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27 May 2020

MEMORANDUM

From: S. C. Steiner, CAPT
COMDT (CG-1121)

Reply to: CDR Charlene Criss
Attn of: 202 475-5183

To: Physician Assistant Training Applicants

Subj: INTERSERVICE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM (IPAP) AY 2021

Ref: (a) ALCGPSC 062/20 Postgraduate and Advanced Education selection Panel Schedule for AY 21
(b) Performance, Training and Education Manual, COMDTINST M1500.10 (series)
(c) Officer Accessions, Evaluations, and Promotions, COMDTINST M1000.3 (series)
(d) Coast Guard Medical Manual, COMDTINST M6000.1 (series)
(e) ALCGPSC 061/20 Officer Postgraduate and Advanced Education Application Process for AY 21
(f) Active Duty Officer Postgraduate and Advanced Education Application Process Guide

1. This Memo serves as information and guidance as directed by reference (a). Please read this memo in its entirety prior to contacting the listed POCs. The selection board is currently scheduled for 08-11 Sep 2020.

2. The Health, Safety, and Work-Life Directorate is soliciting applications for the AY 21 Physician Assistant (PA) Training Program. Applicants should read and be familiar with the applicable sections of references (a) through (f) as part of the application process.

3. The Coast Guard (CG)-sponsored PA training program is conducted by the Interservice Physician Assistant Program (IPAP) located at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, TX. The duration of the program is 29 months. Phase 1 (64 wks), held at Fort Sam Houston, is heavily didactic, offering 96 semester hours (SH) consisting of medical and clinical sciences. Phase 2 (60 wks), consists of clinical rotations and continued didactic instruction at various DOD training sites (50 plus SH). Due to the length of training, BAH protection requests described in reference (e) will most likely be denied.

4. This training and education process requires three PCS moves. Selected applicants should be prepared for a PCS move to Fort Sam Houston for Phase 1, a PCS move to the assigned Phase 2 training site, then to their first unit as a CG PA upon graduation. First unit assignments are based on the needs and priorities of the service, which take priority over member concerns. These choices will often be quite limited to the student. After the first year of clinical practice, all CG PAs should expect to regularly fill TDY afloat, contingency and other over-the-horizon deployment needs. There are generally opportunities to specialize in

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aviation medicine after the first year of clinical practice as well.

5. This year we have two officer and five enlisted tabs (for a total of seven). IPAP students earn a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree upon completion of Phase 1 and a Master's degree upon completion of Phase 2, from the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). Enlisted IPAP Coast Guard graduates will commission as Lieutenant junior grades (temporary regular) upon graduation from Phase 2. Shortly after, they are required to attend a 4 to 5 week Direct Commission Officer (DCO) course at the Coast Guard Academy as soon as practicable. Officer graduates will retain their current grade. 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) Coast Guard service, IAW reference (b). Coast Guard Academy graduates who have not completed their active duty service obligation upon starting the IPAP will serve both obligations sequentially, not concurrently while in training.

6. All IPAP students must meet all service requirements prior to graduation in order to receive their diploma and register to take the Physician Assistant National Certification Exam (PANCE). Failure to meet service requirements will prevent the student from taking the PANCE or receiving their diploma indefinitely.

7. The application process consists of the following academic, program specific and administrative requirements:

A. There are three deadlines, which will not be waived:

(1) The Direct Access My Panel Submission deadline is 05 Jun 2020.

(2) Official transcripts must be received by UNMC no later than 31 Jul 2020, who will provide guidance on the required video interview submission (updated process this AY).

(3) Physician Assistant Package submission deadline is 30 Aug 2020 for ALL other items, including the finalized video submission to UNMC.

B. This program is open to Active Duty CG personnel E4 to E7 with at least 4 years of total CG service in any rating (time in rating is not a factor), as of the selection panel start date; and Officers with no more than 5 years of commissioned service as of the selection panel start date. These criteria will NOT be waived. Officers, if selected, will continue to be considered for promotion. Enlisted, if selected, may continue to compete for advancement.

