



U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE



The Nursing Spotlight

Highlighting Our Successes

Nursing Professional Advisory Committee – Career Development Subcommittee

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Spotlighting the Career of LCDR Rosson Smith

Biography Contributed by: LCDR Laura Reynolds

This Nursing Spotlight is brought to you by CDR Nichole Vetter, CDR Andra Rasmussen, LCDR Thelma Cancam, LCDR Sarah Kullman, LCDR Brandy Cloud, LCDR Alina Schmidt, and LT Sandra Herrera

LCDR Rosson Smith earned her BSN and MSN in nursing and nursing leadership. She was introduced to nursing as a child from hearing stories of her great grandmother that came from Bermuda and worked in the U.S. as a nurse. Prior to commissioning into the USPHS, she had a rewarding career serving as an open-heart ICU nurse, a med/surg step-down ICU nurse, and post anesthesia recovery unit nurse at multiple hospitals. Well respected by her junior military nurses, civilian personnel, and senior nurse leaders; LCDR Smith served as one of only two civilian Head Nurses on one of the busiest Wounded Warrior units at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. She served on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Team and coordinated the transfer of patients to other Military Treatment Facilities (MTF) and staff to new duty stations. She learned about the USPHS from other officers, decided to submit her application and commissioned in October 2012.

After commissioning, she took a position with the Department of Defense (DoD) in the Defense Health Agency (DHA) working at the TRICARE East Regional Office. As a Nurse Consultant for TRICARE, she coordinated medical care using her case management skills to ensure beneficiaries received the care they needed at their assigned MTF or community. LCDR Smith was the lead Referral Management Coordinator, SME (subject matter expert), and liaison for overseeing contract deliverables for the east region. She developed and managed DHA/TRICARE policies for Medical Management, Referral Management and Quality Improvement. She stated, "One major highlight of my career was having the opportunity to rewrite the contract that supported all beneficiaries in the U.S. which allowed service members, families, and dependents with special needs to keep their on-going care without interruption when they moved."

After four-years at TRICARE, she now serves as a Health Policy Administrator in the Office of Policy at Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Health Service Corps (IHSC) where she maintains and disseminates all related IHSC National Policy processes including the annual review of National Policies, Procedures, and Operations Guides for headquarters and field staff. Through TDYs she supports IHSC field staff at

ICE detention centers. She stated that she enjoys serving in this position because of the comradery with her colleagues and supervisor, the challenging and evolving work, and location of the office. She encourages officers to learn more about IHSC because they offer opportunities for a variety of disciplines that can build your professional background and expertise.

LCDR Smith expressed that her most rewarding experiences while serving in the USPHS have been her opportunities to deploy. She deployed after hurricane Maria and Harvey where she worked at one of the field sites and most recently, in August, as a nurse caring for COVID-19 patients in Laredo, TX. She stated, "We faced many obstacles during that deployment during the COVID-19 pandemic but the support from my fellow officers gave me the strength needed to get through."

When asked to give advice to fellow USPHS nurses, LCDR Smith advised them to "seek multiple mentors and opportunities that will advance their career professionally by taking leadership and career development courses." She supports the community by participating in community food drives and volunteering at a mass vaccination site. When asked about her work life balance she mentioned, "We should incorporate self-care into our schedules and do things that make us happy." LCDR Smith does this by spending time with her family and friends and loves her annual trip to Aruba to visit family. Although, COVID-19 hindered her travel plans, she looks forward to her next trip. "This love I have for nursing can be stressful at times but is very rewarding to me in serving people in need of quality care, compassion, and love."



***If you are interested in learning more about the agency where LCDR Smith works, you may contact her directly at Rosson.C.Smith@ice.dhs.gov.**