U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

THERAPIST OFFICERS

BEST KEPT SECRETS

AMERICA'S HEALTH RESPONDERS COMMISSIONED CORPS U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Opportunities

Who Are We?

The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps is an elite team of more than 6,500 full-time, well-trained, highly qualified public health professionals dedicated to delivering the Nation's public health promotion and disease prevention programs and advancing public health science. Driven by a passion for public service, these men and women serve on the front lines in the Nation's fight against disease and poor health conditions. As one of America's seven uniformed services, the Commissioned Corps fills essential public health leadership and service roles within the Nation's Federal Government agencies and programs.

"The variety of roles and responsibilities in clinical or non-clinical rehabilitation positions offer rehab professionals unlimited challenges and experiences. Not only will you serve as a rehab professional in your daily duties, you are also part of a unique team of professionals who respond to national or international disasters."

CAPTAIN SCOTT GAUSTAD Chief Therapist Officer, U.S. Public Health Service

What Do We Do?

Therapist officers comprise one of the 11 categories within the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps. Our category includes more than 150 officers, who work in very distinct, yet collaborative disciplines serving in various agencies. Therapy Officers in Public Health:

- Promote the public health of the United States.
- Provide rehabilitation service to American Indians/ Alaska Natives, federal inmates and members of the Coast Guard and other military branches.
- Expand knowledge through clinical rehabilitation services and research to improve treatment of physical, occupational, speech, respiratory and hearing related impairments.
- Improve the health care system through the development of innovations in health care.
- Assure safe and effective use of medical devices.
- Expand national health resources.
- Respond to natural disasters and serve on critical relief teams.

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Did you know you can:

- Enjoy fantastic medical and dental benefits for you and your family
- Use military bases around the world
- Use the GI Bill to advance your education later on in life
- Contribute pre-tax income to the Thrift Savings Plan

Quality of Practice

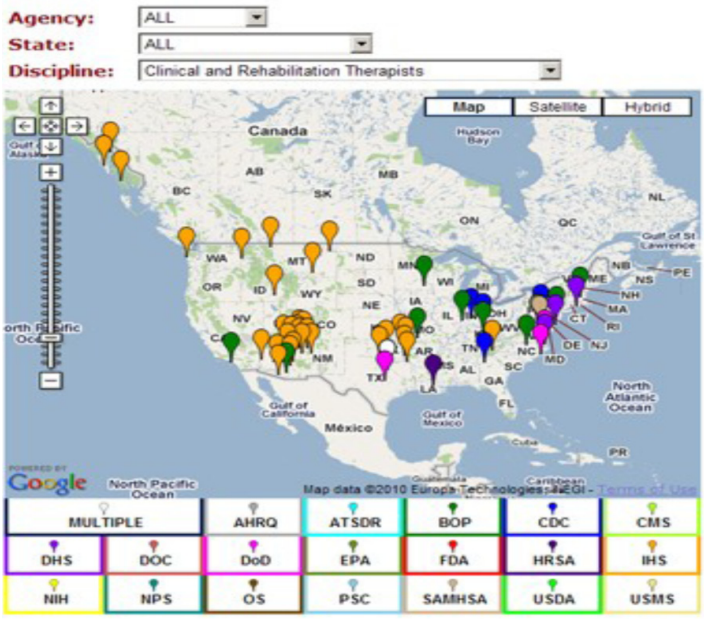
Therapists in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps work in autonomous practice environments, where they direct the provision of rehabilitation services based on patient needs. USPHS provides an opportunity to be creative in providing quality care with ample opportunities to develop a diverse career. Many advancement opportunities and diverse employment settings offer a challenging and rewarding career. USPHS Therapists work in close communication and camaraderie with other medical and health care providers. As a health care team, we work toward providing evidence-based health care and patient education.

Why You Should be a Therapist Officer in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

Where we are located

Almost anywhere and everywhere in the U.S.A. Whether you prefer rural or urban, east or west, north or south; we have a location for you. Therapist officers can be employed as Commissioned Officers across the country in any of the following agencies:

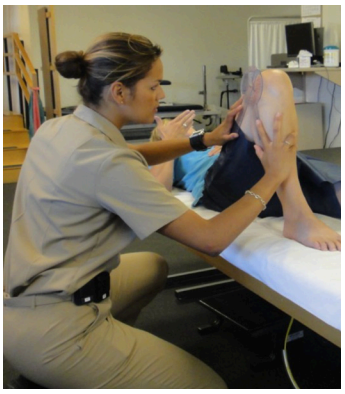
- Indian Health Service
- Federal Bureau of Prisons
- Food and Drug Administration
- National Institutes of Health
- U.S. Coast Guard
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services



