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COMDTNOTE 6010

SUBJ: Solicitation for Physician Assistant (PA) Training Program

- A. Training and Education Manual, COMDTINST M1500.10 (series)
  - B. Officer Accessions, Evaluations, and Promotions, COMDTINST M1000.3 (series)
  - C. Coast Guard Medical Manual, COMDTINST M6000.1 (series)
1. The Health, Safety, and Work-Life Directorate is soliciting applications for the FY12 Physician Assistant (PA) training program. Members should read this message in its entirety to ensure compliance. In addition, understanding applicable sections of ref (A) and (B) is essential to the application process.
  2. The Coast Guard (CG) sponsored PA training program is conducted at the Interservice Physician Assistant Program (IPAP), Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, TX. The duration of this program is 29 months (now 3 months longer). Phase I (64 wks) is heavily didactic (classroom), offering 96 semester hours (SH) and consisting of medical and clinical sciences. Phase II (60 wks) consists of clinical rotations and continued didactic instruction, in addition to 50 plus SH at designated Department of Defense (DoD) service specific sites.
  3. This training and education process requires a permanent change of station (PCS) at the end of phase I. selected applicants should be prepared to PCS following phase II to their first assignment as a CG physician assistant.
  4. The number of PA applicants selected each year is based upon CG staffing needs with budget influence. This year, no more than three applicants will be selected. IPAP students receive a bachelor of science (BS) degree upon completion of phase I and a masters degree upon completion of phase II from the University of Nebraska Medical School. Upon graduation, previously enlisted students will receive CG commissions (temporary regular) as ensigns. Within 12 months of graduating from IPAP the previously enlisted CG students will attend a 5-week direct commission officer program at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT. Officer students will retain their current grade and continue to be considered for promotion.
  5. IPAP graduates incur a 3 for 1 service payback obligation for the first 12 months of training and a 1 for 1 service payback obligation for the subsequent months for a total payback obligation of 53 months (4 years, 5 months) CG service. The PA will not be eligible for multi-year retention special pay during the active duty service obligation/payback.
  6. The application process has two components qualifying for the academic and medical portion and qualifying for the officer commission program.
    - A. This program is open to E4-E7 and officers up to the grade of O-2. No more than one training slot will be allocated to officer applicants. The selected officer will continue to be considered for promotion.
    - B. Academic and administrative requirements:
      - (1) Documented 100 hours (hrs) of patient care experience. At least 40 hours of this must be shadowing a PA in a clinical setting. If this is not possible due to geographic constraints, contact the program manager. Additional experience may be as an emergency medical technician (EMT), health services technician (HS), paramedic, hospital volunteer, or other health related field. Documentation must be in letter form from a supervisor in the facility where the experience was gained, or for CG EMTs and health services technicians, a command endorsement that documents the experience.
      - (2) Minimum of 60 SH of transferable college credits with a grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. At least 30 SH must be earned through attending classes or online and up to 30 SH may be obtained through military schools as recommended by the American Council on Education (ACE), College Level Examination Program (CLEP) or DANTES. Nonresident SH must be acceptable by the University of Nebraska, and be reported on a Coast Guard Institute education assessment worksheet, form CGI-1561.

(3) Completion of the following courses from a regionally-accredited college or university. The courses may be lower-level (freshman or sophomore) or upper-level (junior or senior) but may not be remedial or developmental (this means that a course with introduction, survey, or fundamentals in the title will not count towards meeting the 30 SH prerequisite requirement). The courses must be numbered with the SH equivalents listed and have resulted in a letter grade. If calculus has been taken and completed, proof of algebra is not required. The prerequisite courses may be completed in an online format providing they meet all of the requirements detailed in this paragraph. The math and science courses must have been completed in the preceding 10 years, applicants are advised to retake them if it has been greater than 5 years. For anatomy and physiology and chemistry-lab is highly recommended and will become a requirement next year.

A. Algebra (3 SH)

B. Anatomy and physiology without lab (two semester series)

C. General chemistry without lab (two semester series)

D. English (6 SH total 3 SH must be english composition)

E. Humanities and social sciences (6 SH total)

F. Psychology (3 SH)

(4) An Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) within 5 years is an IPAP requirement regardless of rank or degree status. Minimum combined sat reasoning test score in critical reading, math and writing of 1530, or a minimum old SAT combined score in verbal and math of 1020.

