

1. Date of Report: December 17, 2020

2. BVS POC(s):

Victor Angry

3. Service Area/Program:

Transition and Employment

4. VDVS Director/Program Manager:

Nicole Anderson-Director

Tim Bowden-VTAP Program Manager (Interim)

5. Mission of service area/program (i.e. what does it do?):

VTAP: The Virginia Transition Assistance Program (VTAP) offers transitioning service members and their spouses the best Virginia has to offer. Our mission is to assess, coordinate, and disseminate opportunities for members of the armed forces and their spouses transitioning from military to civilian life by providing a pathway to employment, education, and entrepreneurship. VTAP also provides active duty service members an opportunity to utilize the DoD Skillbridge approved Hire Vets NOW Fellowship Program, a collaboration between VTAP, the Virginia Chamber Foundation, and the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) program to provide internships for active duty service members through 25 employers as of 11/20/2020.

MMAC: The Military Medics and Corpsmen Program (MMAC) provides pathways to careers and credentialing in civilian healthcare for veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses with healthcare-related training and experience.

An innovative and award-winning program, MMAC is changing the way healthcare hires veterans in Virginia. After medically trained service members leave the military and transition to the civilian workforce, many face the challenge of their military healthcare experience and training not translating into civilian healthcare credentials and employment. Many are now unemployed, underemployed, or not working in the healthcare field. On a daily basis, the MMAC Program staff directly address this challenge via effective and efficient operations, legislation, and healthcare regulatory approval - and ultimately veterans hired in healthcare.

As the first and only program of its type in the nation, one element that makes the MMAC program unique and effective is the MMAC-Qualified career pathway. This pathway focuses on

recently discharged veterans who served as Army Medics, Navy/Coast Guard Corpsmen, or Air Force Medical Technicians. Memos of Agreement are in place with 15 major healthcare systems across the Commonwealth of Virginia. The agreements allow the non-credentialed MMAC-Qualified applicants to deliver patient care under the supervision of a physician or designated Registered Nurse. The MMAC-Qualified applicants are expected continue their medical education and obtain civilian healthcare credentials while employed at the MMAC Partner Healthcare Systems.

The MMAC Partner Healthcare Systems:

- ✓ Bon Secours Virginia Health System
- ✓ Capital Area Pediatrics
- ✓ Centra Health
- ✓ Chesapeake Regional Healthcare
- ✓ Carilion Clinic
- ✓ Fort Norfolk Medical Plaza
- ✓ INOVA
- ✓ Mary Washington Healthcare
- ✓ Riverside Health System
- ✓ Sentara
- ✓ Virginia Department of Corrections
- ✓ Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (4 Facilities)

6. Who does the service area/program serve (i.e. who are the customers)?

VTAP: Active duty transitioning service members, veterans (less than 3 years removed from active duty) and their spouses, National Guard members, and Reservists from all service branches.

MMAC: Active duty transitioning service members, veterans, and their spouses with medical training and backgrounds. The primary target group is Army Medics, Navy Corpsmen, and Air Force Medical Technicians no longer than 12 months post-discharge.

7. How is the service/program delivered?

VTAP: Services are delivered individually to transitioning service members and their spouses, through workshops and professional development events in collaboration with military installation transition offices and regional partners, and participation within regional and statewide workgroups and committees with a military affairs focus. The current COVID-19 affected environment has prompted the VTAP program to adopt a virtual posture for rendering services.

MMAC: The MMAC Program taps a worldwide pool of Veterans and Transitioning Service Members with direct healthcare experience or those wishing to apply their military experience and education in the healthcare field. Essentially, the MMAC Program serves as a worldwide extension of a healthcare system's HR talent acquisition team.

Potential employment opportunities for MMAC Program applicants are curated by MMAC staff from the on-line career portals at the MMAC Partner Healthcare Systems and V3 healthcare

employers. The applicant is matched by MMAC staff to identified job opportunities and the residential region requested by the applicant. An employment application is then submitted by the MMAC Applicant. The MMAC team then connects with the established HR point of contact at the MMAC Partner Healthcare System/V3 Employer to advocate and share the applicant's background and resume. The employers determine the hiring decisions, the scope of practice, and the education and credentialing timeline. Weekly messages are sent via Constant Contact to MMAC Applicants and Partner Healthcare System to follow up on applicant hiring status.

Total Hires In The Three MMAC Pathways Since First Veteran Hired in February 2017

- Total Hires: 269
- MMAC-Qualified: 108
- No Veteran Left Behind: 119
- Leadership: 42

Cumulative Hires as of October 1, 2020

The bottom line: Almost anywhere in the Commonwealth an MMAC Applicant would like to live or work, thanks to the MMAC Program there is likely an employment opportunity waiting.