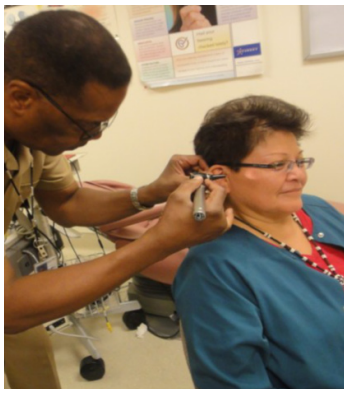
Opportunities for Growth

USPHS Therapists have the opportunity to practice a wide array of rehabilitation services in one clinical environment, yet also have the opportunity to attend trainings to develop a clinical specialty area. Therapists may choose to progress their career on a clinical track, an administrative track, or both, while keeping the same employer. Some examples of areas of professional growth for therapists include:

- Orthopedics
- Wound Care
- Women's Health
- Hearing Conservation
- Vestibular Rehabilitation
- Swallowing Studies
- Early Intervention Services
- Program Management
- Therapeutic Devices
- Cognitive Therapy
- Vision Therapy
- Pediatrics, Research and Respiratory Care



LT Ana Sandee, Physical Therapist, works with a patient on the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico.



CAPT Frank Weaver, Audiologist, provides hearing exam to a patient at Northern Navajo Medical Center.

Quality of Life

Is your quality of life all that it could be? Is it important to you to have time to spend with your family and friends, doing the things you enjoy? As a Commissioned Officer in the U.S. Public Health Service, you receive 30 days of annual leave plus 10 Federal holidays. Many duty stations operate Monday-Friday during normal business hours. This organization allows you to pursue life in literally hundreds of locations from the largest cities to the smallest communities near the oceans, the mountains, the Grand Canyon, the Gulf Coast or national parks. Be prepared to enjoy a camaraderie and sense of common purpose unlike anything you have yet experienced.

Why You Should be a Therapist Officer in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

Why is a career as a PHS therapist a great choice?

The combination of rewarding professional service, pay, benefits, diversity of opportunities, potential for career advancement and geographic mobility and the honor and respect of a career in a uniformed service make a career as a PHS Therapist an unparalleled opportunity.

Therapist category best kept secrets!

Very few therapists know that a career as a Therapy Officer in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps is one of the best career choices they could possibly make. So few people know about us, it seems almost like a national secret.

Career Opportunities

USPHS Therapists have many opportunities to work in a variety of agencies and to completely change career paths while maintaining continuity of benefits. A Therapist officer might choose to work in clinical positions with Indian Health Service or the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and many work in those agencies for the full course of their USPHS careers, advancing to higher levels of responsibility and assuming supervisory and managerial roles. Some therapists, on the other hand, may choose to move around between agencies. Recently, several therapists have assumed positions in Department of Defense (DoD) Tricare Management Activity (TMA) and are working in hospitals and clinics at Army, Navy and Air Force installations in the United States. They may stay in those positions for years, but if they chose, they could move on to a position in another federal agency, perhaps FDA or NIH. A USPHS therapist from any background has many career paths available at multiple agencies.

Join America's Public Health Team!

If you are a therapist or therapy student interested in joining the fight for public health, or if you have questions about what we do and how you can make a difference with the Commissioned Corps, we would like to talk to you. For more information, call us at 800-279-1605 or visit our website at www.usphs.gov.

Therapists from the Federal Medical Center in Fort Worth, TX provide community education on running related injuries.

USPHS Commissioned Corps Officer Benefits

Commissioned Corps officers working for the U.S. Public Health Service enjoy the same benefits as their counterparts in the armed services. Here are a few of them:

- No cost, comprehensive medical and dental care for Corps officers; excellent health benefits for families
- Paid sick leave, maternity leave, and Federal holidays
- Clinical practice liability coverage
- Thirty days of paid vacation per year beginning the first year
- Tax-free housing and meal allowances
- Non-Contributory retirement plan with benefits eligibility beginning after 20 years of service
- Thrift Savings plan—retirement savings and investment plan similar to a 401 (k)
- Loan repayment potential – USPHS understands the financial burden of medical education. Assignments with certain Federal agencies, such as the Indian Health Service, offer loan repayment and/or other educational and family support programs.
- Veterans Affairs benefits, such as the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) which allows active duty members to enroll and pay $100 per month for 12 months; and are then entitled to receive a monthly education benefit once they have completed a minimum service obligation.

Therapy Student Opportunities

The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps offers two excellent opportunities for students to serve their country while completing their education. If you are interested in a public health career, we encourage you to apply to the Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP) and/or the Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (SRCOSTEP). Both programs offer excellent benefits and are highly competitive.

If you have questions about COSTEP, please visit our website at http://www.usphs.gov/student/ COSTEP.aspx.

Additional Uniformed Service Benefits

The Commissioned Corps offers you and your family many other exceptional benefits including:

- Paid moving expenses when you join the Corps, relocate with the Corps, and retire from the Corps.
- Access to military base lodging, recreational facilities and space-available flights on military aircraft.
- Shopping privileges at military base grocery and department stores.

