



## **HEALTH SERVICES PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HSPAC)**

*Multidisciplinary in Approach, Connected by Service, Advancing Public Health*

# **Health Services Category Career Progression Profile Promotion Year (PY) 2020**

## **HSPAC Analytics Subcommittee**



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## Purpose

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This report, titled ***Health Services Category Career Progression Profile, Promotion Year (PY) 2020***, represents the Health Services (HS) Category's continued efforts to identify and document critical professional development considerations. Coupled with the [PY 2020 HS Officer \(HSO\) Category Benchmarks](#), the information contained in this report can provide insight into key drivers of professional success for HSOs.

## Methods

The survey data points collected (**Table 1**) for these analyses were from U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps Officers in the HS Category who successfully attained a **Temporary Grade Promotion** during PY 2020.

All HSOs selected for Temporary Grade Promotion received an e-mail on June 29, 2020 from the HS Category Chief Professional Officer, which requested that the officer complete an anonymous survey. The survey closed on August 3, 2020.

The survey was designed and hosted within the HS Category Survey Monkey account, and the survey contained 25 questions (**Appendix A**). The survey was designed to be consistent with the PY 2020 HS Category Benchmarks. Descriptive statistics (e.g., counts, means, and proportions) were examined for each survey question to describe professional characteristics of HSOs promoted in 2020.

Data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel, and report visualizations were created using Tableau.

The survey was distributed to eighty (80) HSOs who were successful in their Temporary Promotion Board for PY 2020 (O-4=21, O-5=36, O-6=23). Fifty-three (53) officers responded to the survey (response rate=66%). Data for HSOs promoted to O-2 and O-3 were excluded from analysis and are not presented in this report.

<b>Table 1. Promotion Year 2020 Survey Data Points</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion cycle</li> <li>• Current billet grade</li> <li>• Current temporary and permanent grade</li> <li>• Number of years in Commissioned Corps</li> <li>• Professional discipline practiced</li> <li>• Overall COER score</li> <li>• Number of attempts to promote to the promoted rank</li> <li>• Highest individual USPHS award earned</li> <li>• Number of unit USPHS honor awards</li> <li>• Number of USPHS service awards</li> <li>• Number of deployments</li> <li>• Officers in supervisory billets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional contributions/service in PAC, PAG, Deployment Team, Advisory Groups, and Military/Commissioned Officer and Professional Associations</li> <li>• Level of commissioning degree</li> <li>• Level of additional commissioning degree(s)</li> <li>• Continuing education</li> <li>• Additional public health training or certification(s)</li> <li>• Number of transfers</li> <li>• Agency-level committee participation</li> <li>• Participation in HS Category mentoring program</li> <li>• Knowledge and use of previous year's report</li> </ul>

## Limitations

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This report includes only information from HSOs selected for Temporary Grade Promotion in PY 2020. HSOs not selected for promotion were not invited to complete the survey. As a result, characteristics between promoted and non-promoted officers cannot be compared.

These officers may possess different professional development characteristics from those who responded to the survey. Had their information been captured and included, this report's findings may be different.

Finally, the findings are based on self-reported anonymous responses and were not validated.

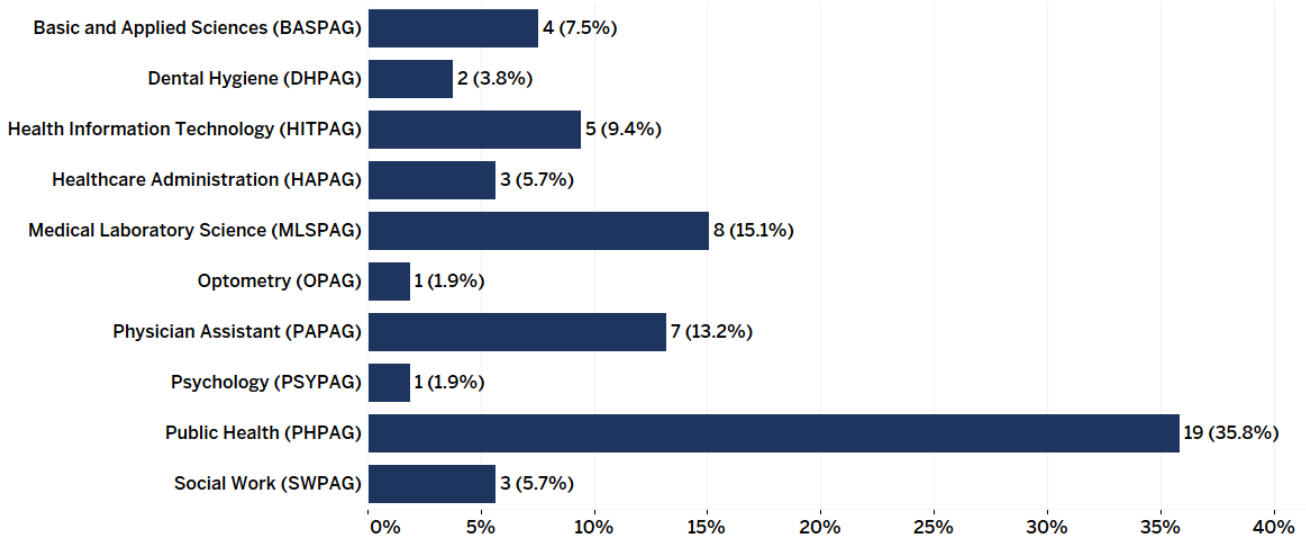
## Results

### Professional Discipline of Respondents

Figure A provides an overview of the range of professional disciplines held by the survey's respondents. HS Professional Advisory Group (PAG) designations were used as proxy for discipline. The Public Health discipline was the highest reported discipline with 35.8 % of the survey responses, followed by Medical Laboratory Science (15.1%) and Physician Assistant (13.2%).

Figure A. Professional Discipline Among Survey Respondents, PY 2020

Which professional advisory group (PAG) do you belong to?

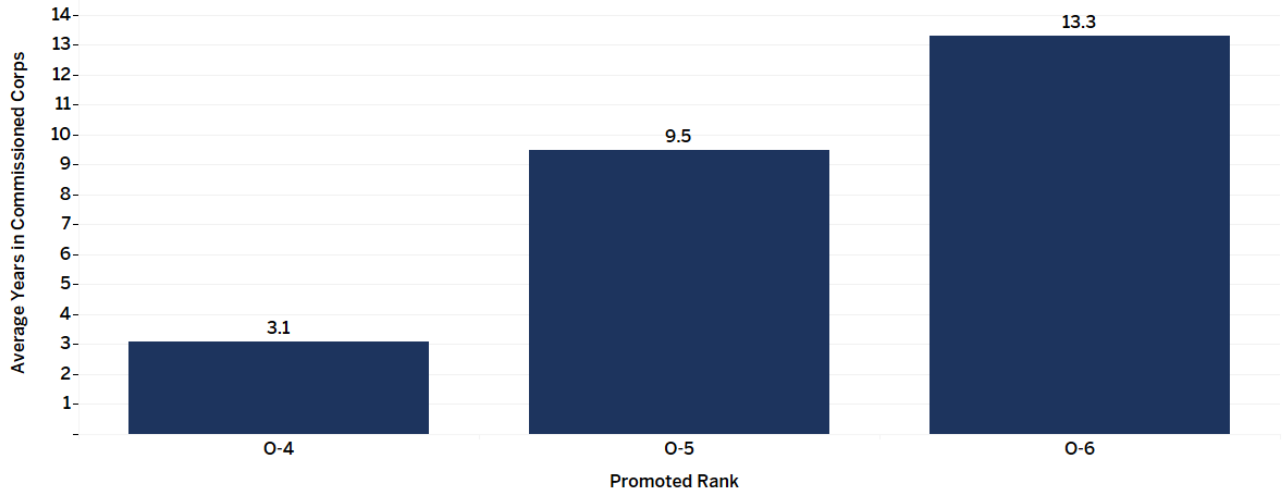


## Number of Years in USPHS Commissioned Corps

**Figure B** displays the average number of years officers served with the USPHS Commissioned Corps at the time they were promoted in PY 2020. Survey results indicate that time-in-service increases with rank.

**Figure B. Average Number of Years in USPHS Commissioned Corps by Rank, PY 2020**

How many years have you been in the USPHS Commissioned Corps?  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?

