



# Quarterly Newsletter

#WeAreCorpsSTRONG

Spring 2018

## Welcome from the Health Services Chief Professional Officer

Dear Fellow Officers:

I am grateful to celebrate another year with our fellow Health Service Officers (HSOs). I am thankful for all of the great public health work that each of you continue to do, not only for your agencies and the Commissioned Corps, but for anyone who is in need of our assistance.

It is with great pride that I unveil the first issue of the Health Services Professional Advisory Committee Quarterly Newsletter! The newsletter is one of several ways to stay informed of policy and operational changes, important updates, and achievements of fellow officers.

We have several informative and exciting activities planned for Category Day on 6 June at the USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium in Dallas, Texas. I look forward to seeing you all there.

**We are Corps Strong!**



**CAPT Jeanean Willis Marsh**  
Chief Professional Officer  
Health Services Category

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### 2018 Executive Committee Members

**Chair:** CDR Carlos Bell

**Executive Secretary:** LCDR Thomas Maruna

**Executive Recorder:** LCDR Stephanie Kenez

#### Voting Members

(\*Non-VMs Co-Chairs)

CDR Catherine Beer	CDR Samuel Schaffzin
CDR Carla Burch	CDR Jacinta Smith
CDR Zanethia Eubanks	CDR Tina Smith
CDR Elizabeth Garza	<i>CDR Cody Thornton*</i>
CDR Neelam Ghiya	CDR Jyl Woolfolk
CDR Malaysia Gresham Harrell	LCDR Sara Azimi-Bolourian
CDR David Hunter	<i>LCDR Nicole Bell *</i>
CDR Anthony Johnson	<i>LCDR Marquita Burnett*</i>
CDR Kristin Kelly	LCDR Roberto Garza
CDR Simleen Kaur	<i>LCDR Elizabeth Goodger*</i>
CDR Brett Maycock	LCDR Joel Richardson
CDR Makeva Rhoden	LCDR Cynthia White



## USPHS SCIENTIFIC & TRAINING SYMPOSIUM

Ensuring Health for Generations to Come: Science Matters

### 4 - 7 June 2018



# DALLAS

# HSPAC Chair's Corner

Dear Fellow HSOs:

Each day our Health Service Officers serve as stewards of public health through their commitment and dedication to the mission of their Agencies/OPDIVs throughout the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and certain non-HHS Federal agencies and programs. Our multidisciplinary officers serve in the areas of disease control and prevention; biomedical research; health information technology; regulation of food, drugs, and medical devices; mental health and drug abuse; and health care delivery -- just to name a few!

In January 2018, I outlined my vision for the year to **engage, encourage, and empower** HSOs to **establish** ourselves as current and future public health leaders across the Commissioned Corps and our respective agencies. As HSOs, we are the *only* Category that has deployed for almost every single response. Therefore, I would like to challenge each of you to lead the way into the USPHS Symposium and ensure that you are basic ready.

As you know, RedDOG now runs monthly readiness checks, and I am excited to report that last month the Health Services Category achieved a 91.41% **Basic Ready rate** (above this month's Corps average of 90.46%). **Thank you for your hard work and extra attention to keep up the HSO rate!**

There is even more excitement to follow, as we all gear up -- both literally and mentally -- for our **USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium**. As we convene for this annual Corps-wide gathering, it is always great to connect with our fellow HSPAC and PAG colleagues from all over the country, representing the dozens of federal departments and component agencies supported by PHS officers. However, the USPHS Symposium is obviously about so much more than that:

- **VISIBILITY** -- This is perhaps the greatest annual opportunity for an impressive, collective display of the diversity of the Commissioned Corps in every sense of the word. With this great opportunity comes the great responsibility to double- and triple-check those gig lines and creases. I encourage you to take a minute to review again the **May 2018 Commissioned Corps Instruction on Uniforms and Appearance**.

- **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** -- As HHS Secretary Azar outlined in the **March 2018 Commissioned Corps Directive on Conditions of Service**, we have a "*duty and responsibility for effective performance, growth and professional development...and professionalism that are the essence of uniformed service.*" I hope you all take fullest advantage not only of the action-packed HS Category Day your fellow HSOs planned for Wednesday, June 6th, but of the entire agenda of readiness events, leadership development series, scientific tracks, and presentations and remarks from inspiring leaders within the Corps and beyond.



**CDR Carlos Bell**  
Chair, Health Services Professional Advisory Committee

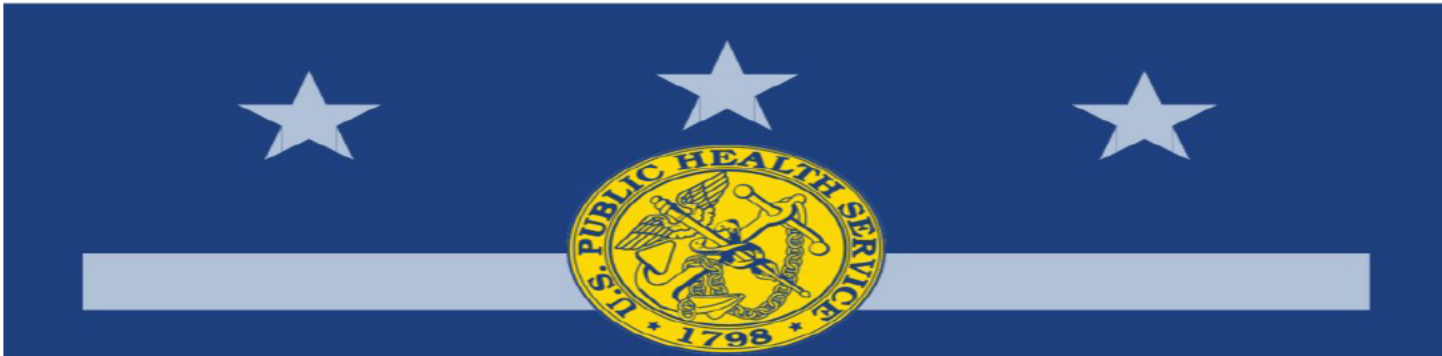
- **SERVICE** -- Perhaps you plan to participate in the **Remote Area Medical (RAM) event** in Durant, OK the weekend prior to the Symposium. Or perhaps the Symposium represents an opportunity for you to connect with your mentor and/or a mentee located in a different part of the country. Whatever the venue, service is a PHS core value, and there will be plenty of opportunities to engage, to exercise, and to be inspired by the many ways PHS officers serve. Consider taking a few coins with you so that you can recognize outstanding service that you witness over the course of the week.

In closing, now that I am equal parts excited and sentimental, I want to again thank you all for what you do, I want to congratulate us on our **91.41%** HSO Basic Ready rate and challenge us to continue to do better, and I wish you safe travels on your way to Dallas.