C. PROGRAM/ ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS:

(1) Applicants must submit a self-composed, hand written essay (350 words or fewer) expressing their reasons to become a PA (and CG officer if enlisted), how the CG will benefit by selecting them, and a brief description or example of how they respond to stressful situations, especially with multiple competing demands.

(2) 100 hours (hrs) of patient care experience. At least 40 hrs must be shadowing a PA in a

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clinical setting. If this is not possible due to geographic constraints, contact the PA force manager. Additional experience as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Health Services Technician (HS), paramedic, hospital volunteer, or other health related field can be used towards the 100 hrs. Documentation must be in letter or memorandum form from a supervisor in the facility where the experience was gained, or for CG EMTs and HSs, a command endorsement that documents the experience.

- (3) 60 semester hours (SH) of transferable college credits with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. At least 30 SH must be earned by attending classes (ground or online). 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 Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Support (DANTES). All credits must be acceptable by UNMC and the program manager. Any CLEP, DANTES, or ACE credits shall be reported on a CG Institute Education Assessment Worksheet, Form CGI-1561. All college level coursework must be reported and will be used to calculate a cumulative GPA. If the cumulative GPA is less than 2.75 the package will not be considered. If UNMC detects a transcript that was not voluntarily provided the package will not be considered.
- (4) 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. The course must be numbered with the SH equivalents listed and have resulted in a letter grade. If precalculus or calculus has been taken and completed, proof of algebra is not required. The prerequisite courses may be completed in an online format provided they meet all of the requirements detailed in this paragraph. The science courses must have been completed in the preceding 8 years, courses completed prior to 01 August 2012 will not be accepted; it is highly recommended that these courses be earned within the last 5 years to effectively prepare the applicant for the rigors of training. The eight year time limit will NOT be waived. Additional science course work with lab is highly recommended in Microbiology, Organic Chemistry, and Biochemistry. Abnormal psychology is also highly recommended.
 - a. College Algebra (3 SH; CLEP and Intermediate not accepted)
 - b. Anatomy & Physiology with lab (8 SH; “introductory” not accepted)
 - c. General Chemistry with lab (8 SH; “introductory” not accepted) upper level Chemistry
 - d. English (6 SH – 3 SH must be English Composition, cannot CLEP this requirement)
 - e. Humanities and Social Sciences (6 SH)
 - f. Psychology (3 SH)
 - g. Medical Terminology (3 SH; HS”A” school satisfies this requirement)
- (5) Transcripts must be submitted as part of the application process to the UNMC. Instructions can be found at the application [Website](#). This application must be submitted, complete and in a “verified” status to be evaluated and moved on for consideration at the CG IPAP board. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure this occurs. Transcripts

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from all institutions attended should be submitted to UNMC IPAP Transcript Processing Center, PO Box 9140, Watertown, MA 02471. All course work completed from every institution must be entered into the application.

Any difficulties with this process should be addressed to the UNMC, contact information is at the end of this memo. In addition, submit unofficial copies of transcripts with Package submission.

- (6) A Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) within 5 years is required of all applicants regardless of degree status. This will not be waived and no substitutions are accepted. There is no minimum score. However, to be competitive, the combined SAT reasoning test score in critical reading, math and writing should be at least 1430 with 420 math (older SAT format prior to 01 Mar 2016) or 1040, 460 math (new SAT format). Applicants who were not able to take an SAT AY 2020 due to COVID-19 are not exempt from this requirement. A previous SAT may be submitted, or a package without an SAT may be submitted. However, if there are adequate qualified applicants who have a qualifying SAT score within the previous 5 years, incomplete packages will not be competitive for selection. If packages with no SAT or outdated SATs are accepted and those members are selected for AY21, the member will be expected to take an SAT no later than 01 Apr 2021. If this requirement is not completed by that date, the selectee will become ineligible and an alternate will replace that selectee.

ALL applicants must submit their standardized test score to HQS-SMB-CGPSC-opm-1-PGpanels@uscg.mil one week prior to the date your panel convenes. You must submit your scores, regardless of if they are in your EIPDR or not. See reference (f) for more information.