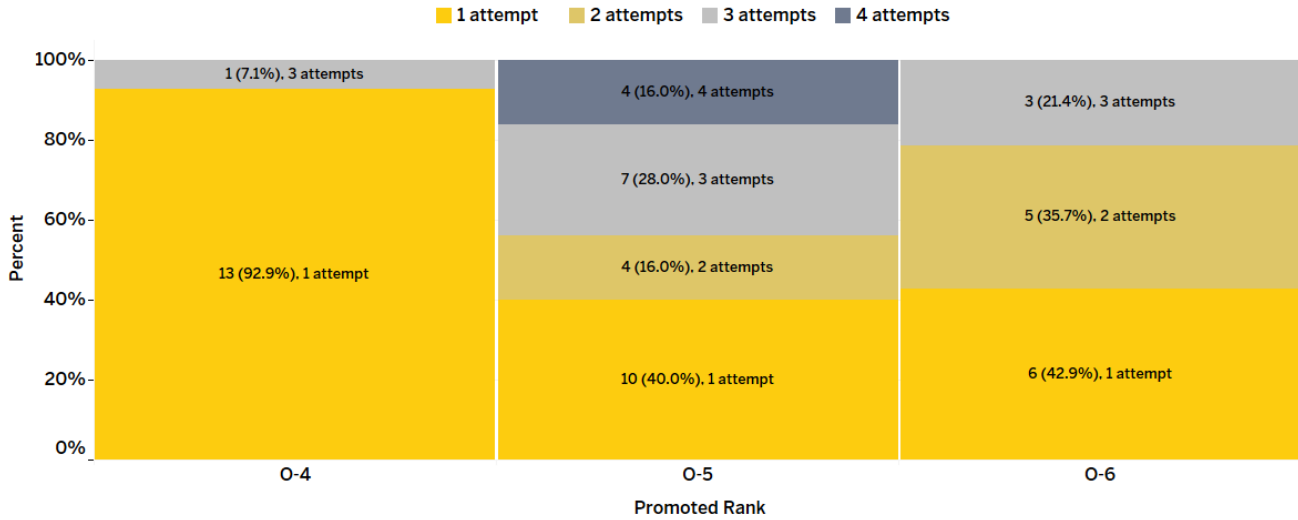


## Number of Attempts for Promoted Rank

**Figure C** shows that among officers promoted to the rank of O-4 in PY 2020, 92.9% were promoted on their first attempt, compared to 40.0% of officers promoted to O-5 and 42.9% promoted to O-6.

**Figure C. Average Number of Attempts for Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Including this promotion, how many times did you put in to promote to the TEMPORARY rank to which you were just successful?  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?



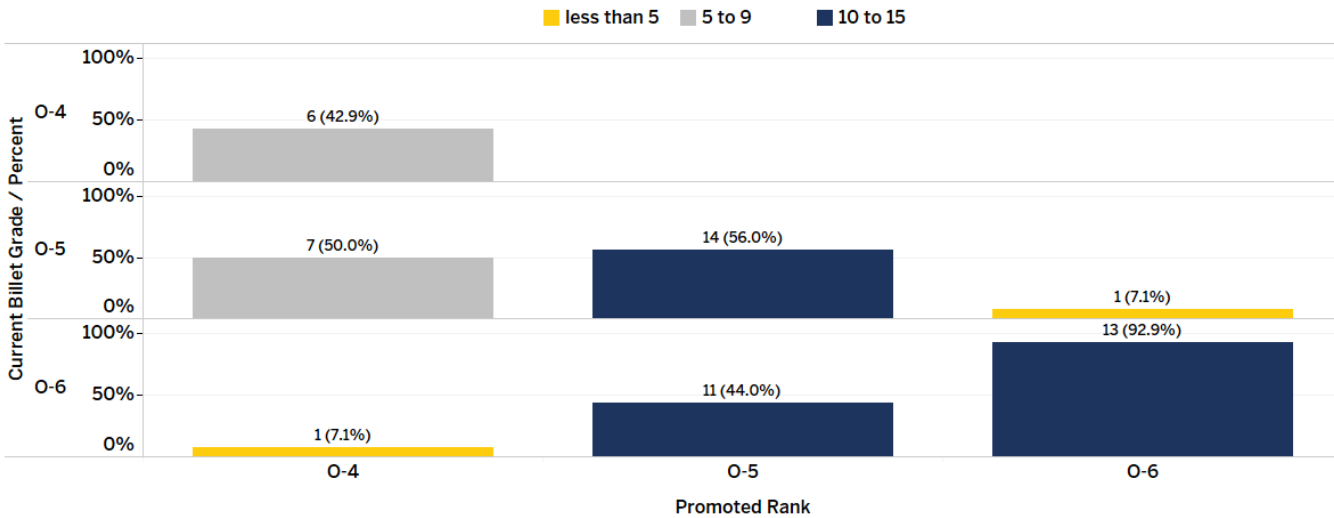


### Current Assignment Billet Ratings

Figure D shows the current assignment billet grade of survey respondents relative to their promoted rank. The majority of respondents held billets at or above the level of their promoted temporary grade. The survey results imply that officers who were promoted had assumed higher levels of professional responsibility.

**Figure D. Current Assignment Billet by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

What was your Billet Grade on Jan 1, 2020?  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?

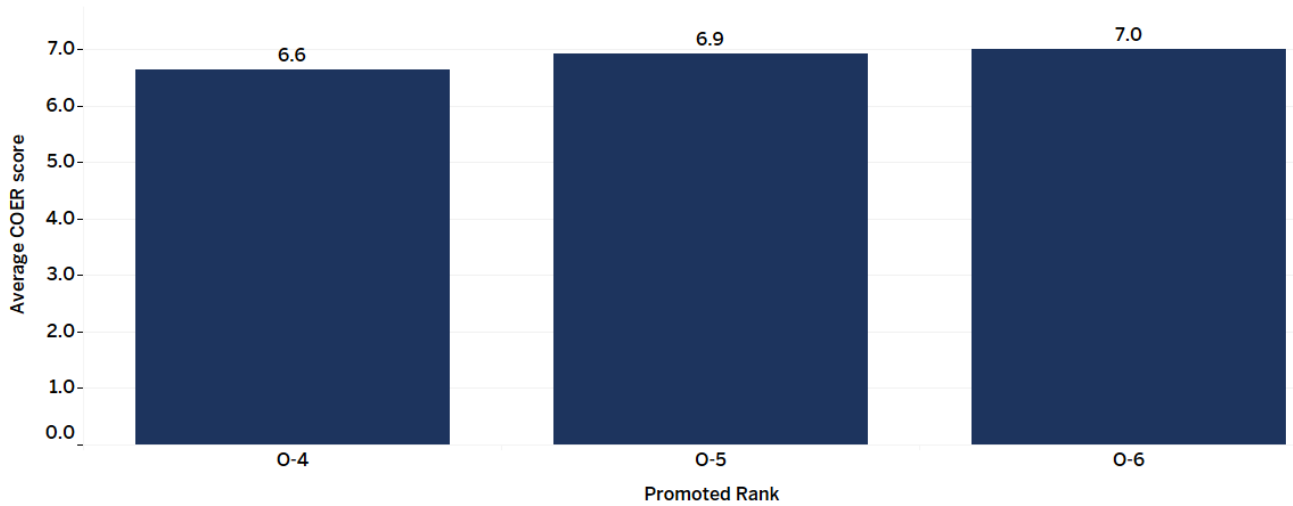


## Overall COER Scores

Figure E shows the survey respondents' average Commissioned Officer Effectiveness Report (COER) Scores for PY 2020. Most officers were rated 6's and 7's on a seven-point scale. The average COER score increased as promoted rank increased.

**Figure E. Average COER Scores by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

What was your overall COER score during the PY20 promotion year?  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?  
Note: All officers scored either a 6 or 7 on their COERs.