## Primary/HSOs Stakeholder Goals — 4Es



*"I would like to challenge each of you to lead the way into the USPHS Symposium and ensure that you are basic ready."*



February 18, 2018

Dear Fellow Commissioned Corps Officers,

Today we acknowledge the 59<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Health Services Category. With advancements in science and health care delivery, the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps began to expand the number of public health disciplines within its ranks to meet the needs of the Nation. The HS Category was established on February 17, 1959 by Acting Surgeon General John D. Porterfield to provide consultation and expert advice on the professional practice of health services officers. Today, the HS Category is one of the largest and most diverse categories with over 1,200 officers. Multidisciplinary HSOs in over 58 disciplines serve as medical practitioners, information technology experts, health administrators, laboratory personnel, behavioral health specialists, and epidemiologists amongst others.

HSOs are an integral part of the Commissioned Corps serving as the only uniformed service focused on public health. You have been critical to nearly every emergency and public health response since 1959 when the category was first established. Officers serve as first responders during emerging epidemics and other significant public health events that have, and continue to, threaten the health and safety of this great Nation and abroad. HSOs deployed to Super Storm Sandy; supported and provided direct patient care in Liberia during the Ebola epidemic, and recently assisted with the evacuation of patients during Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

The U.S. Public Health Service is one of the oldest uniformed services and stands protecting our Nation alongside our sister services. We take great pride in our mission and in the confidence the American people have entrusted in us to protect the health of the Nation.

Congratulations to the Health Services Category on your 59<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

With Corps Pride,

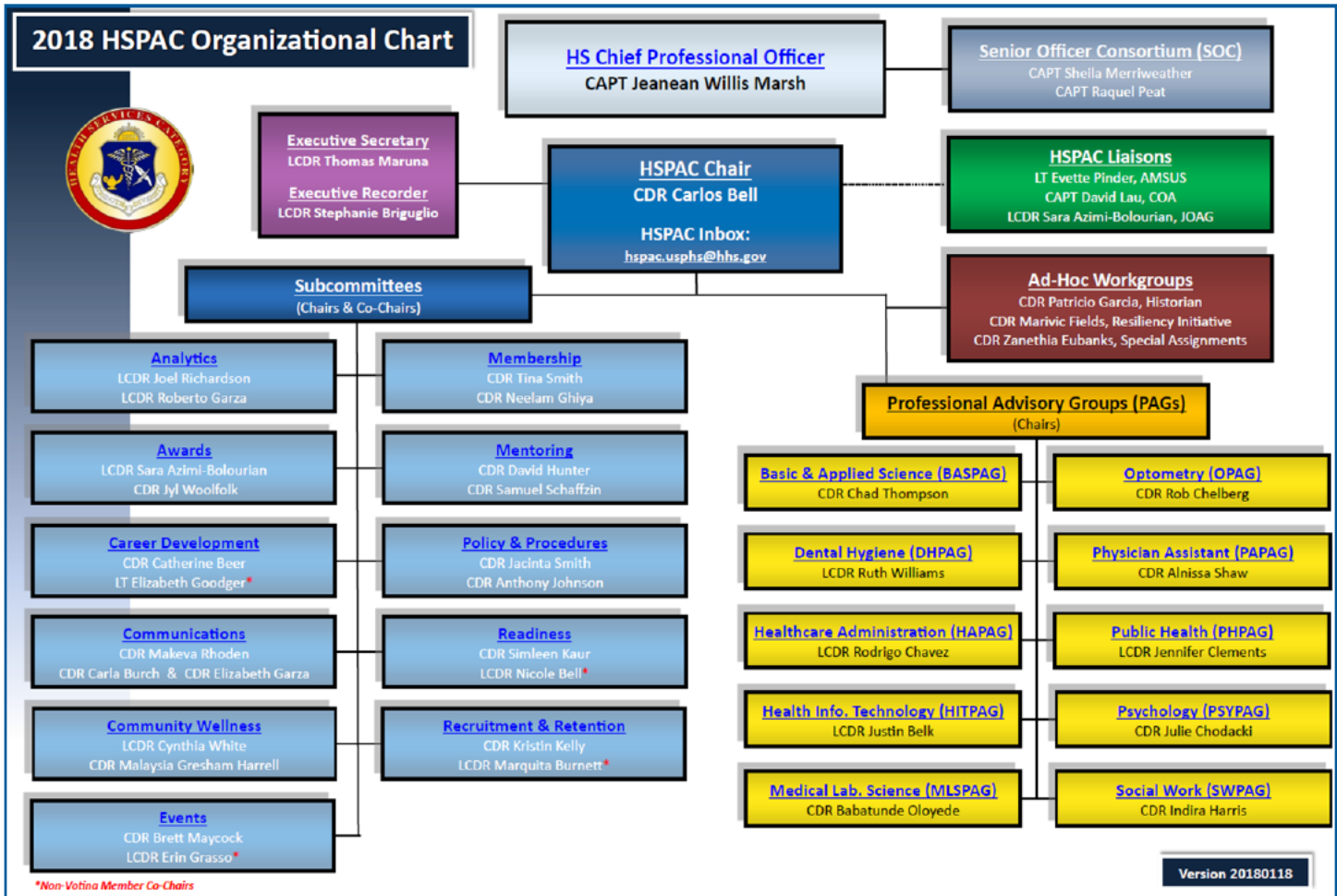
Jerome Adams, MD, MPH VADM, USPHS  
20th Surgeon General



