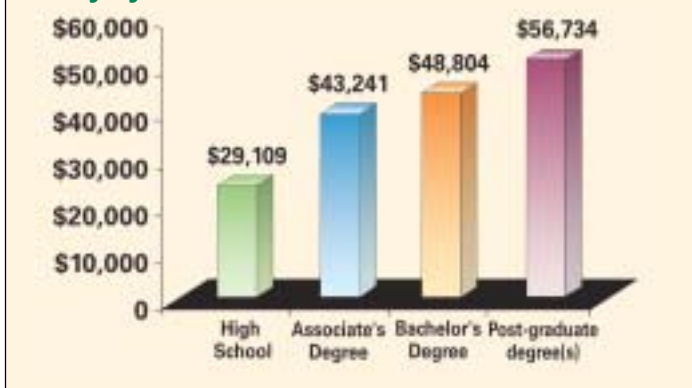
numbers shows that while the highest-paid individuals at an average of \$65,634 were males, just four people, all CS directors, fit that category, making that figure statistically insignificant. Four other males in the "other" job category earned an average salary of \$50,450. But by a 46-23 majority more women than men who participated in the survey said they were CS supervisors and managers. The men were paid at a higher rate, but on average closer by gender, \$43,535 for the men and \$40,526 for the women. The highest average salaries for women were CS directors (\$44,944) and CS managers (\$44,123). The lowest-paid workers in the entire survey were female CS technicians, paid at an average rate of \$26,894. Their male counterparts take home an average of \$31,610.

As it is with most job categories in America, an almost certain passageway to elevated pay for CS personnel is higher education. Only 10 percent of those participat-

ing in the survey hold postgraduate degrees, but they earn the highest salaries in the survey by education levels at \$56,734. Those with bachelor degrees take home an average of \$48,804; associate's degree holders earn \$43,241, while those survey participants with only high school diplomas earn an average of just \$29,109.

By geographical region, those in the far west enjoy the top pay with a \$43,146 average, followed by the northeastern states at \$40,336. Higher pay also went to CS personnel in larger hospitals. Those working in facilities

Salary by Education



with more than 500 beds earned an average of \$50,613, substantially more than the average pay of everyone else, who averaged \$36,400. The city-country gap confirmed this difference as urban workers averaged \$43,834 versus just \$32,616 for CS personnel who said they work in rural areas.

Non-salary issues

Survey participants answered several questions dealing with non-economic matters. For example, most CS workers have little fear about losing their jobs. An overwhelming majority said they felt either "very secure" (41 percent) or "secure" (50 percent) when asked about security in their current positions.

Other findings:

- 32.2 percent of respondents said their hospitals reprocess medical devices onsite
- 58 percent said their facility utilize the services of third party device reprocessors
- A plurality of CS departments (22 percent) employ more than 30 people, the survey found, with the remainder spread almost equally among departments with fewer FTEs.

-Survey participants take an average of 8.5 continuing education classes each year

-Sterile processing (90 percent), decontamination (84 percent), medical equipment cleaning/disinfection (73 percent) and OR supply distribution (60 percent) are functions that report most often to the CS director. **HPN**

Salary by Years in Central Service



Salary by Title



Salary by Gender

