

# What Can AI Do for Your Career in Sleep?

By Andrea Ramberg, BA, RPSGT, CCSH

Finding enough time in your day to accomplish everything both personally and professionally is a struggle that many people can relate to. Most of us wish that we could find time to do more, yet many of us finish our days with items still left on our to-do list. If technology could free up half the time your team currently spends scoring studies, what items could you start crossing off your list each day? Could you use that time to take your career in sleep to the next level?

One of the things I'm passionate about is finding ways for technologists to excel in the midst of the ever-growing demands placed on sleep care professionals. Implementing artificial intelligence (AI) technology can lead to scoring more studies in less time and reduce your sleep lab backlog. This, in turn, frees up time in your workday to pursue a new part- or full-time role at your sleep lab. There are many opportunities in sleep for technologists to expand patient care and compliance, including attaining an additional certification, pursuing continuing education by taking a course at a local college or implementing a new program for your sleep lab. All of these initiatives have the potential to both positively impact your sleep center and elevate your career.

## Career Doors That Open With a CCSH

Your career can rapidly evolve when you earn an additional degree, credential or certification. In sleep medicine, the Certification in Clinical Sleep Health (CCSH) credential might be the one that opens the most doors for sleep technologists. That was certainly the case for me. I started out in sleep medicine performing in sleep lab studies and transitioned to a scoring technologist.

While building up my skills, I recognized opportunities to make a difference in the lives of my patients beyond scoring studies.

I obtained my CCSH certification, and using my expertise and knowledge, worked to improve the care pathway for patients in the community that I served by starting a sleep navigation program. My CCSH credential helped me grow my career, and it started with me seeing an opportunity to make a difference and finding a way to make it happen.

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If you're interested in earning your CCSH the following are career paths a sleep technologist might consider pursuing. The first three start with the CCSH credential and the fourth is a direct result of implementing an AI-assisted sleep scoring solution.

### Sleep Coach

With your CCSH, you will have the skills and qualifications to help patients with specific disorders that require unique therapy plans, including insomnia. Generally, sleep coaches work closely with physicians and other behavioral medical specialists to facilitate improved outcomes for the patient. For many patients, talking with a sleep coach might be the very first step in analyzing sleep patterns. Patients may not be ready to accept their current reality; a sleep coach is someone who can guide a patient toward healthy (or healthier) sleep patterns. Sleep coaches will also work with parents to assist them in getting their kids on a healthier sleep schedule, providing benefits to the entire family.

### Sleep Navigator

Often found in health systems, the sleep navigator brings together the sleep lab and other areas of the health system. Sleep navigators help facilitate the care plan from inpatient to outpatient, ensuring patients do not fall through the cracks and get the right treatment. Navigators educate physicians and nurses on what to look for in patients as well as put systems in place to remove the challenges often faced with pre-op screening, subsequent testing, and follow-up treatment and education.

### Sleep Educator

A sleep educator typically serves in a durable medical equipment (DME) role. Educators work directly with patients, for example, after a home sleep apnea test (HSAT) is taken, but before the patient begins their auto-titrating continuous positive airway pressure (Auto-PAP) setup. The sleep educator will educate the patient on the potential disease state,

how to use and clean the positive airway pressure (PAP) device and what to expect with mask and therapy options. Educators can also provide remote monitoring. Because remote monitoring is a newly reimbursable activity, sleep educators are able to support patients and the bottom line at the same time. As such, educators are remotely downloading patient PAP data and interpreting and commenting on it with patients proactively to improve adherence.

### Love Scoring Studies? Be a Super Scorer

For the sleep technologists that love scoring sleep test studies, implementing AI technology can help them either increase the volume of tests they get through on a given day or allow them to really dissect and interpret the more complex or difficult sleep tests. AI-assisted sleep test scoring software can take the first pass at scoring the polysomnography (PSG) or HSAT study and then the super scorer can go back into the test and focus their time on the parts that are most complex and really need the

expertise of a sleep technologist. Sleep technologists can be the eyes and the ears of the physician and catch little details such as arrhythmias or abnormal electroencephalography (EEG) results, as well as catch patterns that ultimately result in the patient getting a better diagnosis and care plan.

### Closing Career Advice

As you head into 2022, consider what your career goals are for the new year. Will you earn your Registered Polysomnographic Technologist (RPSGT) or CCSH credential? Will you take a couple of classes at your local college in a specific area of interest or to make a positive contribution to your sleep team or organization? This past year has seen a lot of changes and challenges in sleep medicine and health care in general. The evolution of sleep medicine means we all need to take our careers to the next level. Don't be afraid to set professional goals and create opportunities and a plan that will positively impact your career in 2022 and beyond. 🌙



**ANDREA RAMBERG, BA, RPSGT, CCSH**, has spent over a decade in sleep medicine learning every component of polysomnography, from clinical to administrative. She is double credentialed with her RPSGT and CCSH, and holds a bachelor's in psychology while currently pursuing a master's in industrial and organizational psychology. Ramberg is the president-elect of the BRPT and will begin her term as president on Jan. 1, 2022. She is the customer success manager with EnsoData and is passionate about bringing sleep into the future.

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