**VADM Jerome Adams**  
20th Surgeon General



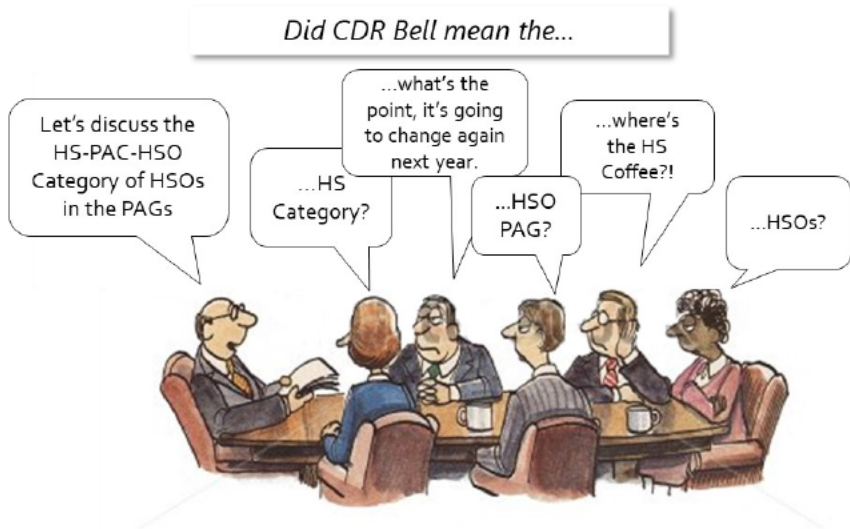
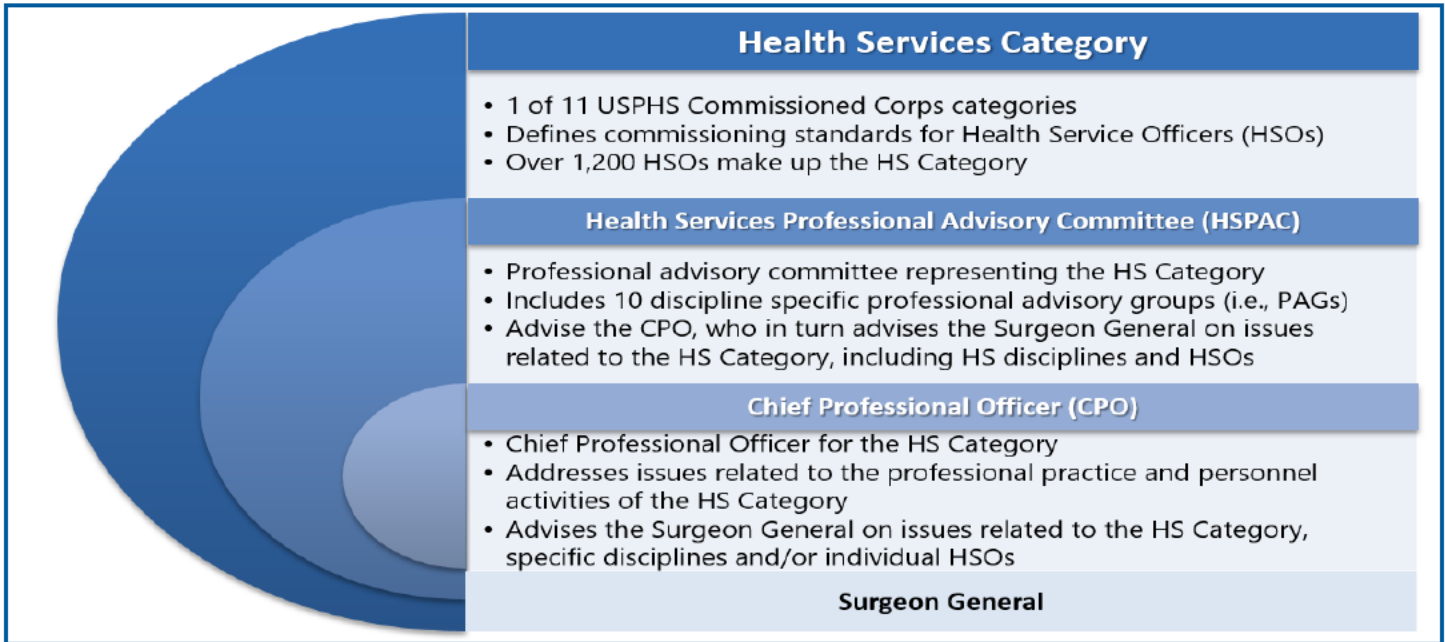
# 2018 HSPAC Organizational Structure



Structure	Definition	Distinction
<b>HSPAC Subcommittees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A subdivision of the HSPAC organized for the purpose of furthering the mission of the PAC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead by an HSPAC Voting Member(s)</li> <li>Long-term need</li> <li>Multiple-Projects</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Advisory Groups (PAGs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discipline specific advisory organization under the HSPAC</li> <li>Serve as the lead of the discipline for the HSPAC and the Commissioned Corps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 distinct disciplines</li> <li>Responsible for staying abreast of issues and topics related to the specific discipline</li> </ul>
<b>HSPAC Ad-Hoc Workgroups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An ad-hoc subdivision of the HSPAC organized for the purpose of meeting a short-term need for the PAC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Led by an HSPAC VM or non-VM</li> <li>Short-term need</li> <li>Project specific</li> </ul>

# What's in a name?

It important to understand the purpose of the HSPAC and where we fit organizationally. It is also important to use standard and consistent terminology. Believe it or not, it matters and it increases the value of the HSPAC.



*What's in a name?  
That which we call a rose  
by any other name would  
smell as sweet."*

*William Shakespeare*

Terminology Knowledge Check		
HSPAC Category	HSO Category	<b>HS Category</b>
<b>HSPAC</b>	HS PAC	HSO PAC
<b>HSPAC PAGs</b>	<b>PAGs</b>	HS Category PAGs

*The bolded blue acronyms are the correct terminology.*

# Career Progression and Promotion Guidance (CP<sub>2</sub>G)

## What is CP<sub>2</sub>G and Why You Should Care

Are you looking for a comprehensive toolkit to assist and provide you with information and guidance for career progression and promotion? Check out our newly updated Career Progression and Promotion Guidance (CP<sub>2</sub>G) [website](#) for your all-inclusive HSPAC CP<sub>2</sub>G Toolkit. It includes your HSO benchmarks, the official HS CV, Reviewing Official's Statement (ROS) and Officer's Statement (OS) guidelines, supporting documents and services, along with CP<sub>2</sub>G-related webinars.



Career Development

**Make sure you bookmark this link.** The link can also be found on the new HSPAC Resources for HSOs website. For the FY 2019 promotion cycle, the CP<sub>2</sub>G team will work closely with the Career Development Subcommittee Chair, Co-Chair, PAC Chair and CPO on any updates that may be made to the official HS Category CV and other supporting documents. The CP<sub>2</sub>G Team will also be conducting a survey to inquire how to better meet the career development needs of our 10 Professional Advisory Groups ([PAGs](#)):

1. Basic and Applied Science (BASPAG)
2. Dental Hygiene (DHPAG)
3. Healthcare Administration (HAPAG)
4. Health Information Technology (HITPAG)
5. Medical Laboratory Science (MLSPAG)
6. Optometry (OPAG)
7. Physician Assistant (PAPAG)
8. Public Health (PHPAG)
9. Psychology (PsyPAG)
10. Social Work (SWPAG)

We hope that these resources will provide you with the necessary tools for career progression and a successful promotion cycle. For questions, contact [CareerDevelopment.HSPAC@gmail.com](mailto:CareerDevelopment.HSPAC@gmail.com).