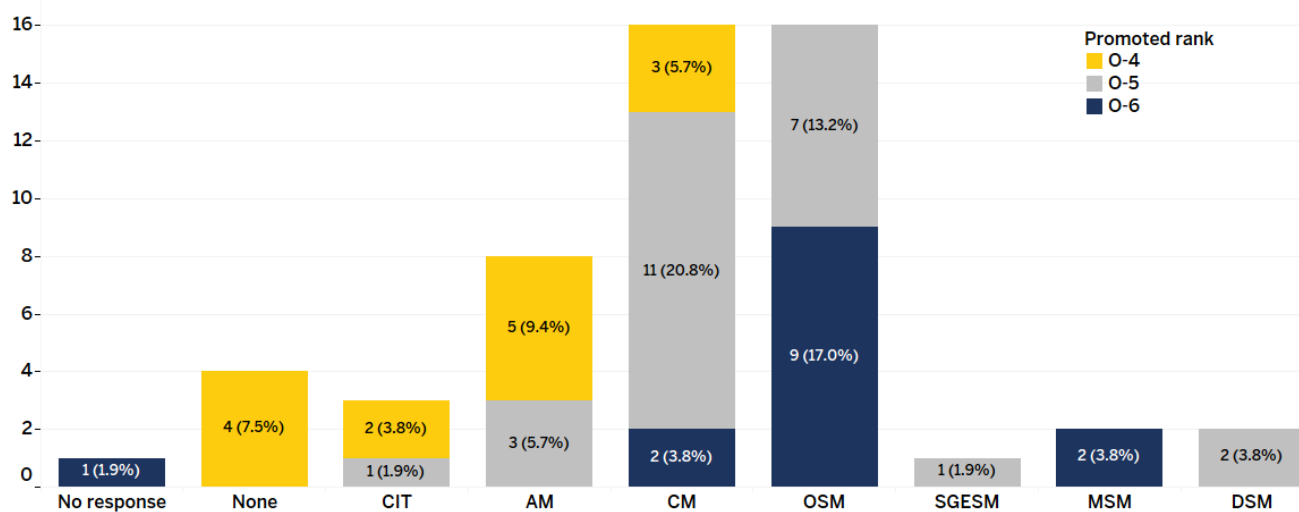


## USPHS Awards

**Figure F** shows the highest individual USPHS award earned by survey respondents. For PY 2020, individual USPHS award distributions continue to be consistent with guidance found in the HS Category Promotion Benchmarks. **Figure G** shows the average number of service awards earned by survey respondents. **Figure H** shows the average number of unit awards earned by survey respondents. HS Category Promotion Benchmarks for PY 2020 state that officers should strive for increasing levels of achievement, including team or unit participation, which may result in individual or unit awards. For Award History, the HS Category Promotion Benchmarks state that an HS officer's level of awards should increase with rank. For PY 2020, the most commonly reported highest individual honor awards earned among officers promoted to the rank of O-5 and O-6 were the USPHS Commendation and Outstanding Service Medals.

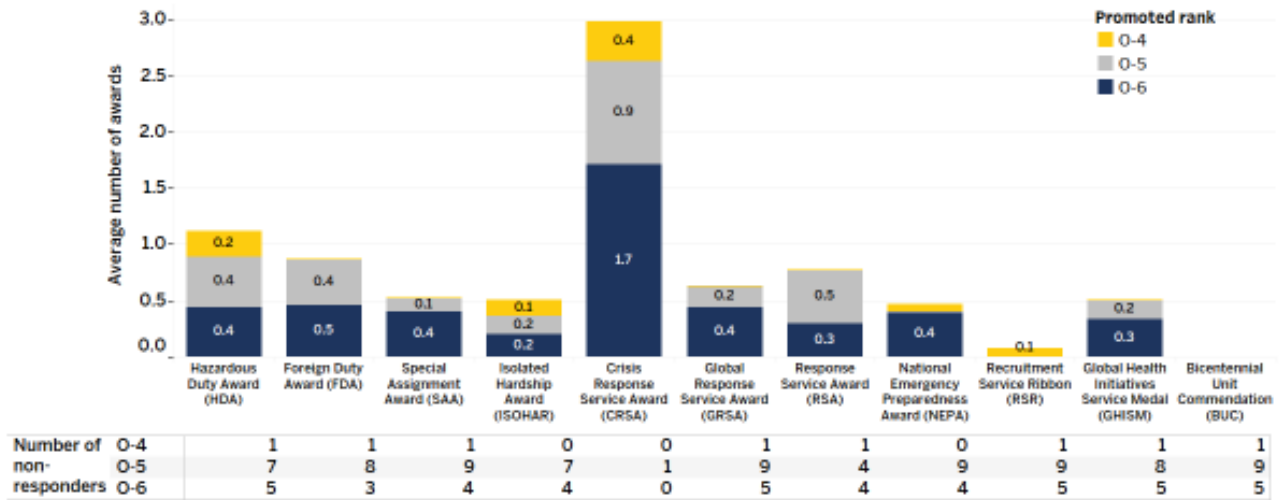
**Figure F. Highest USPHS Individual Award Earned by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Since your last promotion, how many USPHS Individual Honor Awards have you received? Question asked for each type of award  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?



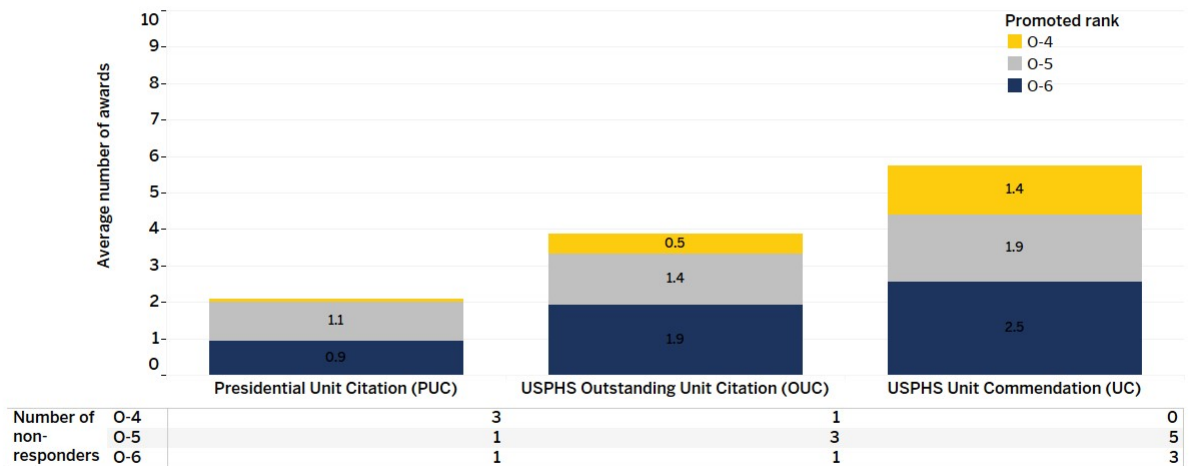
**Figure G. Average Number of Service Awards Earned by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Since your last promotion how many USPHS Service Awards you have received? Question asked for each type of award  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?  
Note: Non-responses are excluded from average calculations.



**Figure H. Average Number of Unit Awards Earned by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Since your last promotion how many USPHS Unit Honor Awards you have received? Question asked for each type of award  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?  
Note: Non-responses are excluded from average calculations.

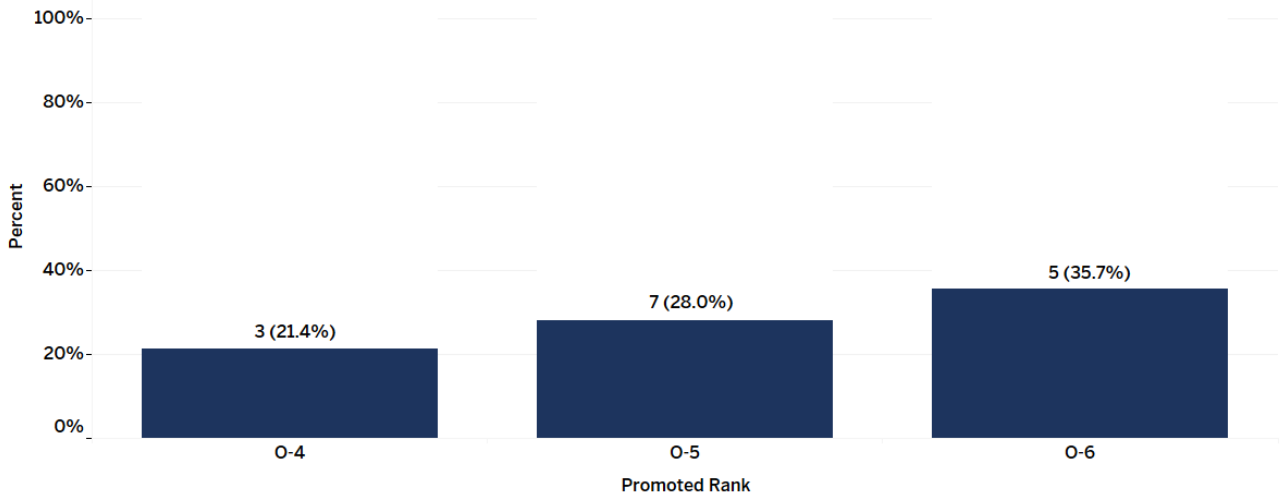


## Supervisory Role of HSOs

The proportion of HSOs in supervisory billets increases with higher rank among survey respondents (**Figure I**).