8. How does delivering the service/program help Virginia's veterans?

MMAC/VTAP: Virginia's veterans and their families face a myriad of challenges as they make the transition from military to civilian life. Navigating the "sea of goodwill," adjusting culturally from military to civilian life, translating military skills and experience to civilian workforce demand, the perceived loss of stature and/or identity, developing professional networks, and identifying community support to address their unique situations are among them.

Over 200,000 service members and their families make the transition from military to civilian life annually. FY19 military separations data projections from the Department of Defense places the number of transitioning military in Virginia at over 21,000 service members*. Conservative estimates point to, at a minimum, a solid one-third of these service members remaining in Virginia. VTAP's and MMAC's holistic approach to providing transition assistance provides transitioning service members clarity, a sense of direction, renewed purpose, confidence, and a strategic plan to pursue career goals and effectively manage the quality of life concerns.

By providing direct services to transitioning military, recently separated veterans, and military spouses, Virginia's veterans and their families are better educated, equipped, and empowered to pursue and achieve success as they define it. Direct services provided include conducting referrals to vetted resource and direct assistance providers, planning and executing events focused on workforce development, and building and maintaining both pre-existing and new relationships with the public and private sectors. Military installation commanders within Virginia can be assured that a port of entry into Virginia's unique suite of programs, services, and resources exists to assist military families with firmly anchoring themselves for the next leg of their life journeys. **Data provided by the Military-Civilian Transition Office of the Defense Human Resources Activity – U.S. Department of Defense*

9. By helping the veteran, how does it help the Commonwealth?

VTAP/MMAC: Both teams manage on-going efforts to increase the number of veterans connected to their earned benefits, hired by Virginia employers, credentialed or certified in high-demand industries such as healthcare, advanced manufacturing and IT. Virginia as the best destination for military families once their service to our country is complete. Gainfully employed veterans and military spouses positively impact Virginia's economy by expanding the Commonwealth's tax base, purchasing homes, participating in leisure and tourism activities, and attending community colleges and universities. Support of veteran entrepreneurs also creates additional employment opportunities for Virginia's residents.

With incidents of veteran suicide, anxiety, and depression on the rise, gainful and meaningful employment, connections to statewide, regional, and community resources to address these challenges lessen the probability of these occurrences and provides a foundation for affected veterans to move forward. These functions of VTAP and MMAC all work together to produce the effect of stabilizing military families, strengthening the communities in which they live, and increasing the safety and prosperity of all Virginia residents.

With VTAP and MMAC's ability to provide direct referrals of employment-ready veterans to employers, facilitate free recruitment events, and market employment vacancies in all regions of the state, Virginia's employers reduce recruiting costs and commit resources to develop their employees and growing their businesses.

MMAC: The unique and measurable aspect of the MMAC Program is that it not only keeps veterans in Virginia but it draws veterans and transitioning service members from across the globe to come to live and work in the Commonwealth. No other state in the nation offers Medics and Corpsmen the opportunity to temporarily waive the civilian healthcare credentials required for employment while in school to receive those credentials. The veterans hired in healthcare via MMAC directly contribute to the state and local tax base, economy, and community as a whole.

The MMAC Program has actively developed new relationships with major hospital systems to provide an additional solution to their staffing needs. The MMAC Program fosters a new awareness and appreciation of veterans and what they offer the healthcare workplace. It has established a positive reputation, strong public-private relationships, and tangible employment results. These current and future outcomes are built on a solid foundation of relationships, responsiveness, and robust veteran and healthcare employer support.

Each MMAC Applicant hired is estimated to generate at least:

State:	\$2,275 in state tax revenue
State/Local:	\$457 in sales tax revenue
Local:	<u>\$1,928</u> in local tax revenue
Total:	\$4,660

Data Source: JLARC 2018 Report: "Virginia Compared to Other States"

MMAC Healthcare Systems: \$4,129 in savings (cost avoidance) in recruitment costs per hire. Reduction in cost to healthcare partners based on data from 232 MMAC hires. Healthcare partners noted that partnering with MMAC had reduced their hiring cycle time/costs by 50%. Documented Gaps within Existing Military Transition and Suicide Prevention Programs:

“Majority of military families say they lack support upon transitioning out, survey finds.”
<https://www.militarytimes.com/education-transition/2020/06/30/majority-of-military-families-say-they-lack-support-upon-transitioning-out-survey-finds/>

“After years of failure to end the crisis, veteran suicide takes center stage on Capitol Hill”
<https://www.stripes.com/news/veterans/after-years-of-failure-to-end-the-crisis-veteran-suicide-takes-center-stage-on-capitol-hill-1.621428>

“Bill to help reduce and prevent veteran suicides heads to President’s desk for signature”
<https://www.whsv.com/2020/09/24/bill-to-help-reduce-and-prevent-veteran-suicides-heads-to-presidents-desk-for-signature/>