To learn more about Commissioned Corps Benefits while assigned to the Indian Health Service, view the following videos from the IHS Division of Oral Health. http://www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/Dental/index.cfm?module=videos

U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Next Steps

USPHS Officer Qualifications

All Commissioned Corps officers must meet several basic qualifications: You must be a U.S. citizen, be less than 44 years of age and pass a physical examination. To be a therapist officer, you also need the following:

For occupational therapy, you must have a bachelor's degree, master's degree, or doctoral degree in occupational therapy (entry level). The qualifying degree must be earned from a school or college of occupational therapy accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) at the time of graduation. You also must possess a current, unrestricted, and valid certification/registration by the American Occupational Therapy Association. Licensed by state.

For physical therapy, you must have a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in physical therapy earned from a school or college of physical therapy accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). You also must possess a current, unrestricted, and valid license/registration as a physical therapist by any State.

For speech-language pathology, you must have a master's degree in speech-language pathology earned from a school or college of speech-language pathology accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA). You also must possess a current, unrestricted, and valid certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

For audiology, you must have a master's or doctoral degree in audiology earned from a school or college of audiology accredited by the CAA. You also must possess a current, unrestricted and valid certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and a state license.

For respiratory therapy, you must have a bachelor's or master's degree in respiratory therapy from a school or college of respiratory therapy accredited by the Committee on Accreditation of Respiratory Care (CoARC) or Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) at the time of graduation. You also must possess an active, current, unrestricted, and valid Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) license from any U.S. State, territory, common-wealth, or District of Columbia, and the RRT program must be recognized by the National Board of Respiratory Care (NBRC). It should be noted that a certified or registered pulmonary function technician/technologist is not a qualifying certification.

Who Do I Contact?

AGENCY	RECRUITER	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE	EMAIL
Therapy Professional Advisory Committee	CDR Jill Tillman	417-837-1739	www.bop.gov	jtillman@bop.gov
Bureau of Prisons	CAPT Jean Bradley	817-782-4572	www.bop.gov	jebradley@bop.gov
Indian Health Service	LCDR Dawn Dineyazhe	505-722-1186	www.ihs.gov	Dawn.Dineyazhe@ihs.gov
Center for Medicare & Medicaid	CDR Mercedes Benitez-McCrary	410-786-5716	www.cms.gov	mbenitezmccrary@cms.hhs.gov
Centers for Disease Control & Prevention	CDR David Byrne	513-533-8414	www.cdc.gov	zne2@cdc.gov
Health Resources & Services Admin	CAPT John Figarola	225-756-3752	www.hrsa.gov	jfigarola@hrsa.gov
Food and Drug Administration	LCDR Doug Fiorentino	781-596-7817	www.fda.gov	douglas.fiorentino@fda.hhs.gov
U.S. Department of Agriculture	CAPT Sue Newman	909-860-2367	www.usda.gov	sue.newman@fsis.usda.gov
Office of Commissioned Corps Operations	LCDR Dean Trombley	240-453-6065	www.usphs.gov	dean.trombley@hhs.gov
U.S. Coast Guard	CDR Ramon Ector	860-444-8414	www.uscg.mil	ramon.l.ector@uscg.mil

Commissioned Officer Pay Comparison—2011 with Dependents

PHS Therapy Officers					
Salary Base	O-3 w/ less than 2 yrs service	O-3 with over 3 yrs service	O-4 with over 4 yrs service	O-5 with over 10 yrs service	O-6 with over 20 yrs service
Monthly Base Pay (taxable)	$3,771	$4,616	$5,371	$6,766	$9,371
Subsistence (no tax)	$250	$250	$250	$250	$250
Housing (no tax)	$897-2,955	$960-3,327	$1,056-3,846	$1,122-4,218	$1,134-4,260
Retirement Annuity	Non-contributory	Non-contributory	Non-contributory	Non-contributory	Non-contributory
Gross Income– Monthly	$4,328-6,386	$5,726-8,093	$6,566-9,356	$8,005-11,101	$10,581-13,707
Federal Income Tax	$329	$623	$677	$951	$1,982
Social Security	$135	$191	$222	$280	$374
Medicare	$47	$66	$77	$97	$134
State Income Tax	May be exempt	May be exempt	May be exempt	May be exempt	May be exempt
Health Care Benefits	Noncontributory	Non-contributory	Non-contributory	Non-contributory	Non-contributory
Take Home Pay Monthly	$3,817-5,875	$4,846-7,213	$5,590-8,380	$6,677-9,773	$8,091-11,217
Monthly pension after 30 years service	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	$5,024/month After federal taxes, for life

Therapist Officers are also eligible to receive Non-physician Board Certified Pay (NPBCP): Payable based on years of creditable service to Therapists who achieve board certification in an approved specialty area.