



## **HEAL Coalition ALERT: Bureau of Labor Statistics Releases Survey on Injuries in Allied Health Fields**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently released the results of a ten-year study on occupational injuries among nursing, psychiatric, and home health care aides. The findings indicated that between 1995 and 2004, nearly 800,000 aides were injured on the job, primarily muscle strains, sprains, and tears, and related disorders.

The BLS findings have received news coverage in Washington, and will no doubt be read and reviewed by key policy-makers in Congress, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Health and Human Services. The question is: How will these policy-makers interpret the BLS study?

- Will they notice that the number of injuries steadily declined by almost 40% during the ten years covered by the study?
- Will they be aware of the ways in which nursing and home health aides receive detailed instructions by allied health schools on techniques and methods designed to reduce the risk of injury, both to the aide and the patient?
- Or will the Department of Labor – possibly influenced by Members of Congress – embark on a round of costly and burdensome regulations to protect workers, despite the dramatic reduction in the number of on-the-job injuries in the past decade?

Only through a dedicated presence in Washington will allied health schools be able to influence policy on key issues such as these. Congress must be informed about the quality training that private career colleges and schools provide to a large and growing segment of the allied health professions workforce.

If the proprietary allied health school community does not take action, legislation could be enacted to the detriment of your students and schools. We must ensure that legislation impacting allied health is being developed with our interests, and those of the professionals we educate, in mind.

Join the HEAL Coalition now, and through effective advocacy we can make a difference!

If you are interested in joining us, or would like more information regarding the HEAL Coalition, contact Executive Director Tom Netting at (202) 626-8553.