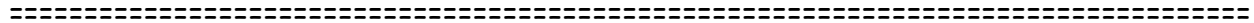


- Chapter 36 -

Military Track Medical Students in Emergency Medicine

- **Resident Author:** Dan S. Mosely, MD (San Antonio Uniformed Services Health Education Consortium)
- **Faculty Author:** Robert G. Buckley, MD, MPH, FACEP (Naval Medical Center San Diego)
- **Faculty Editor:** Carol L. Barsky, MD, FAAEM (Mount-Sinai Medical Center)



Overview

Medical students seeking financial assistance for medical school costs who are interested in military service have two options. First, there is the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS), a fully accredited medical school in Bethesda, Maryland. Second, there is the Health Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP) that funds most of the cost of medical school in exchange for a service obligation to the military following medical school and completion of internship or residency.

Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

Established in 1972, the USUHS (a.k.a. F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine) trains future physicians in the unique aspects of military medicine while meeting all requirements for general medical licensure in the United States. Application to USUHS is through the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS), as it is to all other accredited US medical schools. One must also meet all requirements for active military service. The potential student must undergo a complete medical screening and background security investigation prior to being unconditionally accepted into USUHS. Detailed information is available at www.usuhs.mil.

The four services represented at USUHS are the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Public Health Service (PHS). While attending USUHS, students receive an active reserve commission, with a full active duty commission upon graduation. Students are ranked Second Lieutenant (Army and Air Force) or Ensign (Navy and PHS) and receive basic military pay for that rank. All tuition payments, fees, medical supplies and books are provided.

In addition to meeting all the requirements for medical education, the USUHS student is exposed to both 'life in the military' and 'military medicine.' Classes are given in military medical history, chemical and biological warfare, wound ballistics, deployment medicine, as well as many other military topics. At least two field exercises are conducted over the 4-year curriculum, giving the student a concentrated and intense introduction to medical support during simulated combat operations.

Following graduation, the term of commitment is longer than that incurred with an HPSP scholarship. After post-graduate training, the USUHS graduate owes seven years of active military service. Any commitment previously incurred to either Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) or any of the military academies is additional.

USUHS prepares students for a rewarding life in the military and is best suited for those who enjoy the unique aspects of military medicine.

Health Professional's Scholarship Program

The Health Professional's Scholarship Program (HPSP) is designed to provide the military with competent physicians to meet both peacetime and wartime medical roles. Recipients of the HPSP scholarship receive full payment for medical school tuition, fees, medical supplies, and textbooks, as well as a monthly stipend, in return for a military service commitment following graduation. To apply for the HPSP, the student must already be accepted into an accredited medical school (or be enrolled). Additionally, the student must meet all requirements for active military service such as a medical screening and background security investigation. More information on the HPSP program can be found at the following web sites:

- o Army - <http://www.mods.army.mil/medicaleducation/>
- o Navy - <http://nshs.med.navy.mil/hsp/default.htm>
- o Air Force - <http://ci.afit.af.mil/CIM/CIMJ/cimj.asp>

Following graduation, the physician owes one year of active military service for every year of scholarship, with a minimum of 2 years service. For instance, if the entire four years of medical school were funded by the military, the student would owe four years of service. However, if the student applied after the first year and only three years were funded, the student would only owe three years. A student receiving the scholarship for only one year of medical school would still owe the minimum 2 years of service.

Officer Preparedness Training

All medical officers attend 4 to 6 weeks of basic officer training. For USUHS students, this occurs prior to the first year of medical school. For HPSP students, this is accomplished either during summer term in medical school or immediately upon graduation. These courses are designed to give the new medical officer an orientation to military life as well as military customs and courtesies.

Currently, the Army conducts its "Officer Basic Course" (OBC) at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. The Navy's "Officer Indoctrination School" (OIS) is located in Newport, Rhode Island, while the Air Force conducts the "Commissioned Officer Training" (COT) course at Gunter Annex, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

Post Graduate Education in the Military

The three typical pathways to residency training in the military are inservice programs at military treatment facilities (MTFs), or deferment and outservice programs that are completed at civilian residency training programs. For any given specialty, a graduate medical selection board is convened in the capital region each December to determine the program selection and the number of years of training for every applicant. Selection board results are published in mid-December.

Inservice Residency Training Programs at Military Treatment Facilities

Various Army, Navy, and Air Force MTFs around the country sponsor inservice residency training programs. They are all fully accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). Nearly all specialties and subspecialties are represented as well as numerous fellowships. While in a dedicated post-graduate training program (internship, residency, or fellowship), pay-back towards the initial service obligation is on "hold." The service commitment resumes upon graduation from training. Inservice training counts toward retirement, but generally incurs additional obligated service time which may be served concurrent with other medical school obligations.

Currently, inservice residency training EM programs are available at the following MTFs:

Army:

- o Madigan Army Medical Center, Fort Lewis, WA - Post-Graduate Years (PGY) 2-4
- o Darnall Army Community Hospital, Fort Hood, TX - PGY 1-3

Navy:

- o Naval Medical Center San Diego, San Diego, CA - PGY 2-4
- o Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Portsmouth, VA - PGY 2-4

Air Force:

- o Wright-Patterson Medical Center, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, OH - PGY 2-4

Combined Programs (Army-Air Force):

- o Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, TX & Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, TX - PGY1-3

Deferment Programs for Residency Training at Civilian Programs

Some graduating medical students are selected for deferment for their entire residency. This means that the student can match as an intern/resident and complete his/her training in a civilian program. Upon such completion, he/she then enters or returns to military service as a civilian residency-trained emergency physician (EP). In some cases, similar deferment of service obligation is permitted for graduating medical students or medical corps officers who are already in the process of completing or have completed an internship.

Other graduating students are, however, granted only a one-year deferment to complete an internship in a civilian program. They are then expected to serve in general medical practice as general medical officers, as flight surgeons, or as diving medical officers for 2-3 years before applying for further inservice, outservice or deferred training.

Application to this program follows the normal civilian "match" guidelines after approval from the ACGME of the respective service. Using the deferment route to post-graduate training incurs no further obligation but neither does it count toward payback for the initial obligation. Furthermore, the years spent in deferred training generally do not count toward retirement. USUHS students are not eligible for deferment training programs.

Outservice Programs for Residency Training at Civilian Programs

Outservice training allows medical corps officers already on active duty the opportunity to train at a civilian institution while remaining on full-time active duty status. Unlike members in a deferment program, outservice trainees continue to draw their military pay based on rank and may be eligible for certain bonuses. In addition, like inservice training, time served in outservice training counts toward retirement.

The number of outservice training slots awarded each year varies depending on the particular need for residency or fellowship trained specialists for the respective branch of service. Graduating medical students are generally not eligible for outservice training.

Summary

The military offers a unique and exciting perspective to the practice of emergency medicine (EM). As recognized leaders in resuscitation, stabilization and triage, EPs are uniquely qualified to provide the medical support needed for either wartime or peacetime missions. Furthermore, EPs play a leading role in training tomorrow's medics and corpsmen.

For more information on Military Medical Student forums and activities, please visit the Military Medical Student home page at <http://www.usuhs.mil/mmsa/>.