Document Links	Description
<a href="#">2018 HSO Benchmarks</a>	Guidance on promotion precepts & benchmarks to describe the "best qualified" HSO for a specific grade
<a href="#">HS Official CV Instructions</a>	Instructions for FY2018 CV
<a href="#">HS Category CV Best Practices and Tips</a>	Best practices & changes to required FY2018 promotion documents
<a href="#">HS Category Official CV Template</a>	Sample CV to show correct formatting of the FY2018 CV
<a href="#">FY2018 ROS HS Guidelines</a>	Guidance & examples for the Reviewing Official's Statement
<a href="#">FY2018 OS HS Guidelines</a>	Guidance & examples for the Officer's Statement
<a href="#">2018 DCCPR Promotion Checklist</a>	Instructions & deadlines for required promotion steps
<a href="#">Annual Accomplishments Tracking Sheet Template</a>	Tracking sheet for officers to use during the year to keep up with accomplishments/performance
<a href="#">2017 HS Category Career Trend Analysis Reports</a>	Analysis of promotion statistics to identify and characterize current promotion trends among HSOs
<a href="#">2017 HS Category Career Progression Profile</a>	Identifies & documents critical factors affecting HSO's professional development, provides insight into key drivers of professional success
<a href="#">Writing for Impact Guidance Document</a>	Guidance & examples to assist HSOs with writing powerful statements that captures the impact of their work

# Communications Connection

## Tweet or Post – We are looking at you #HSOs to Engage in Social Media!

One of the HSPAC Chair's priorities is showing our value to HSOs and engaging with our officers. With the new structure of the Communications Subcommittee, we were asked to also oversee social media. So, we established a dedicated team for each of our channels.

For this newsletter, we wanted to focus on our new closed Facebook Group (internal to HSOs only) and our Twitter (more outward facing) platform and why you should follow and/or join us! We are always looking at new ways to engage on social media. Please contact us at [Communications.HSPAC@gmail.com](mailto:Communications.HSPAC@gmail.com) to share your ideas. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing how we can best serve you all.



We are excited about the new direction of the Category and as such, we have been brainstorming innovative ways to further celebrate and accelerate our forward momentum. Specifically, we are looking at the various ways we communicate. We acknowledge that we are all inundated with email, often with redundant messages. Email is often one-way communication designed to push out a message, but our true goal/desire is to generate Category-wide engagement and collaboration; two-way communication! Prior successes tells us that there is a large population of officers willing and interested in collaborating in a Facebook community. We have seen a number of examples where officers are uplifting and supporting each other by answering questions and providing personal feedback. Using the tools available to us, we want to create an environment of collaboration and esprit de corps; an environment that will add value to our members and create a space that encourages participation and interaction across the HSPAC and the Category.

You may have noticed recently that we have closed our outward facing business style Facebook Page and recently advertised our new closed Group directly to the HSPAC. We refocused our online presence on the officers that we serve as a PAC with the idea to make it more intentional and useful as a closed Facebook Group. We intend on taking this opportunity to build an online community within the category that will encourage the same support and collaboration that we have seen with other unofficial pages. We are looking to you to guide the conversation by chiming in - sharing updates and asking questions directly and actively engaging with the members of our category to create an intentional and easily accessible dialogue in real time to further identify the issues that currently affect our category members. We hope that you will join us in this initiative to build a community of encouragement and support that we feel will add value to the membership of the HSPAC and create a pride that will echo throughout the Category that #WeAreCorpsSTRONG. If you have not yet joined, please do so: [www.facebook.com/groups/HSO.HSPAC](http://www.facebook.com/groups/HSO.HSPAC).



As we continue to celebrate the outstanding members of our Health Services Category and accelerate our exciting messaging forward, we would like to highlight our outward facing platform on Twitter. It is an exciting way to help push our Category into the national and health-related lexicon by facilitating engagement and collaboration both within the Corps, and across the health spectrum. We are looking to you to guide the conversation by chiming in - sharing updates and asking questions directly and actively engaging with the members of our category to create an intentional and easily accessible dialogue in real time to further identify the issues that currently affect our category members. We hope that you will join us in this initiative to help to build a resource of reliable public HSPAC information as well as relevant health information by building a community of encouragement and support that we feel will add value to the membership of the HSPAC and show how we celebrate #strengththroughdiversity. If you have not yet joined, please do so: [www.twitter.com/PHS\\_HSPAC](http://www.twitter.com/PHS_HSPAC) and encourage to also join in and share with their networks.

# Mentoring Matters

The HSPAC Mentoring Subcommittee would like to invite all HSOs to sign up for a mentor! Having a mentor can help officers foster professional growth and support their career development. Click [here](#) to access the mentoring program login page to request a mentor.

**Senior officers: We need YOU!** Health Services is the most diverse category in the Commissioned Corps and requires a wide range of experience and expertise among our mentors in order to make the best and most helpful matches. Senior officers, if you are not already engaged in the mentoring program, we encourage you to sign up [here](#).

Both mentors and mentees are encouraged to check out the mentoring homepage to access training and other resources, as well as archived issues of the mentoring newsletter. In the future, you will find other articles, updates, and mentoring guidance within the HSPAC Quarterly Newsletter. If you would like to contribute to future articles, share a success story, or provide recommendations for useful tools and resources, be sure to reach out to CDR [David Hunter](#) (Chair), CDR [Sam Schaffzin](#) (Co-Chair), or [LCDR Kelly Leong](#) (Communications officer).

## Join the Mentoring Program Today!





# Policy Updates

## HEALTH PROFESSIONS SPECIAL PAY

The Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness (DCCPR) is in the process of finalizing and implementing the new Health Professions Special Pay (HPSP) policy in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act. DCCPR hosted a webinar in early April to discuss key components of the HPSP, including the primary differences between the legacy special pay contracts and instructions for submitting new HPSP agreements. Additionally, a HPSP comprehensive package, including instructions, agreement forms, rate tables, and FAQs, will be distributed to officers via email and posted on the CCMIS site. Finally, for officers who have already signed approved, multiyear legacy contracts that extend into 2018, those contracts will remain in place and will be honored for the duration of each contract.

If you have questions related to special pay or need assistance, please contact [surgeon.general@hhs.gov](mailto:surgeon.general@hhs.gov).



## READINESS

Updates to Basic Readiness policies and RedDOG Self-Service reporting requirements were presented during the 23 March 2018 HSPAC All-Hands Meeting. Additionally, RedDOG released critical Basic Readiness reporting changes as follows:

1. Basic Readiness is now reported on a monthly (not quarterly) basis. Officers must ensure each month that their information is correct and up-to-date.
2. At the end of each year there will be 12 (not four) Basic Readiness entries.
3. Future Promotion boards will view officers' Basic Readiness history. Readiness history for promotion boards will start with 2017 (2016, 2015, etc. not reviewed). Eventually, promotion boards will review five years of Basic Readiness history.
4. Failure to maintain Basic Readiness may impact officers' retention in the Corps.