- (7) Letters of recommendation. Two are required, at least one from a CG PA and one from a U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) physician or PA familiar with the applicant's medical experience and potential for becoming a PA. If unable to obtain a letter from a CG PA or PHS physician or PA, non-HS applicants may substitute letters from a DoD or civilian physician or PA who is familiar with the applicant's health care experience. Two additional letters of recommendation are authorized. These may be from personal, professional or educational sources. Applicants who are unable to secure two letters of recommendation from a PA or physician shall contact the PA Force Manager identified at the end of this message.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS:

- (1) Applicants must be physically qualified for worldwide duty and enlisted applicants must pass a Pre-Commissioning Physical Examination IAW reference (d). A memorandum from the approving authority to the IPAP Selection Panel with the date of the physical examination should state the member meets CG commissioning and retention medical standards as of the date of the approved physical. Should an enlisted applicant not meet Pre-Commission physical standards, a waiver may be requested through CG Recruiting Command via usual medical waiver processes. There is no requirement to submit the

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physical examination.

- (2) Applicants must not have any court-martial convictions on record, nor Non-Judicial Punishment (NJP) during previous 5 years.
- (3) Applicants must be a United States Citizen.
- (4) Officer program interview (for enlisted applicants only). 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 member's application NLT 30 Aug 2020. The Officer Interview Panel can normally be scheduled through any CG Education Service Officer (ESO). PHS Officers may not be part of this panel. With rare exception, a CG PA should be a member of the interview panel. The PA shall not have worked with the applicant within the preceding year as a patient, co-worker or applicant mentor, prior to participating in an interview panel. 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. Educational Services Officers and applicants having difficulty securing a CG PA for the interview panel should contact the PA Force Manager. In addition, any applicants having difficulty scheduling an officer interview should contact the PA Force Manager for further assistance. Once the Officer Interview Board is complete and signed by every panel member, one of the panel members will submit the CG-5527 directly to the PG Panel inbox (HQS-SMB-CGPSC-opm-1-PGpanels@uscg.mil).
- (5) Video Interview: A 2 minute video of the applicant providing responses to questions is required. This interview will be directed and managed by UNMC and provided to the CG IPAP Selection Panel for review (updated process for AY21).
- (6) Direct Access My Panel Submission. All applicants should select the position associated with the Physician Assistant Post Graduate Program. IPAP position number is 000096 and should read "PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT" See 6. (A). (1) above.
- (7) Command endorsements forwarded in Direct Access via the My Assignments Endorsements shall include a comment on the applicant's leadership, interests, ability and potential value to the service as a PA. For members who will not be tour complete by summer 2021, commands must specifically endorse if they recommend a waiver to short tour. Only endorsements 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 candidate's application. Process Guide found under the Documents section of the OPM-1 PG Portal website: [PG Panels Reference Library](#).
- (8) Please submit packages in **ONE** pdf document (saved as: Last Name, First Name M.I. Rate/Rank_IPAPPackage) and in the following order:
 - (1) Resume (TAB)

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- (2) Essay (TAB)
- (3) Letters of Recommendation (TAB)
- (4) Verified Experience (TAB)
- (5) Personal Awards (TAB), maximum of 5, in order of newest to oldest
- (6) Forms (TAB), Memo verifying applicants meet commissioning and retention standards.
- (7) SAT (TAB)
- (8) Unofficial transcripts.

8. Applications must be fully acceptable to IPAP and UNMC. The CG selection board will consider only those applicants that are acceptable to both.

9. Applicants may contact UNMC via email: IPAP@UNMC.EDU or the IPAP specific phone line (402) 559-6673 regarding course requirements, transcript submission or other concerns. If UNMC is contacted, identify yourself as a CG IPAP applicant. Applicants are encouraged to seek amplifying information on eligibility requirements, prerequisites, and clarification of application procedures by contacting CDR Charlene Criss, Physician Assistant Force Manager 202-475-5183, Charlene.R.Criss@uscg.mil. Questions regarding the processing of advanced education applications should be directed to YN3 Bruno Felix, Nel J., at PSC (OPM-1), at 202-795-6439, Nel.J.BrunoFelix@uscg.mil.

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