**Figure I: Percentage of Officers in Supervisory Billets by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Were you a supervisor of at least one employee when you submitted your promotion package at the end of last year?  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?



## Commissioning Degrees and Additional Degrees

Figure J lists the commissioning degrees of HS officer survey respondents. Master's degrees were the most common commissioning degree for those promoted to O-4, O-5, and O-6.

Figure J: Commissioning Degrees by Promoted Rank, PY 2020

What is the level of your Commissioning Degree?  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?

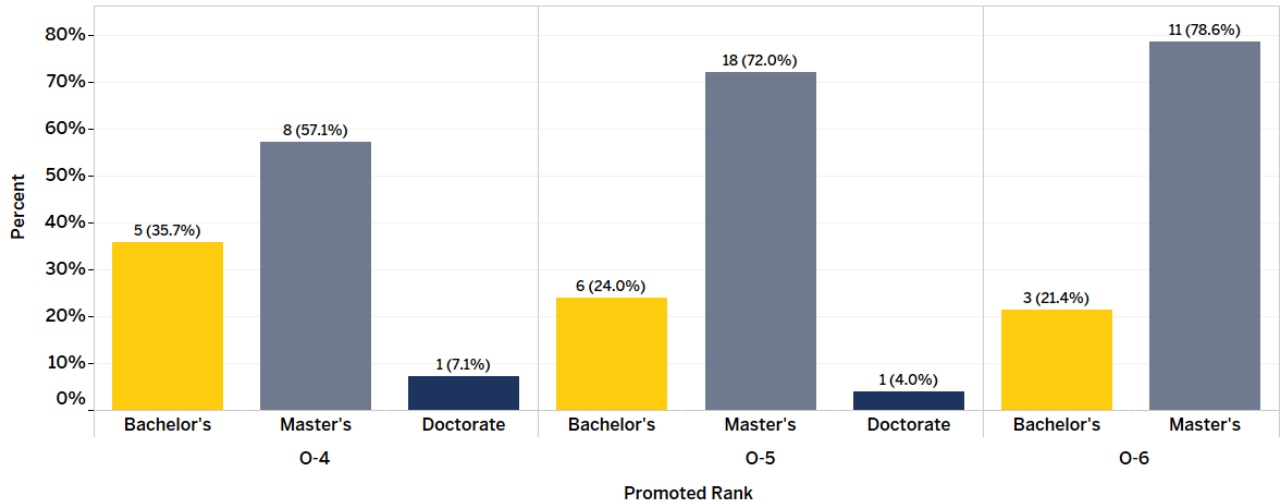
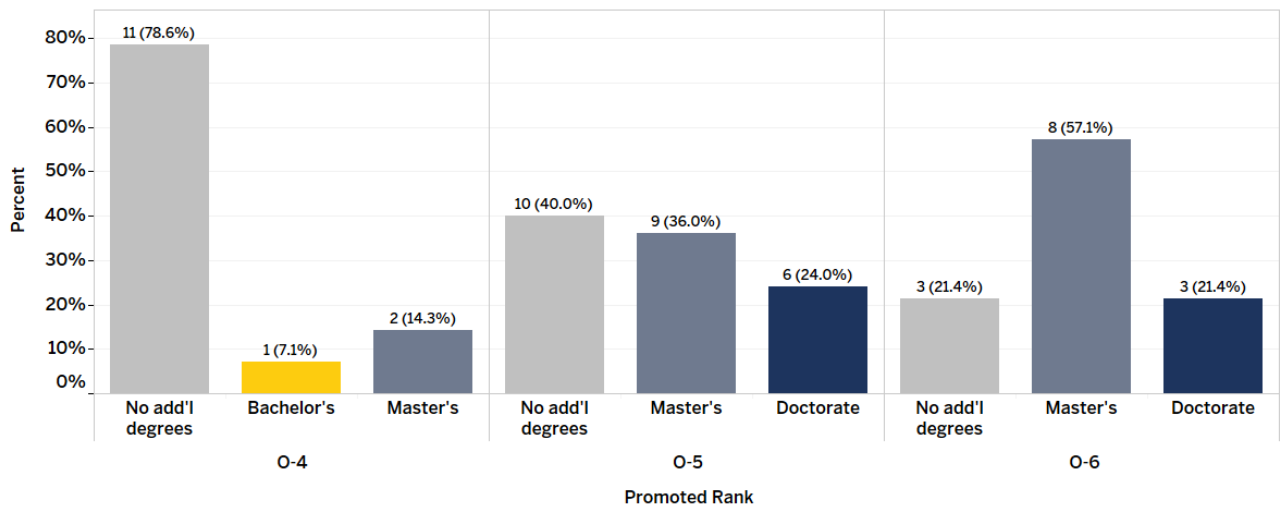


Figure K describes the types of post-commissioning degrees obtained by respondents. Master's Degrees were the most commonly reported additional degree across all ranks. A large percentage of officers reported not obtaining an additional degree.

Figure K: Highest Additional Degree Obtained by Promoted Rank, PY 2020

What is the highest level of additional degree(s) that you have earned since commissioning?  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?



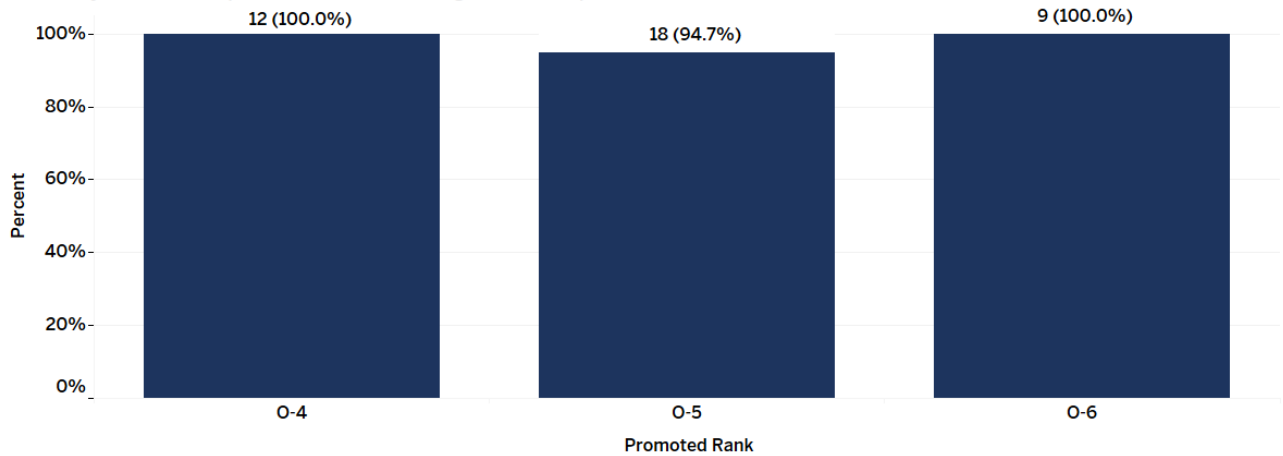
## Continuing Education and Public Health Training/Certifications

Survey respondents provided information regarding their compliance with continuing education requirements for their professional licensure/certifications (**Figure L**), as well as whether they completed additional public health training or certifications (**Figure M**).

For disciplines where applicable, compliance with continuing education requirements was 100% for officers promoted to O-4 and O-6 and 94.7% for officers promoted to O-5. Taking additional public health training or certifications appeared to be important across all ranks. Those promoted to O-5 and O-6 indicated that they participated in more trainings or certificate programs compared with officers promoted to O-4.