(5) Two letters of recommendation from a CG physician assistant and/or U.S. Public Health Service physician/physician assistant familiar with the applicants medical experience and potential for clinical care. Although letters of recommendation from CG physician assistants are ideal, non-health service technician (HS) applicants may substitute letters from a civilian physician or physician assistant who are familiar with the applicant's health care experience.

(6) Applicants who are unable to secure a letter of recommendation from a physician assistant or physician shall contact the PA force manager identified at the end of this message.

C. Officer commissioning requirements:

(1) Regular Coast Guard E-4 or above in any rating, in second or subsequent enlistment. Waivers for time in service requirement may be considered based on needs of the service, but applicants must have more than 3 years of active duty service at time of application. Officer applicants must have a command endorsement that identifies requirements for backfill if selected for training as this could be a factor in selection.

(2) Physically qualified for worldwide duty and pass a pre-commissioning physical examination IAW ref (C).

(3) No court-martial convictions or non-judicial punishment (NJP) during current enlistment.

(4) United States citizenship.

(5) Officer program interview. The officer programs applicant assessment, form CG-5527 must be completed by the interview panel and submitted directly to psc-opm-1 for enclosure with the members application by 15 July 2012. The officer interview panel can normally be scheduled through any CG education services officer (ESO). A PHS officer may not be part of this panel. Applicants may contact the PA force manager if the command or ESO is not able to schedule the interview. Those applicants re-applying may use the same officer programs applicant assessment, form CG-5527 for up to 2 years. Thereafter, a new interview should be conducted. Applicants having trouble scheduling an officer interview should contact the PA force manager for further assistance. Officers will submit copies of their officer evaluation reports in lieu of officer programs applicant assessment, form CG-5527 for the preceding four years.

(6) Direct access e-resume.

(7) Command endorsement to direct access e-resume.

- (8) List of personal awards (no more than five).
  - (9) Request for conditional release, form DD-368. Enlisted applicants only, complete sections 1-3 only.
  - (10) SECCEN checkmate results(proof of secret clearance). Items 11-15 required only if applicant does not have a current secret clearance.
  - (11) National Police Record Check, form DD-369, provided via command security officer.
  - (12) Copy of social security card.
  - (13) Fingerprint cards, form fd-258: two originals.
  - (14) Personnel security action, form CG-5588.
  - (15) Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (e-QIP), questionnaire for national security positions, form SF-86: provided via command security officer.
  - (16) Officer Candidate School agreement, form CG-3211B. (Enlisted only).
  - (17) Administrative remarks, form CG-3307 acknowledging prohibition on using any GI Bill for courses taken as part of PA program.
7. Applicants must also submit a self-composed, hand-written essay (350 words or less) expressing their reasons to become a CG officer and physician assistant, how the CG will benefit by selecting them, and a brief description or example of how they respond to stressful situations.
  8. Applicants must complete an e-resume and select the position associated with the physician assistant post graduate program. Submission deadline is 15 July 2012.
  9. Command endorsements forwarded via the e-interview shall include a comment on the applicants leadership, interests, ability and potential value to the service as a physician assistant. Only endorsement from the immediate command are authorized. In the "job endorsement" page under the "recommendation" drop-down menu, commanding officers should choose "make offer" to positively endorse a candidates application.
  10. Applicants must separately mail remaining application materials (official copies of transcripts, sat scores, two letters of recommendation, personal essay, approved pre-commissioning physical examination, certified documentation of health care experience, signed payback statement, and a signed privacy act statement) to commander PSC-OPM-1. All application materials must be received NLT 15 July 2012.
  11. Applications must be fully acceptable to IPAP and the University of Nebraska Medical Center. The CG selection board will consider only those applicants that are acceptable to both.
  12. Do not call the University of Nebraska for prerequisite or course requirements. Applicants are encouraged to seek amplifying info on eligibility requirements, prerequisites, and clarification of application procedures by contacting LCDR Robert Pekari, physician assistant force manager 202-475-5183 or robert.m.pekari@uscg.mil. Questions regarding the processing of advanced education applications should be directed to YN3 Benjamin may commander PSC-OPM, at 202-493-1623.
  13. RADM Maura Dollymore, Director of Health, Safety, and Work-Life, sends.
  14. Internet release authorized.

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