RedDOG will serve as the primary contact for issues regarding non-medical and application issues. If you require assistance, please see the contacts below.

- Non-medical data and application issues: e-mail [RedDOG@hhs.gov](mailto:RedDOG@hhs.gov) or use the RedDOG Assistance Form located in the RedDOG Self-Service application. ([See Readiness: Down-to-Basics](#))
- Medical information: [Sally.Bentsi-Enchill@hhs.gov](mailto:Sally.Bentsi-Enchill@hhs.gov) and [Samuel.Bell@hhs.gov](mailto:Samuel.Bell@hhs.gov)
- Licensure: [PHSLicensure@hhs.gov](mailto:PHSLicensure@hhs.gov)
- Basic Life Support: If dates are incorrect in the RedDOG Self-Service application, re-upload through eDOC-U. Ensure you enter the **expiration date** as the document date.

# Readiness Recharge

## THE SEVEN REQUIREMENTS OF BASIC READINESS

Basic Readiness is a condition of service and it's mandatory for officers at all times. The Surgeon General has discussed the importance of all PHS Commissioned Corps Officers being Basic Ready. Now RedDOG is conducting monthly readiness checks - instead of quarterly. Now, more than ever, it is critical to the future of the USPHS that we are Basic Ready and stand prepared to deploy. Below is a quick reference of the Seven Requirements of Basic Readiness and where you update information. For detail information, please review the [RedDOG Basic Readiness Checklist](#).



### 1. Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT)

**Renew: Every 12-months and before expiration of previous APFT**

Update APFT results via [CCMIS Officer Secure Area \(OSA\)](#) Readiness Self-Service (SS). Please note that officers are no longer required to submit the APFT form. If a medical condition prohibits an officer from completing the APFT, the officer should contact Medical Affairs to obtain a condition specific waiver.

### 2. Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification

**Renew: Every 24-months and before expiration of previous certification**

Your BLS certification must be uploaded through eDOC-U in the [OSA SS](#). Officers must complete and maintain currency in one of the following approved certifications.

1. American Heart Association (AHA) Basic Life Support (BLS) for health care providers;
2. American Heart Association (AHA) Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS); or
3. American Red Cross (ARC) CPR/AED for the professional rescuer.

### 3. Immunizations

**Renew: As required and before expiration of previous immunization**

Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, MMR, Tetanus/Diphtheria, Varicella, Tuberculosis, Influenza) Submit immunization documents to Medical Affairs via the [eOPF Document Upload](#) (eDOC-U) function in CCMIS. NOTE: DO NOT mail immunization documents unless directed by Medical Affairs. Most Immunization-related questions can be answered by viewing the [Immunizations webpage](#).

### 4. Licensure/Certification

**Renew: As required and before expiration of previous Licensure/certification**

Officers who are required to have a valid license/certification should review the information listed on the Officer Secure Area (OSA) dashboard in CCMIS and ensure that:

- A copy of the most recent license/certification is in the eOPF, and
- That the Promotion Information Report (PIR) correctly reflects a compliant status.

Copies of current, valid licenses/certifications should be uploaded through eDOC-U prior to the expiration of the previous licenses.

### 5. Medical Exam

**Renew: Every 5-years and before expiration of previous medical exam**

Required medical documents (DD-2808 - Report of Medical Examination and PHS-6355 - Report of Dental Exam) are available on CCMIS. Instructions for completing Medical Examination can be found [here](#). Mail required documents to Medical Affairs at: 1101 Wootton Parkway, Plaza Level, Suite 100, Rockville, MD 20852. Allow at least two weeks for mail to reach DCCPR as most mail is received and processed at an offsite sorting location. Do not mail to any other address, even if a different mailing address is listed on medical forms/instructions.

### 6. Readiness Course Completion

**Completion Frequency: One time**

To qualify at the Basic Readiness level, you must successfully complete 12 online training modules. Courses include: RedDOG Courses 110, 140, 141, 142, 180, 182, 183, and 217 and FEMA course FEMA IS-100, IS-200, IS-700, or IS-800 can be found [here](#).

### 7. Deployment Role

**Renew: Select once, and then update as needed.**

Update/select your deployment/response role(s) via self-service menu in the Officer Secure Area of CCMIS.

Please send your Readiness questions to the HSPAC Readiness Subcommittee at [Readiness.HSPAC@gmail.com](mailto:Readiness.HSPAC@gmail.com).

# Psychology Professional Advisory Group (PsyPAG)

It's been another busy quarter for PsyPAG! Several PAG initiatives are underway. Our officers continue to deploy, and day-to-day over 75% of PAG members deliver clinical care in prisons, at Indian Health Services sites, or to the US Military.



Since nearly 30% of PsyPAG members are board certified, and board certification pay stopped unexpectedly in January, many of our members experienced a reduction in pay. Fortunately, our advocacy committee took up the cause and attempted to find answers when our members had no other voice. Although the fate of PHS board certification pay remains uncertain, the issue had the benefit of re-sparking the discussion of pay parity. PHS psychologists -- over 40% work at DoD alongside sister service psychologists -- get paid significantly less than armed service psychologists, because PHS psychologists do not receive the same specialty pay as armed service psychologists.

In an attempt to provide additional support to new officers, the PsyPAG professional development committee is in the process of implementing a new cohort mentoring program based on the concept identified during the 2017 HS Category Day PAG break out session at the COA Symposium. Plans are also underway to revamp how we conduct meetings; to ensure more dynamic and interactive meetings that focus on specific topics, we will debut our first SWAP (Share Wisdom Across Psychologists) meet next month. In addition to discussing information, the meets are intended to build stronger relationships between psychologists, especially those who might be stationed in an area without other PHS officers.

Two new special interest groups have also begun this year: community service and senior leader engagement. Because so many (over half) of our members are stationed with the BOP and DoD, they have minimal exposure to other PHS officers, particularly other PHS psychologists and senior level officers. PsyPAG is privileged to include many experienced and knowledgeable O-6s in both the Sci and HS Categories; however, they tend to be too busy to be able to commit to participate in ongoing PAG projects and committees. The senior leader engagement effort is identifying ways to utilize the expertise of our O-6s via focused and time-limited opportunities. Our community service SIG seeks to utilize our psychology skills to improve our communities, often in partnership with other PHS organizations who are engaged in outreach and service projects.

In response to the Surgeon General's call to improve readiness, PsyPAG is in the process of quantifying the deployment rates of our members. Since we are comprised primarily of clinicians, many of our members are active participants in Tier 1 and Tier 2 deployment teams. Further we are in the process of developing a Myth Busters Fact Sheet to respond to some of the misperceptions about our physical readiness, clinical acumen, and willingness to deploy, as well as our ability to work alongside other uniformed service members. We welcome the opportunity to demonstrate all the ways in which we contribute to protecting, promoting, and advancing mental health.