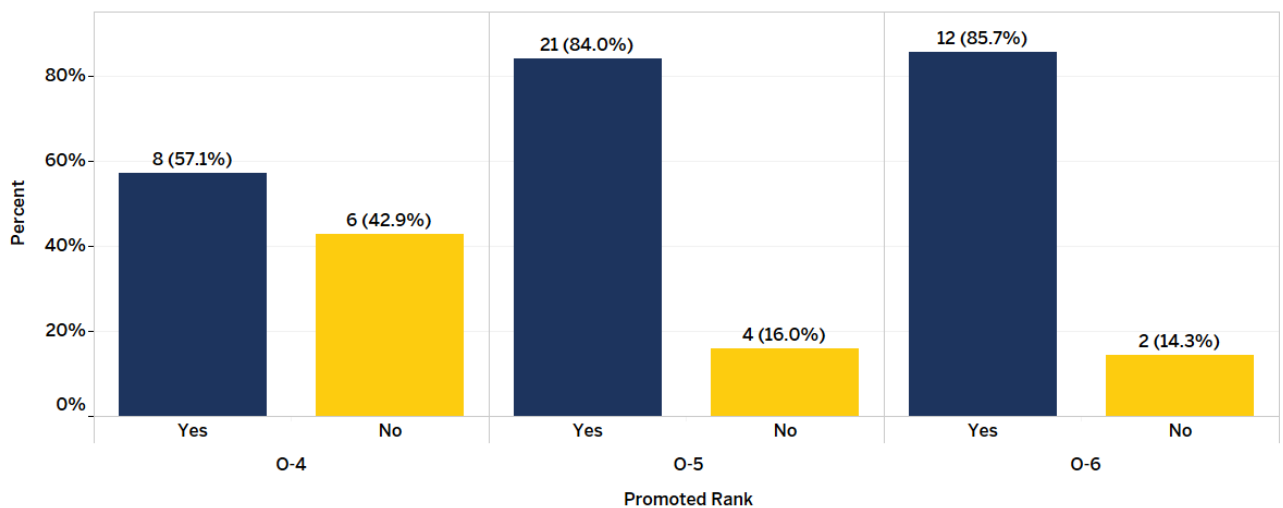
**Figure L: Percentage of Survey Respondents Meeting Continuing Education Requirements by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Have you met or exceeded the continuing education standard or requirements for your discipline?  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?  
Note: Analyses exclude respondents with no continuing education requirements.



**Figure M: Additional Public Health Training or Certifications by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Have you obtained additional public health training or certifications since earning your commissioning degree?  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?



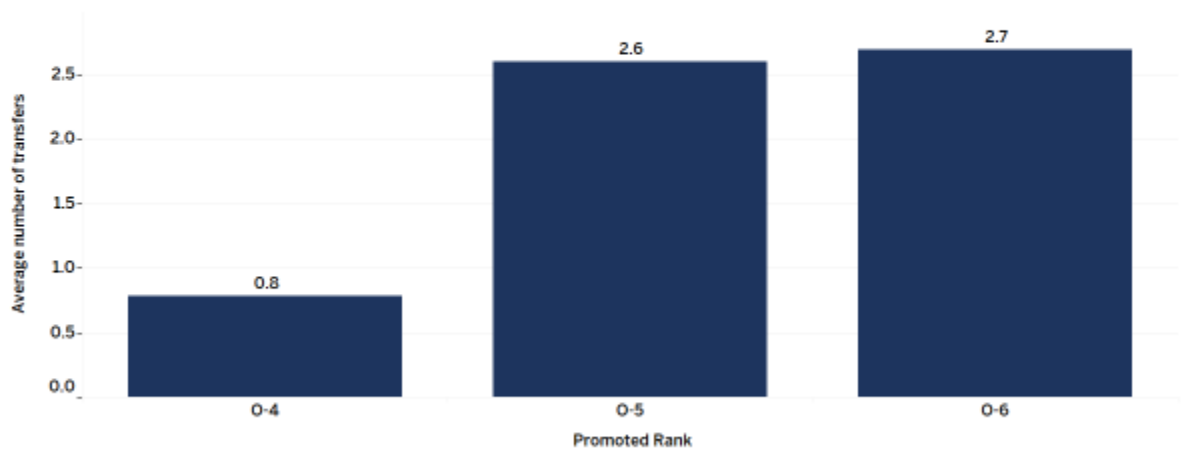
## Geographic and Agency Transfers

The data from survey respondents show that the average number of geographic and agency transfers for which Transfer Personnel Orders were issued increases for HSOs as an officer's career progresses (**Figure N**). The average number of geographic or agency transfers increased with rank. Not only was this observation expected (the chances of programmatic and geographic moves increase the longer an officer has served on active duty), it also reflects guidelines provided in the HS Officer Category Promotion Benchmarks.

**Note:** These numbers do not include billet changes to upgrade/downgrade a billet.

**Figure N: Geographic and Agency Transfers by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

How many transfers have you had during your USPHS career? Only include geographic and agency transfers for which Transfer Personnel Orders were issued.  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?



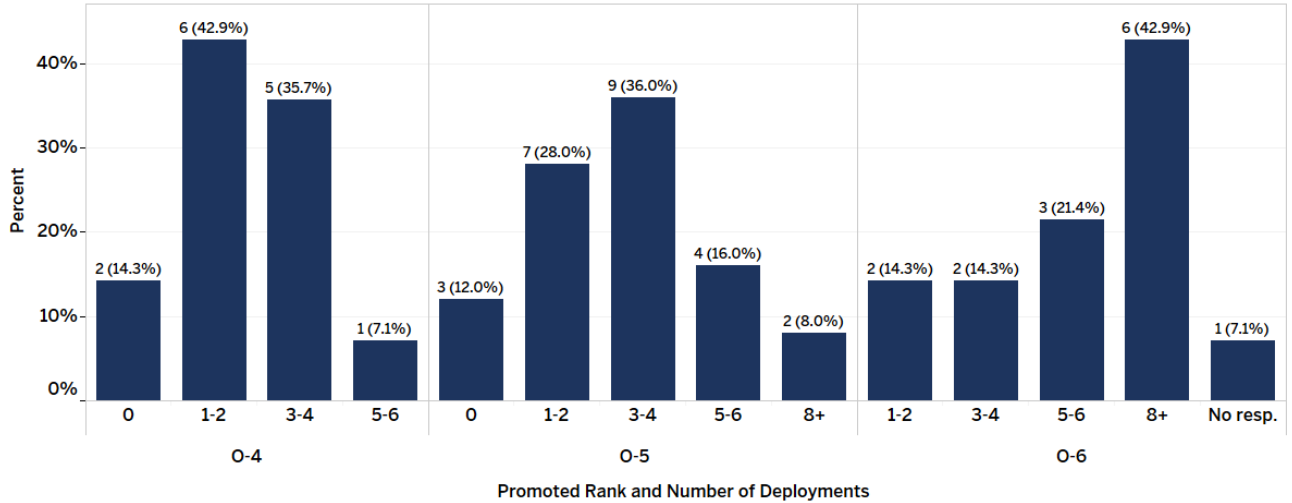


## Deployments

Survey results indicated that the number of deployments increased with rank (**Figure O**). This may be attributed to increased time to participate in deployment activations, participation in different response teams over time, or increased value to deploying teams resulting in increased participation.

**Figure O: Percent of HS Officers by Number of Deployments and Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

How many times have you been deployed as a USPHS Officer? Do not include non-Corps deployments to support your agency or duty station. Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?

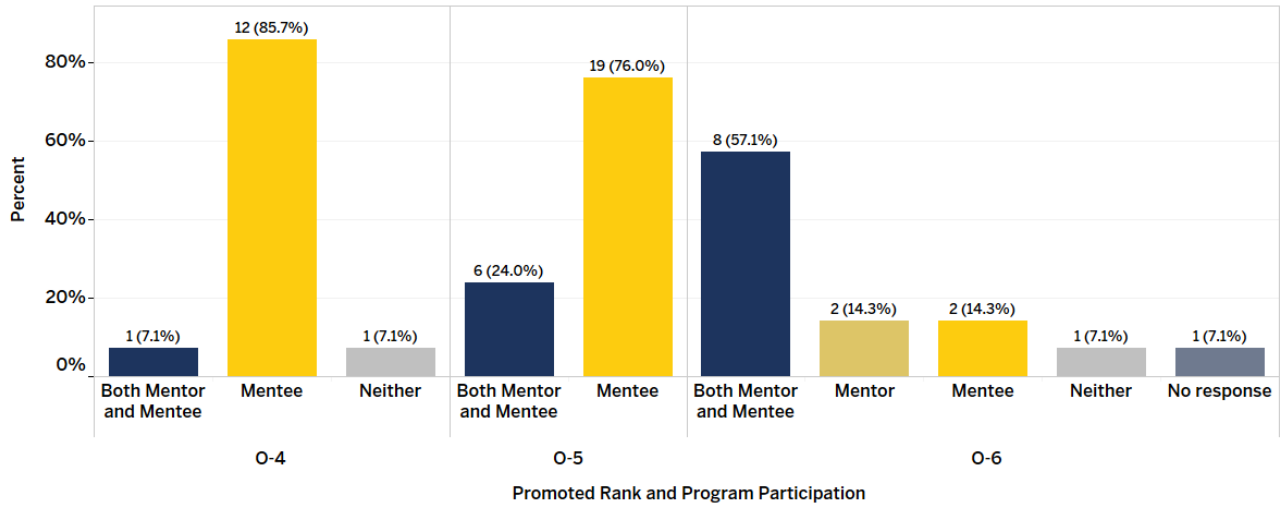


## Participation in the HS Category Mentor/Mentee Process

**Figure P** describes HSO participation in mentorship programs. Survey results showed that the majority of promoted HSOs, regardless of rank, participated in the Official HS Category Mentoring Program either as a mentee, mentor, or both. Participation as a mentor increased with promoted rank.

