



Military Health Care Professionals – *They Walk on Water*

By Debbie Gregory, CEO of MilitaryConnection.com

The recruitment of outstanding health care professionals is challenging and highly competitive. Even in these difficult economic times, health care organizations are aggressively recruiting viable professionals. Not many health care professionals are losing their jobs and the demand is still very high – especially compared to the situation with other occupations. MilitaryConnection.com recognizes and commends each of you for the excellent job that you perform on an ongoing basis.

The pool of health care professionals seeking employment, including physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and allied health care professionals, is limited for a variety of reasons. There simply is more demand than there is supply, and hospitals and health care organizations nationwide all want to capture these qualified professionals. The demand for health care professionals has increased as a huge segment of our population, the baby boomers, grows older and requires greater health care services.

Additionally, many states have legislated minimum nurse-to-patient ratio staffing requirements for acute care hospitals, with the goal of better patient outcomes. All this has been happening at the same time that nursing schools have not kept pace with the demand. In fact, there are simply not enough nursing schools or open slots for students who want to join this noble profession.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing has reported that in 2007 more than 36,000 qualified applicants were turned away from entry-level baccalaureate degree programs in nursing schools because of insufficient numbers of faculty, clinical sites, classroom space and clinical mentors.

The Veterans Administration currently provides clinical education for approximately 100,000 health professional trainees annually, including students from more than 600 schools of nursing. The VA is the nation's largest provider of graduate medical education and a major contributor to medical and scientific research. In addition to caring for America's veterans, health care must be provided for all those who serve in the military as well as their dependents.

Thankfully, in this war as in others, we have far fewer casualties than wounded warriors. This is because of the superior care that they receive across the board from military health care professionals. There also have been military medical breakthroughs in areas such as trauma, wound care, burn treatment, brain injuries and rehabilitation, among others. Military health care professionals have expertise that spans neonatal to geriatric care and everything in between. The military and veteran health care system delivers world-class health care and is one of the largest integrated health care systems worldwide.

Health care recruiters nationwide are competing for viable candidates. Many are using similar resources to reach the same market of candidates. It is time to think out of the box and go after this niche market of military health care professionals, including those transitioning and separating from military service, veterans, National Guard, and those in the Reserves who are completing their call to duty, as well as government and public health care professionals. As recruiters, we must be the first to capture this extraordinary market of military health care candidates.

More than 250,000 people transition out of the military every year. In addition to those transitioning, there are 1.3 million National Guard and Reserve members and more than 25 million veterans. More than 50 percent of them have spouses. Health care professionals number in the tens of thousands. Those who serve our country are responsible and disciplined, possess tremendous leadership skills, and cover a wide variety of specialties. This is a richly diverse audience that is in good physical condition, drug-free and dependable. Many also hold active security clearances (source: Profile of the Military Community, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense).

If you Google "health care jobs for military," MilitaryConnection.com is No. 1 out of millions of listings. This site is one of the most comprehensive online military/veterans' directories on the Internet, with thousands of pages of resources and information that attract both active and passive health care candidates.

MilitaryConnection.com is known as the go-to site for connecting military health care professionals with outstanding civilian and government jobs. We also work with transition officers and veterans' service officers nationwide. We focus on providing a multitude of resources, including but not limited to:

- Licensing boards for physicians, nurses and allied health professionals
- Professional associations by state and specialty
- Professional conferences
- Directory of hospital and health care employers
- Nursing columns, Q&As and articles
- Military medicine
- Health care interview questions
- Virtual health care job fair
- Live job fairs
- Job tips
- Job board featuring thousands of jobs
- And more ...

Military service attracts many experienced health care professionals as well as those who want to become nurses, physicians and allied health professionals. These individuals are often motivated by the superior education benefits and/or the forgiveness of their student loans. Military and veterans hospitals face recruitment and retention challenges too, but they are different than those in the civilian world. Military and government service can be a rotating door.

Many who have reached their goals and completed their obligations separate from military service. Individuals in the National Guard and the Reserves or those who have been activated for a specific term will complete their activation term and return to civilian life often wanting something different from the civilian health care position they held prior to being called to duty. Government health care

professionals can attain full retirement at a fairly young age, and many desire to move into a second career in the private sector, earning a second retirement.

We hope that you will include military and veterans' health care professionals in your recruitment plans. Doing so will place you several steps ahead of your competition. MilitaryConnection.com is designed to enable you to broadcast your recruitment message to this audience of viable health care professionals.

MilitaryConnection.com offers many effective recruitment advertising options for your consideration. We can also partner your organization with respected military nonprofits to increase your positive visibility and create a win-win situation for all. MilitaryConnection.com has the honor of working with the most respected military and veteran nonprofits in the nation and is a valued member of the military and veteran communities. Additionally, we are proud corporate members of the Defense Department's America Supports You program. Check us out, because when the next tour returns home, it's on MilitaryConnection.com!

About the Author:

Debbie Gregory is CEO of MilitaryConnection.com (a Division of Gregory Media Inc.). In business since 1999, she is contracted to handle print recruitment advertising in authorized military base newspapers affiliated with large regional hospitals. Debbie launched MilitaryConnection.com just three years ago, and since that time its traffic and rankings have surpassed many larger and well-established competitors. A member of the International Association of Employment Web Sites, MilitaryConnection.com has been designated as one of the top 350 employment Web sites on the Internet and is seen as the Gold Standard among employment Web sites. MilitaryConnection.com is also a member of the Better Business Bureau and holds an A+ ranking, the highest possible ranking a company can attain.

Debbie has just been named Ventura County Woman Business Owner of the Year by NAWBO (the National Association of Women Business Owners – an organization with more than 10 million members nationwide). Debbie and MilitaryConnection.com have received numerous awards and commendations, including commendations from America Supports You, General Peter Pace (prior chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff), and General James Combs, commander of Los Alamitos Joint Forces Base; Soldiers Angels' coveted Crystal Award as well as its Golden Wing Award; Homefront America's Patriot Award; and the Veterans Information Gold Web Award.

