

Chapter 61

ROLE OF THE DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY MEDICAL LOGISTICS DIRECTORATE

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Introduction

The Defense Health Agency Medical Logistics Directorate (DHA MEDLOG), formerly known as the Defense Medical Materiel Program Office, located at Fort Detrick, Maryland (Figure 61-1), is a joint activity under the direction, authority, and control of the Defense Health Agency (DHA). Since the DHA MEDLOG's inception, its focus has been medical materiel standardization within the Department of Defense (DOD).¹ The DHA has tasked the MEDLOG with integrating and delivering medical logistics materiel, equipment, and services along the continuum of operational and institutional Military



Figure 61-1. The Defense Medical Logistics (MEDLOG) Center on Fort Detrick, Maryland, is home to the Defense Health Agency MEDLOG Directorate (2020).

Health System missions.¹ The DHA MEDLOG is supported by an office staffed with diverse clinicians and non-clinicians, including an Army physician assistant (PA), registered nurses, pharmacists, laboratory officers, biomedical equipment technicians, medical logisticians, information management staff, and support personnel representing all the services.

Job Duties and Responsibilities

The DHA MEDLOG PA serves as chief of the Clinical Product Analysis Office (Figure 61-2). This office's main role is to provide accurate and appropriate clinical input to the military medical logistics community. The chief is responsible for (a) providing input as a clinical subject matter expert to support current and new medical materiel and contingency readiness; (b) helping identify new requirements and processes within the DOD supply system to support joint and service

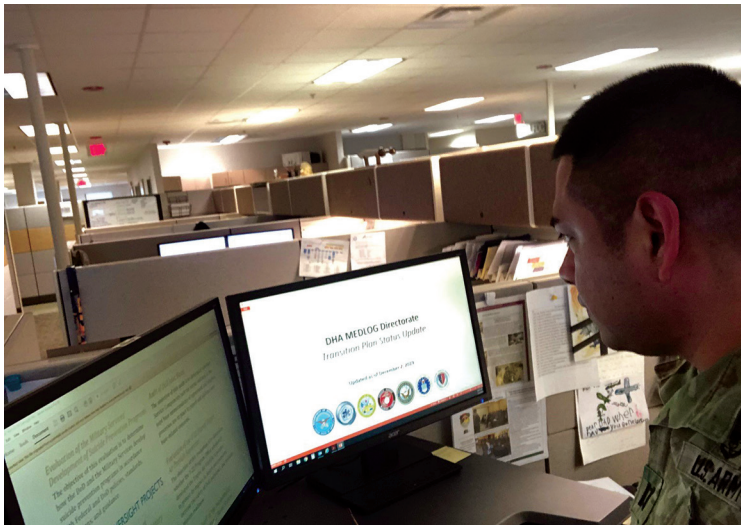


Figure 6-2. Captain Victor Acevedo performing daily duties as chief of the Clinical Product Analysis Office, Supply Management Division, Defense Health Agency Medical Logistics Center (2019).

operational requirements; and (c) leading joint initiatives and projects to optimize use of medical materiel across the services. Additionally, the chief serves as the DHA MEDLOG's National Stock Number management team officer in charge, responsible for (a) maintenance and new actions for over 100,000 medical materiel items in the Defense Medical Logistics Item Identification System (DMLIIS) database;³ (b) evaluating medical materiel for quality and adjudicating product quality deficiency reports for the DOD;⁴ (c) maintaining and updating the DOD's recommended personal protective equipment list for health care personnel;⁵ and (d) working with joint developers, planners, researchers, and testing agencies to identify capability gaps for improving medical material interoperability, interchangeability, sustainability, and casualty survivability.

The DHA MEDLOG PA also provides clinical and operational insight to interservice and intergovernmental agencies, including the US Army Medical Materiel Agency, the Air Force Medical Evaluation Support Activity, the Air Force Medical Readiness Agency, and the Marine Corps Systems Command. Additionally, the PA represents DHA MEDLOG as a member of multiple clinical working groups, including the Committee for Tactical Combat Casualty Care and the Global Patient Movement Joint Advisory Board.

Requirements

The Army PA serving in this position must hold the rank of captain or above, have graduated from the Captains Career Course, and have clinical experience as a PA (civilian or military) and as an Army Medical Department officer. An overseas combat deployment experience is appropriate.

Skills and Attributes

The following qualities are helpful for excelling in this position: (a) a history of operational experience, in the wider readiness variety of units, the better; (b) recent deployment experience, preferably experience in multiple roles of care; (c) develop the basic knowledge of medical logistics and acquisition processes within the DOD; (d) basic knowledge of data processing and reporting; and (e) interest in medical equipment and medical product research.

Another very important skill is to be able to effectively lead working groups comprised of clinicians, engineers, and logisticians from within the organization, other services, and outside entities such as the Defense Logistics Agency.

Training

The Defense Acquisition University online course, “Fundamentals of System Acquisition Management” (ACQ 101), should be completed within the first 6 months in this position. DHA MEDLOG and the Defense Logistics Agency provide general training to access medical logistics databases and tools such as the JMAR (Joint Medical Asset Repository), DMLIIS, MCRW (Medical Contingency Requirements Workflow), MMC (Medical Master Catalog), and MedPDB (Medical/Surgical Product Data Bank). These systems contain information on medical supplies, devices, and equipment in use by the services.

Key Facts

This position is typically a 3-year tour and is coded for a 65D (PA area of concentration) O-3 (captain) with no other additional skill identifier requirements. The position title is expected to change upon approval of the new DHA MEDLOG organizational structure, which will grow in size and responsibility. The position is a staff rather than a leadership position, and is currently rated by the chief of Supply Management Division (immediate supervisor) and senior-rated by the director of the DHA MEDLOG. In this position, the PA is not responsible or expected to provide medical care or medical advice at work. However, to maintain clinical skills and provider bonus pay, the PA in this position is encouraged to volunteer at the Barquist Army Health Clinic at Fort Detrick. Historically, PAs assigned to this position are in clinic between 8 and 12 hours per month. The credentialing military treatment facility is Fort Meade, Maryland.

Tips for Success

The PA in this position needs to think “joint” versus Army. Newcomers to DHA MEDLOG should become familiar with the directorate’s

official public website, <https://www.health.mil/About-MHS/OASDHA/Defense-Health-Agency>, and pay particular attention to the publications and policy documents issued by Military Health Affairs and the DHA.

Conclusion

The PA serving as chief of the DHA MEDLOG Clinical Product Analysis Office will be involved in multiple aspects/groups that impact the Military Health System medical materiel and sustained contingency readiness. He or she will be expected to provide input about medical logistical needs and related matters of the joint operational field (roles of care 1–3), while collaborating daily with fellow service members and equities from the other service departments, DOD civilians, and government contractors.

References

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