# Public Health Professional Advisory Group (PHPAG)

## Advanced Readiness Pilot Program (ARPP)



Under the guidance of the HSPAC Readiness Subcommittee, the Public Health Professional Advisory Group (PHPAG) is participating in an Advanced Readiness Pilot Program (ARPP). The ARPP is a two-year program conducted through the PHPAG's Technical Readiness Subcommittee to improve individual preparedness and resilience of PHPAG officers in a deployment setting and to increase their technical readiness capabilities in a deployment environment. The ARPP requires 50 hours of pre-identified advanced readiness training courses over two years (25 hours in year one and two). All courses are free and available online to maximize flexibility. Upon completion of all requirements, an officer will receive a certificate indicating completion of the program.

Current pre-requisites to participate in this Advanced Readiness pilot program are as follows:

1. **Basic Readiness:** Must be basic ready for at least one year (4 quarters) prior to starting the program and maintain basic readiness throughout the two-year program.
2. **Field Readiness:** Must have satisfied AND received the Field Medical Readiness Badge (must be in PIR and authorized to wear, not pending).
3. **Standing:** Have no current or pending adverse actions with the Agency or the Commissioned Corps.

While this pilot program is not a requirement by the HSPAC or the Commissioned Corps at this time, eligible PHPAG officers are encouraged to participate ensuring they are prepared to serve when called upon.

The ARPP is expected to enroll PHPAG officers on a quarterly period. The next call for enrollment will be **1-30 June 2018**, with a start date of **1 July 2018**.

It should be noted that the ARPP is a pilot program that is currently only open to officers assigned to the PHPAG and Physician Assistant Professional Advisory Group (PAPAG). Given the clinical work conducted by officers in the PAPAG, the PAPAG ARPP also includes 120 hours of clinical training. Pending findings from the PHPAG and PAPAG ARPP, HSPAC may open this program to other HSPAC PAGs.

For questions about the PHPAG ARPP, please contact [CDR Jonathan Kwan](#).

# Social Work Professional Advisory Group (SWPAG)

CAPT Jeasmine Aizvera, LCDR Nicole Pascua, LT Jamillah Bynum, and LT Heather Light are USPHS Social Worker Officers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). They are advocates, champions, and leaders. Combined, they have worked 58 years as social workers and 16 years as officers in the USPHS. As social workers, they provide a comprehensive array of services to research participants and their support systems. LT Bynum provides addiction-related psychosocial support, resource development, and discharge planning. LT Light empowers chronically ill patients to find solutions and advocate for their unique and complex needs here and in their communities while also serving as an instructor for graduate social work students and mentoring future clinicians. You will find LCDR Pascua at the helm of leadership for the Office of Hospitality and Volunteer Services and the Edmond J. Safra Family Lodge. She oversees the hospital hospitality team, patient library, messenger and patient escort service, and hospital volunteer program. LCDR Pascua finds it rewarding to meet individuals from the community who want to volunteer at NIH because they believe in the mission and value work in the medical sciences. CAPT Aizvera oversees quality measures and performance improvement activities as Manager in the Social Work Department. She supervises a team of clinical social workers and has a small but impactful clinical assignment in pediatric behavioral health. She is excited about leading the Social Work Department in developing a psychosocial acuity scale that will incorporate objective measures into our work so we can improve the ability to describe our patients, what makes them different, and what factors contribute to the intensity of our work.



When our nation faces natural or man-made emergencies, these officers step out beyond NIH Building 10 and deploy to the frontlines, providing support, training, and case management to the vulnerable and underserved. CAPT Aizvera has deployed six times, including after three hurricanes, and to a Native American reservation during a behavioral health crisis. The core values of the PHS CC are leadership, service, integrity, and excellence. These values align strongly with social work professional ethics, with service being central. To CAPT Aizvera, when she commissioned in 2002, the "tremendous overlap" in "the work as a social worker and serving the people of our country" appealed to her. LCDR Pascua echoed a similar sentiment, adding, "responsibility towards oneself and community and advocacy for others who are disenfranchised or disempowered." LT Bynum comes from a family of service members and worked for many years with veterans. Recently, she participated in the 2018 *Winterhaven Homeless Veterans Stand Down*, joining with officers to provide supplies and services to homeless veterans at the DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Finally, LT Light is an active volunteer providing homeless shelter meals, pantry food supplies and works within her church on a variety of outreach projects.

In March 2018, CAPT Aizvera, LCDR Pascua, LT Bynum, and LT Light joined over 680,000 social workers nationally as the *Wing(women) of Change*. Thanks to these officers from a grateful nation for their dedication, service, and commitment.

# Kudos Corner

## United States Army Medical Service Corps Award of Excellence

LCDR Elizabeth Goodger and LT Aaron Grober received the United States Army Medical Service Corps Award of Excellence while attending the U.S. Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Junior Leader Course 2018.

The Award of Excellence recognizes junior officers from the Army, Navy, Air Force, and U.S. Public Health Service who demonstrate exceptional capacity and potential for leadership. The award was presented by MG Michael O'Guinn, Deputy Surgeon General, Army Reserve. Chief Professional Officer, CAPT Willis Marsh, attended the Awards dinner and presentation.



*LCDR Goodger (left), CAPT Jeanean Willis Marsh (center), LT Grober (right)*

# HSOs in Action

## Officers Participate in Winter Special Olympics Bowling Championship

In February 2018, the USPHS was invited to serve alongside our sister services during the 2018 District of Columbia (DC) Winter Special Olympics Bowling Championships. Every year the uniformed services are asked to “adopt-a-day” and provide volunteers to support the day’s activities. When volunteers were requested, many officers were eager to serve from across all Categories. However, we were not prepared for the remarkable effect it would have on everyone. We assisted the Special Olympic Adult Athletes with bowling, keeping score, giving an abundance of high fives, verbal encouragement, laughs, and unlimited hugs! After each team bowled a full game, awards were disseminated. The expressions on each of the athletes’ faces as they were donned with their medallions were priceless and ranged from total amazement to pure, ineffable joy! In recognition of our support, the USPHS was awarded the prestigious Special Friend of Special Olympics plaque. HSO, CDR Indira Harris, who organized the Corps’ participation in the event, accepted the award on behalf of the USPHS.



Officers encourage and support Special Olympics participants.

As a result, we were asked to be a key partner for the DC Special Olympics Young Athletes Program (YAP) Spring Festival at Catholic University’s DuFour Center in March 2018. YAP is a sport and athletic program for children ages 2-7 with and without intellectual disabilities. It provides an opportunity to break down barriers and stigma between those with and those without disabilities through play. For 8 weeks prior to the event, the youth worked on a variety of athletic skills. During the YAP Spring Festival, they finally had the opportunity to put all their hard work and new skills to use. Over 250 children were transported from 10 different schools around the DC area to participate in this event.