**Figure P: Participation in HS Category Mentorship Program by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Describe your level of involvement in the official HSPAC officer mentoring program.  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?

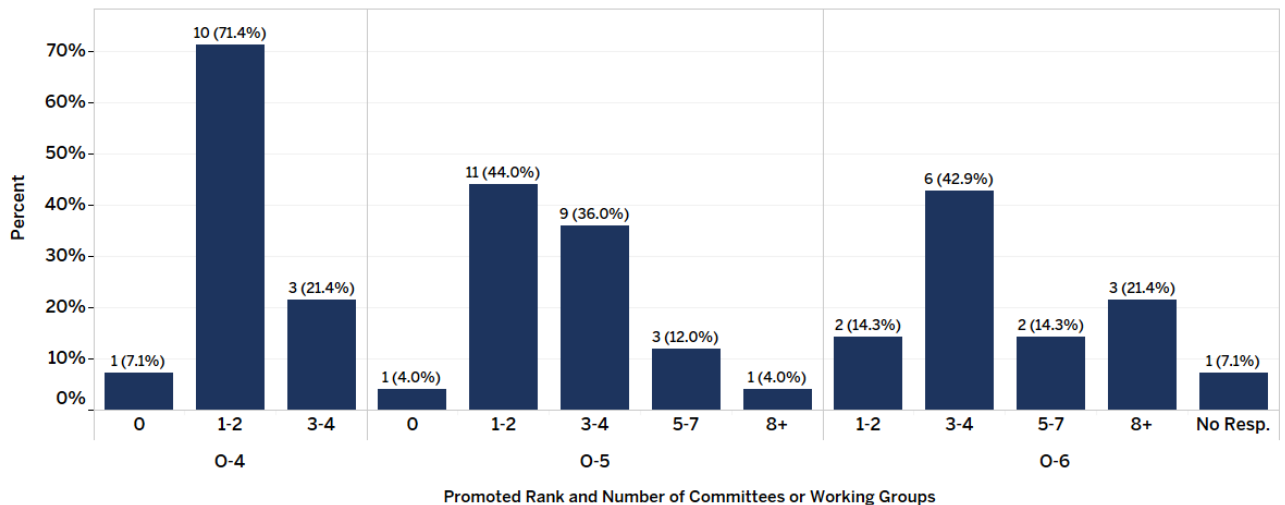


## Agency Committee Participation

Survey response data suggests HSOs continue to be actively involved in agency committees (**Figure Q**). Participation in agency committees increased with promoted rank.

**Figure Q. Participation on Agency Committees by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

How many agency-level committees or working groups did you participate on at your duty station in 2019?  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?

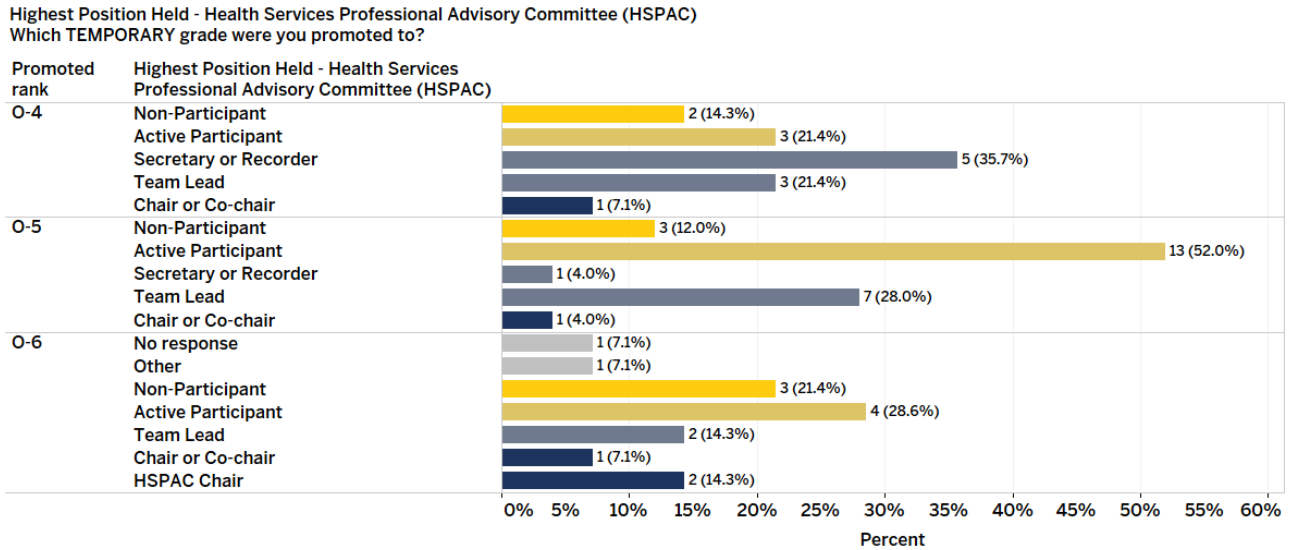


## Participation in USPHS Activities

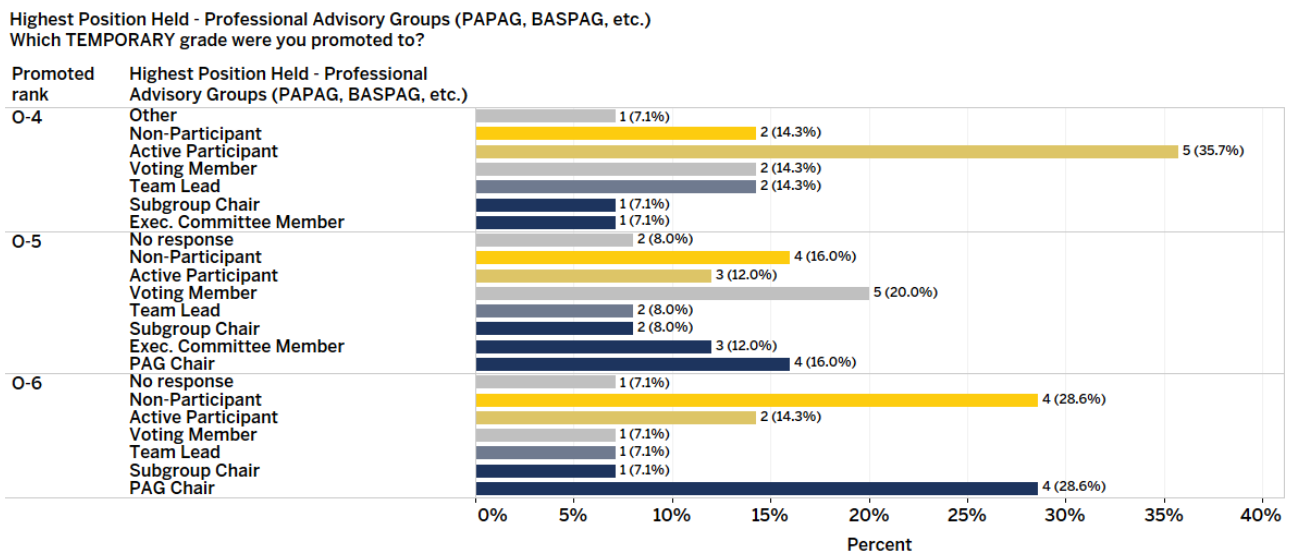
Promoted HSOs were highly involved in numerous USPHS activities including the HS Professional Advisory Committee (PAC), HS Professional Advisory Groups (PAGs), deployment teams, professional and other advisory groups, and the Commissioned Officers Association (COA).

Figures R-V convey that survey respondents tended to be very active in these organizations and activities, with leadership roles typically increasing as rank increases.