By supporting both of these activities, we contributed in saving the Special Olympics almost \$23,000 in manpower.

Most importantly, we put smiles on the faces of the athletes we cheered on, encouraged, and supported. Special Olympics events provide a great opportunity for the USPHS, as it allows for cross category collaboration and service, and provides a tremendous amount of positive visibility to community organizations and our sister services. USPHS Officers serve this organization in Maryland and other locations. We are *one Corps with one mission*, and our activities reflect this when we can leverage opportunities to demonstrate Corps values.

*A huge thank you to the PHS Officers who served in one or both of these events:*

CAPT Sheila Ryan  
CDR Gelio Alves  
CDR William “Bill” Bolduc  
CDR Charles Darr  
CDR Catherine Davies  
CDR Zanethia Eubanks  
CDR Indira Harris  
LCDR Stephanie Felder

LCDR Jessica Fox  
LCDR Monique Worrell  
LCDR Monique Richards  
LCDR Jamie Cherup  
LT Lauren Ryszka  
LT Chaltu Wakijra  
LT Matthew Doyle



Officers pose for a photo while supporting the Special Olympics.

# Leadership Circle

## An Inspiring Leader Among Us: Officer Plays Critical Role in 2015 Anthrax Crisis

On May 22, 2015, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was contacted by a private company regarding the growth of live *Bacillus anthracis* from a sample that was purported to be inactivated (i.e., killed bacterial spores). The CDC began an investigation working with the Department of Defense (DoD) laboratories, state officials, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). This investigation revealed that on April 20, 2015, inactivated *Bacillus anthracis* samples (Ames strain) originating at the Dugway Proving Ground was routed through the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (ECBC). ECBC sent the inactivated *Bacillus anthracis* material to six different private sector companies on April 29, 2015. This shipment was sent to support a DoD effort to develop a new rapid field-based test to identify biological threats in the environment. One company in Maryland forwarded the *Bacillus anthracis* sample to a subcontractor in Maryland. It was this subcontractor that notified the CDC Select Agent Program on May 22, 2015 of the live BA finding.

The Department of Defense assembled the Committee for Comprehensive Review of DoD Laboratory Procedures, Processes, and Protocols Associated with Inactivating *Bacillus anthracis* Spores to determine what caused live spores to persist in deactivated materials.

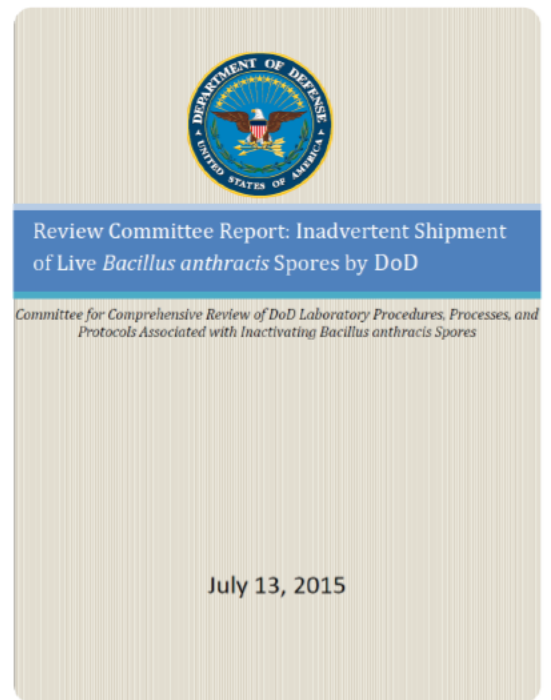
CAPT Malcolm Johns was identified to join the interagency team of experts, with representatives from more than 10 agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), the Army Test and Evaluation Command, and the US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command (USAMRMC). At the time of the incident, CAPT Johns oversaw the Quality Assurance program for BioWatch, the national biodetection program managed by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). He previously managed the program's lab operations, which performs daily tests for bioterror agents in more than 30 major metropolitan areas around the country.



**CAPT Malcolm Johns**

CAPT Johns was the only US Public Health Service officer on this high-profile effort and was honored for his work with an Award for Excellence from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, & Logistics). His contributions “helped mitigate the initial crisis and contributed to systemic corrective actions that will significantly improve the safety and security of DoD’s biological defense program.”

To read the full Committee Report and learn more about CAPT Johns’ activities during the 2015 Anthrax crisis, go to: [Review Committee Report: Inadvertent Shipment of Live \*Bacillus anthracis\* Spores by DoD.](#)





# Leadership Circle

## Trust and Human Connections

As leaders, we come into contact with individuals on a regular basis. I've always believed that human beings are interesting—a tapestry of wonder to the eyes of the beholder coupled with a unique complexity that is intriguing to the heart-mind. If we experience human contact and interconnectedness that is respectful, gentle, compassionate, understanding, supportive, nurturing, and accepting then we are fortunate. An interpersonal relationship and connection of this magnitude enriches our life and encourages us as we continue our journey on the path towards a calm, clear, and loving state of consciousness and a secure and vibrant spiritual connection with the world. This type of soulful connection with another human being is a gift, a blessing, and priceless beyond words.

The reality is that a relationship absent of trust, has no meaningful value. After all, trust is an integral ingredient that binds the relationship. This notion is especially true in the workplace. While we cannot always choose who we will work with, we have a choice as to how we will respond to situations and people—being assertive, setting boundaries, and putting our health and well-being first. Meditation, reflection, and deep soul searching helps an individual to derive at a decision as to whether or not you are willing to forgive someone. This is a personal decision. The adage of “forgive and forget” is not easy when trust is betrayed, especially on a deep and soulful level. If trust is betrayed, depending on the circumstances and the level of betrayal, the relationship may or may not be able to be repaired. Sometimes accepting that a relationship cannot be salvaged is vital to letting go and moving forward.

As human beings, we are responsible for our behaviors and actions. The sad, cold reality is that there are individuals who choose not to accept responsibility for their ill-will actions, blaming others, engaging in manipulation to fulfill their self-serving personal agendas to get ahead. Sometimes the system enables this type of behavior, as do folks whom are pulled into this dark quagmire of despair by not holding folks accountable. At the end of the day, only you know what you have done, so your integrity—or lack thereof—comes into play here and you have to answer to the Universe and a Higher Power. An important question to ask yourself is: what sort of legacy do I want to leave as a leader?