### Figure R. Participation in HSPAC Activities by Promoted Rank, PY 2020

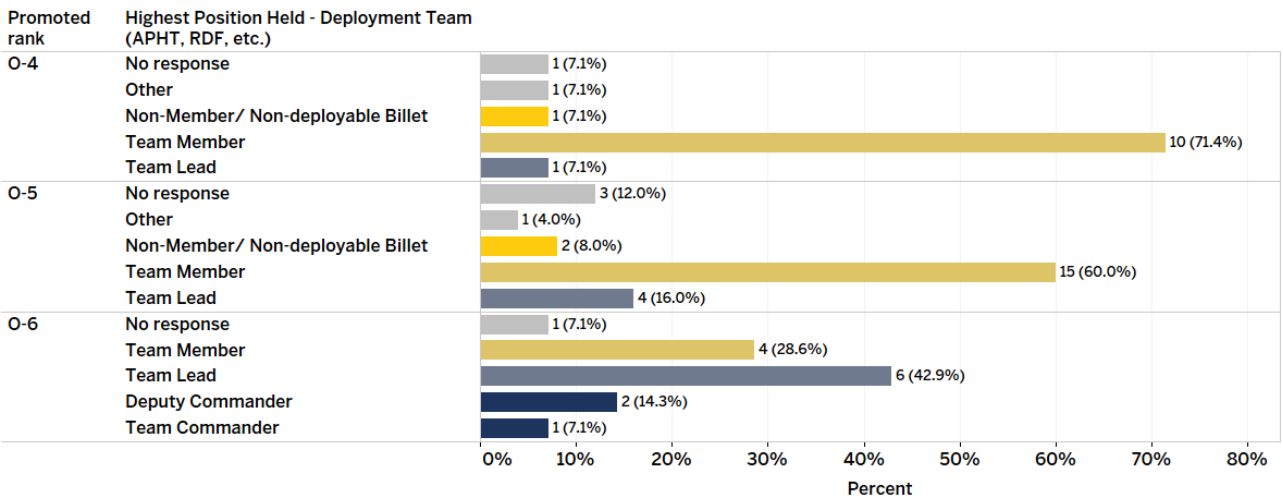


### Figure S. Participation in PAG Activities by Promoted Rank, PY 2020



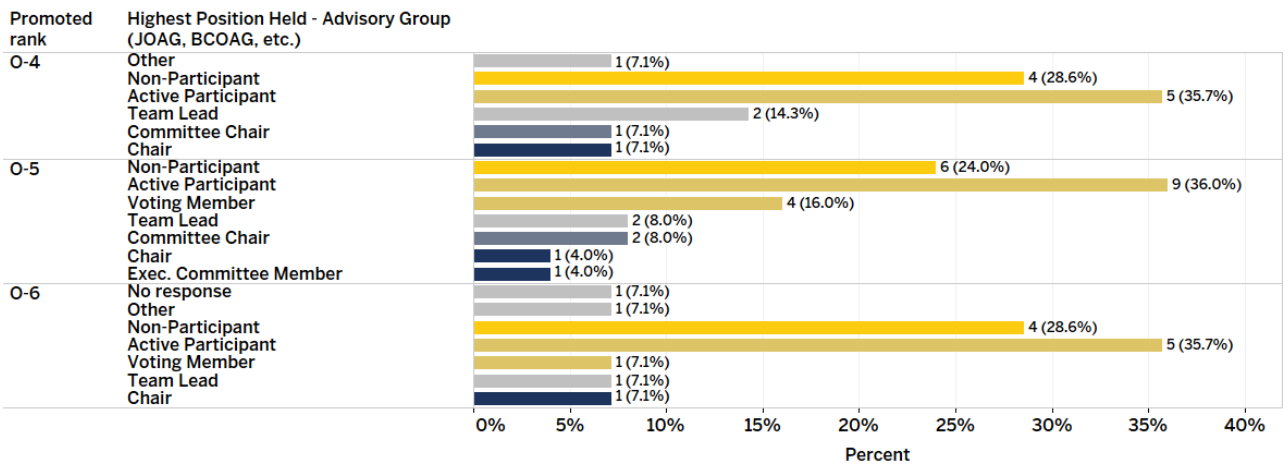
**Figure T. Participation in USPHS Deployment Teams by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Highest Position Held - Deployment Team (APHT, RDF, etc.)  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?



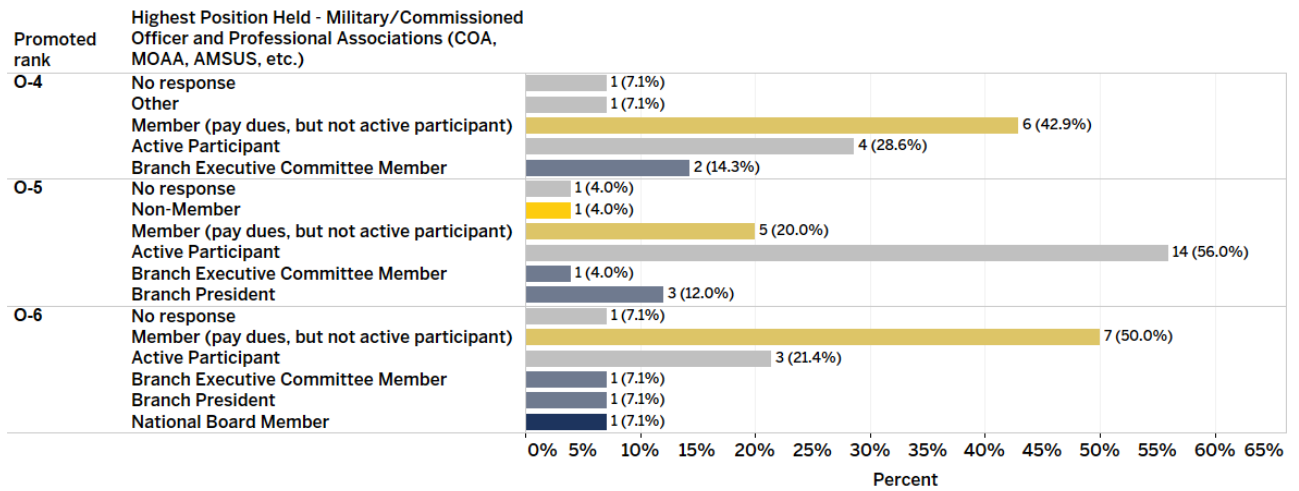
**Figure U. Participation in Advisory Groups (e.g., JOAG, BCOAG) by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Highest Position Held - Advisory Group (JOAG, BCOAG, etc.)  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?



**Figure V. Participation in COA, MOAA, AMSUS by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Highest Position Held - Military/Commissioned Officer and Professional Associations (COA, MOAA, AMSUS, etc.)  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?

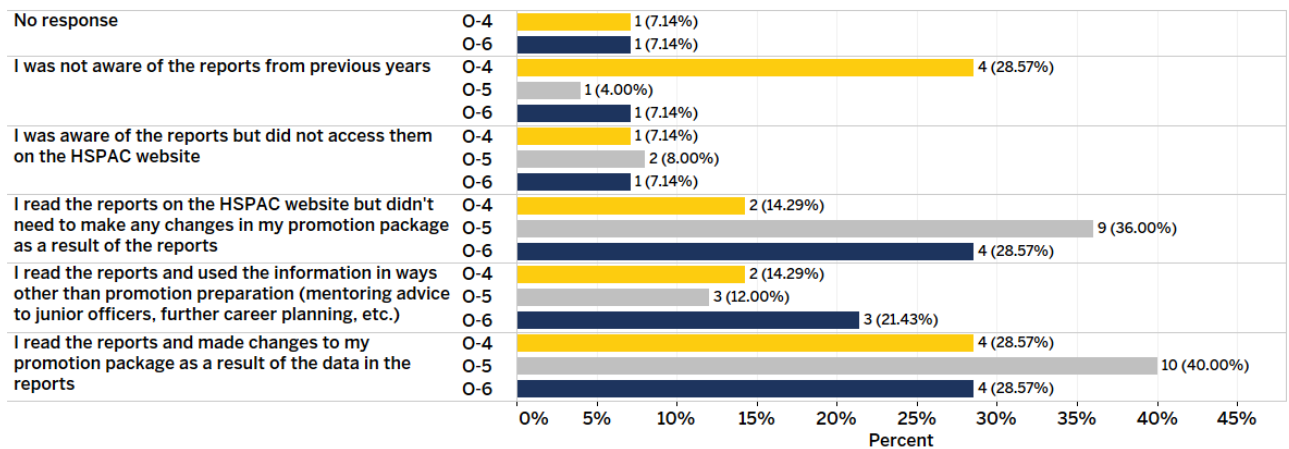


**Awareness and Use of Previous Promotable Officer Profile Reports**

Participants were asked to report their awareness and use of the previously published Promotable Officer Profile and HS Category Career Progression Profile reports (Figure W). Many officers promoted were aware of the reports; however, there was a noticeable number of officers promoted to O-4 and O-5 that were not aware of the previous year’s reports. This report shows that almost half of the officers successfully promoted in PY 20 who completed the survey found previous iterations of the Promoted Officer Profile report to be valuable.

**Figure W. Awareness and Use of Previous Promoted Officer Profiles by Promoted Rank, PY 2020**

Were you aware of the HSA Category Career Progression Profile reports, and if so, did you utilize them to help prepare yourself for the 2020 promotion cycle?  
Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to?



## Summary

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The majority of respondents for the 2020 survey were officers with a Masters in Public Health, Medical Laboratory Scientists, and Physician Assistants. Officers promoted to the rank of O-4 served approximately 3.1 years in the Commissioned Corps compared to 9.5 years for officers promoted to O-5 and 13.3 years for officers promoted to O-6. The average number of years in the USPHS for all respondents was 8.8 years.

The distribution of individual PHS awards across ranks generally followed the PY 2020 HS Category Benchmarks. On average, officers at higher ranks reported more awards for individual, unit, and service award categories than their lower ranking peers.

Officers reported high COER scores in PY 2020 across all ranks. The average COER score among officers promoted was 6.9 out of a maximum score of 7.

This report showed, as one would expect, that the number of geographic and agency transfers for PY 2020 for HSOs increased as the officer's career progressed.

Almost all promoted HSOs, where applicable, reported meeting their respective disciplines continuing education requirements.

Participation in various USPHS activities was important across all ranks. The report showed more junior officers participated as mentees, and more senior officers participated as both mentees and mentors in the HS Category Mentorship Program.

Lastly, some officer respondents indicated they were unaware of previous HS Category Career Progression Profile reports. The Category should continue to promote this report to ensure officers have access to this resource for career planning.

## Future Steps

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The **HSPAC Analytics Subcommittee** continues to provide data analytics and improved situational awareness to the HS Category regarding officers' professional development and career progression. The HSPAC Analytics Subcommittee is proud to provide this resource to our fellow officers. The Subcommittee reminds its readers that the limitations of this report should be carefully considered before drawing conclusions about the findings. Future iterations of this report should consider ways to streamline data collection and improve the information's accuracy, as well as ways to publicize the findings.

## **Appendix A: Promotion Information Survey for PY 2020 Promoted Officers**

### **Section 1. Officer Information**

1. Number of years in the Corps (#)
2. TEMPORARY Grade on Jan 1, 2020 (dropdown menu of all grades O-1 through O-8)
3. PERMANENT Grade on Jan 1, 2020 (dropdown menu of all grades O-1 through O-8)
4. BILLET Grade on Jan 1, 2020 (dropdown menu of all grades O-1 through O-8)
5. Which Professional Advisory Group do you belong to? (Basic and Applied Sciences, Dental Hygiene, Healthcare Administration, Health Information Technology, Medical Laboratory Science, Optometry, Physician Assistant, Public Health, Psychology, Social Work, Do Not Know)
6. Which TEMPORARY grade were you promoted to? (dropdown menu of all grades O-1 through O-8 and N/A)
7. Including this promotion, how many times did you put in to promote to the TEMPORARY rank to which you were successful? (dropdown menu 1 through 5+ and N/A).

### **Section 2. Performance Rating and Reviewing Official's Statement (Performance)**

8. What was your overall COER Score during the PY 2020 promotion year? (#1-7)
9. What is the TOTAL number of PHS Individual Honor Awards you have received? [e.g., total number of Distinguished Service Medals (DSM), Meritorious Service Medals (MSM), Outstanding Service Medals (OSM), Commendation Medals (CM), Achievement Medals (AM), and PHS Citations (CIT)] (0 through 6+)
10. What is the total number of PHS Unit Honor Awards you have received? [e.g. Presidential Unit Citation (PUC), PHS Outstanding Unit Citation (OUC), PHS Unit Commendation (UC)] (0 through 6+)
11. What is the total number of PHS Service Awards you have received [e.g., Hazardous Duty Award (HDA), Foreign Duty Award (FDA), Special Assignment Award (SAA), Isolated Hardship Award (ISOHAR), Crisis Response Service Award (CRSA), Global Response Service Award (GRSA), Response Service Award (RSA), National Emergency Preparedness Award (NEPA), Recruitment Service Ribbon (RSR), Global Health Initiatives Service Medal (GHISM), Bicentennial Unit Commendation (BUC)]? (0 through 6+)
12. Were you a supervisor of at least one employee when you submitted your promotion package at the end of last year? (Yes, No)

### **Section 3. Education, Training, and Professional Development Related to the Needs of the PHS**

13. What is the level of your Commissioning Degree? (Dropdown menu: Bachelor, Masters, Doctorate)
14. What is the highest level of additional degrees that you have earned since commissioning? (Dropdown menu: Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate, N/A or No additional degree(s) earned)
15. Have you met or exceeded the continuing education standard or requirements for your discipline? (Yes, No, N/A)
16. Have you obtained additional public health training or certifications since earning your commissioning degree? (Yes, No)

**Section 4. Career Progression and Potential**

17. How many transfers have you had during your PHS career? Only include geographic and agency transfers for which Transfer Personnel Orders were issued. (Note: these do not include billet changes to upgrade/downgrade a billet.) (0 through 10+)
18. How many agency-level committees or working groups did you participate on at your duty station in 2019? (0 through 10+)

**Section 5. Professional Contributions & Services to the PHS Commissioned Corps (Officership)**

19. Describe your professional contributions and service to the USPHS Commissioned Corps (Officership) in the following categories:

Activity	Highest position held (select the single highest position for each)
Health Services Professional Advisory Committee (HSPAC)	Dropdown menu: HSPAC Chair, HSPAC Executive Committee Member, HSPAC Subcommittee chair or co-chair, Team Lead within subcommittee, Active Participant, Non-participant, other
Professional Advisory Groups (PAPAG, BASPAG, etc.)	Dropdown menu: PAG Chair, PAG Executive Committee Member, PAG Subcommittee chair, PAG Voting Member, Team Lead, Active Participant, Non-participant, Other
Deployment Team (APHT, RDF, etc.)	Dropdown menu: Team Commander, Deputy Commander, Team Lead, Team Member, Non-member/Non-Deployable Billet), Other

20. Describe your professional contributions and service to the USPHS Commissioned Corps (Officership) in the following categories:

Activity	Highest position held (select the single highest position for each)
Advisory Group (JOAG, BCOAG, etc.)	Dropdown menu: Chair, executive committee member, committee chair, voting member, team lead, active participant, non-participant, other
Military/Commissioned Officers and Professional Associations (COA, MOAA, AMSUS, etc.)	Dropdown menu: National board member, branch president, branch executive committee member, active participant, member (pay dues to organization but not otherwise active), non-member, other

21. How many times have you been deployed as a USPHS Officer? Do not include non-Corps deployments to support your agency or duty station. (0-10+)
22. Describe your level of involvement in the official HSPAC officer mentoring program. (Dropdown menu: Mentor, mentee, both mentor and mentee, neither)
23. If not promoted on the first try, what feedback has the promotion board provided you from past attempts that you feel would be useful to other officers? Check all that apply. (Become more



involved with USPHS activities, Get more involved with PAC/PAG, Move to higher billet, Pursue mentoring, Seek continuing education and training opportunities, No feedback provided, Other (please specify)

24. Surveys similar to this have been used to produce the annual HS Category Career Progression Profile report from 2014 to 2019. Were you aware of the reports and if so, did you utilize them to help prepare yourself for the 2020 promotion cycle? [Dropdown menu: I was not aware of the reports from previous years, I was aware of the reports but did not access them on the HSPAC website' I read the reports on the HS PAC website but didn't need to make any changes in my promotion package as a result of the reports; I read the reports and made changes to my promotion package as a result of the data in the reports; I read the reports and used the information in ways other than promotion preparation (mentoring advice to junior officers, further career planning, etc.)]
25. Please provide any additional feedback or comments that you'd like to include with your responses. (free text area)