My sense is that integrity is another important personal attribute that an individual is responsible for and has sole ownership of. Relatedly, our moral compass speaks volumes as to who we are on spiritual and soulful levels; the deep layers of our true self. So, choose wisely, exercise a high degree of integrity in parallel with your heart-wisdom, and exhibit a reputation as someone who can be trusted. I wish you well on your spiritual journey to wholeness!



**CAPT Charlene Majersky**

# Leadership Circle

## Mentor Yourself!

During my early career, the HSO Mentoring Subcommittee had matched me with a mentor I worked with successfully for many years. However, after my promotion created a rank imbalance in my mentor-mentee relationship, my long-time mentor and I decided to part ways. While waiting for my match, I thought why not be a mentor to myself?

Mentor myself? Yes, we can mentor ourselves! Not that this should replace having an official mentor, but there's no reason we can't continue to work on ourselves while waiting for an appropriate match. Let me explain.

First and foremost, mentoring yourself involves self-examination. Good questions to ask yourself include, "Where am I now and where do I want to go from here? Who am I at my core?" I asked my current mentee shortly after we began working together to write a personal mission statement. Just like a mission statement guides a company, a personal mission statement can guide our lives and help us stay focused when we feel bombarded by a multitude of competing options and demands.

I also strongly believe in creating short, mid, and long-term goals. As a clinical social worker, I often encourage my patients to divide a piece of paper into three sections and write out where he/she wants to be in two months, two months to two years, and two years to five years. And yes, actually writing our goals down on paper helps much more than trying to keep the information in our heads.

A third technique useful in mentoring yourself is to identify your heroes. If possible, gather a few photos of the individuals you consider to be your heroes and attach them with pushpins or tape in your work area. Think about and write out the qualities that you admire in the people you consider to be your heroes. The photos you select will help remind you of the qualities you wish to emulate as you move forward in your career and personal life.

A fourth technique is to be endlessly thirsty for additional education! Ask yourself, "What training do I need to meet my work and personal goals? Can I sign up for the training in person or will I need to use distance learning technology?"

1. *Develop a mission statement.*
2. *Set short, mid, and long-term goals.*
3. *Identify your heroes. Think about the qualities you admire about them.*
4. *Be thirsty for knowledge. Seek additional training.*
5. *Make lemonade out of lemons. Use setbacks as your launching pads.*

A fifth technique is to continually try to make lemonade out of lemons. At times we all feel pummeled by daily frustrations. It is paramount that we use perceived setbacks as launching pads for new projects rather than letting the many roadblocks we run into defeat us.

And lastly, remember the importance of not only mental stimulation, but physical fitness. There is nothing more revitalizing to our mental and physical wellbeing than exercise! The track, treadmill, dirt path, swimming pool, or bicycle seat can be good places to destress and relax while building physical resiliency and health. No doubt, there are many other ways to mentor you. But these are the ones that have proven most effective for me throughout my career – even during times when I have had a mentor! I hope these ideas will be useful to you as well. Good luck to you in your work and personal life.



**CAPT Julie A. Niven**

# USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium

## 4 -7 June 2018

### Schedule of Events

<p><b>5 June 2018</b></p> <p>0700-0900 Waterford A</p>	<p><b>HSO Career Counseling Session</b></p> <p>The HSPAC Mentoring and Career Development Subcommittees will host the HSO Career Counseling Session at the 2018 USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium in Dallas, Texas. Senior HS officers who have served on the promotion board and/or have mentored HS officers will serve as counselors and review HSO benchmarks, career checklist, component of the CV, review/edit CV, and review eOPF for personalized general guidance on career growth and necessary steps needed for successful promotion. Sessions will be one on one for 30-minutes each, by appointment only. Additionally, HS officers will get an opportunity to meet the HSO Chief Professional Officer, CAPT Jeanean Willis Marsh and Health Services Professional Advisory Committee Chair, CDR Carlos Bell at the HSO Career Counseling Session.</p> <p>If you are an officer interested in receiving this counseling service, please fill out the survey link by 4pm Wednesday, May 30, 2018 for a confirmed appointment time. Note there will be opportunities for walk-in based on the availability of our senior officers, thus please tell a fellow HS officer if you missed the cutoff period. Questions or concerns, please email <a href="#">CAPT Raquel Peat</a>.</p>
<p><b>5 June 2018</b></p> <p>0800-0900 Garden Court 2</p>	<p><b>CPO Listening Session</b></p> <p>The listening session will be an opportunity to meet with and hear directly from our Chief Professional Officer, CAPT Jeanean Willis Marsh.</p>
<p><b>5 June 2018</b></p> <p>1830 Malachite Showroom</p>	<p><b>USPHS Music Ensemble Annual Concert</b></p> <p>Join fellow officers for an evening of music and entertainment.</p>
<p><b>6 June 2018</b></p> <p>0815-1700 Garden Court 3</p>	<p><b>Category Day</b></p> <p>Don't be left out! Last year's event was a success and we hope to surpass expectations for this year! After an energetic opening session, we will dive into a promoted officer's profile and learn more about our Category's professional core competencies, which were designed to help guide officers' career development and advancement. There will plenty of time to network with fellow officers, visit the Exhibit Hall, and</p> <p>The full <a href="#">agenda</a> is available on the Category Day webpage.</p>
<p><b>6 June 2018</b></p> <p>1900-until Union Park</p>	<p><b>HSPAC Social</b></p> <p>Join fellow HSOs for an evening of networking and fun at Union Park. Stick around after for the USPHS Combined Social.</p>
<p><b>6 June 2018</b></p> <p>2100-until Union Park</p>	<p><b>USPHS Combined Social</b></p> <p>Work hard...play hard. Join fellow officers for food and beverages. There will be a live DJ and a special raffle for prizes. All are welcome!</p>
<p><b>7 June 2018</b></p> <p>0630-0930</p>	<p><b>Surgeon General's 5K Run/Walk</b></p> <p>Which cause did you select for the 2018 Surgeon General's 5K Run/Walk and Virtual Run? Complete your annual physical fitness test (APFT) and run the 5K Run/Walk with colleagues and friends.</p>

# Announcements

EXTRA!  
EXTRA!



Are you interested in contributing to the next issue of the HSPAC Quarterly Newsletter?

Submit articles and photos to: [Communication.HSPAC@gmail.com](mailto:Communication.HSPAC@gmail.com)

Include "article" in the subject line.

## Upcoming Events



The HSPAC Events Calendar (located at the bottom of the HSPAC website) shows upcoming events being hosted by the HSPAC. Click the calendar icon to visit the Events Calendar page. To include an event on the HSPAC calendar, submit a calendar invitation to HSPAC at [Calendar.HSPAC@gmail.com](mailto:Calendar.HSPAC@gmail.com) with all pertinent information and a point of contact.

## Connect with us:



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