Documented Benefits of Veteran Employment and Entrepreneurship:

“As The Economy Reopens, Look To Veteran-Owned Companies”
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesnonprofitcouncil/2020/08/03/as-the-economy-reopens-look-to-veteran-owned-companies/#4ef038c94728>

“Study Shows Morale and Profits Improve by Hiring Veterans”
<https://blog.seattlepi.com/militarywire/2019/05/14/study-shows-morale-and-profits-improve-by-hiring-veterans/>

10. What is the statutory authority for the service area/program?

VTAP: VDVS proposals for the 2021 Virginia state legislative sessions support the inclusion of VTAP within the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) program. The V3 program’s statutory authority is derived from the Code of Virginia, under § 2.2-2001.2. *Initiatives to reduce unemployment among veterans*. VDVS is proposing to amend this statute with Draft Bill DVS-4, VDVS Services for Transitioning Service Members, Veterans, and Families:

“D. The Department shall develop a comprehensive program to reduce unemployment among veterans by assisting military service members and veterans, and their spouses, in making a successful transition from the military to civilian life in Virginia. Such a program shall assist military service members, veterans, and spouses with civilian employment skills and connections to Virginia education and employment opportunities. The program shall promote strategies and services for connecting transitioning service members, veterans, and spouses to resources in Virginia, to include (i) skills and workforce assessments; (ii) connections to local, regional, state, or federal employment resources; and (iii) a process for employers for hiring transitioning service members, veterans, and spouses through internship and apprenticeship programs.”

MMAC: Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.4. C. *“Military medical personnel may practice and perform certain delegated acts that constitute the practice of medicine or nursing under the supervision of a physician or podiatrist, a Chief Medical Officer/Director or their designee who holds an active, unrestricted license in Virginia. Such activities shall reflect the level of training and experience of the military medical personnel. The supervising physician or podiatrist shall retain responsibility for the care of the patient.”*

11. Where do the resources for the service area/program come from (general fund, non-general fund, donations, etc.?)

VTAP/MMAC: General Funds, appropriated for the Veterans Education, Training, and Employment (VETE) directorate, provides all funding for costs related to VTAP and MMAC and their respective staff.

12. How has COVID-19 impacted the delivery of services? What service adaptations have been made or are planned?

VTAP: Prior to COVID-19, VTAP's Regional Transition Coordinators maintained a physical presence on Virginia's major military installations, throughout the state, and with regional partners to deliver workshops, presentations, and peer-to-peer support to active duty service members and military spouses. Social media and email campaigns supported our outreach efforts and provided additional mediums for maintaining relationships, following up with VTAP clients, and marketing events hosted by VTAP and our regional collaborators. In the current environment, COVID-19 has all but eliminated in-person collaborations and service delivery. Although this trend has started to abate, the ability to directly address large audiences of active duty service members, access to military installation events, and collaborations with regional partners at their locations have been negatively impacted.

These outreach efforts served as the primary catalysts for generating inquiries into VTAP and VDVS programs targeting retiring and separating service members. Military transition assistance programs, pre-separation briefings, and Capstone events have adopted virtual formats to provide their services, the vast majority of military installations have curbed access for non-essential personnel, and regional partners have been slow to regain facility capacity and public access levels in existence prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

VTAP has adapted to COVID-19 protections by adopting virtual delivery mechanisms for its office hours previously held on military installations, VDVS presentations, and workforce development workshops hosted alongside regional partners. VTAP is also focusing additional efforts on maintaining existing relationships with military installations and regional partners via phone, email, and social media, and leveraging existing relationships to develop new relationships with organizations in the military transition, employment, and family support space. Collaborative efforts are underway between VTAP and the VETE directorate's communication team to develop marketing strategies for spreading awareness of VDVS service lines and VTAP. VTAP is also actively pursuing partnerships with the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) and the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to develop additional pipelines of military talent into those organizations. The prestige and abundance of opportunities represented by these organizations will serve as additional avenues of employment for the military community and generate activity within VTAP.

MMAC: In general, the core daily functions and operations of the MMAC Program have not been substantially impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. In fact, this crisis has been the catalyst for new partnerships and veteran employment opportunities. In the initial phase of the outbreak,

as a cost-cutting move most healthcare systems froze hiring, and laid off or reassigned staff. This negatively impacted our hiring numbers and communication with hospital talent acquisition and clinical staff. MMAC is seeing a gradual change in this trend. However, presentations, meetings and client/hospital face-to-face interaction moved to a virtual format.

The MMAC Information Brief Series started at Norfolk Naval Base and Fort Belvoir, as well as one planned for Fort Bragg have been temporality suspended. MMAC is exploring the delivery of the briefings on a virtual platform. MMAC staff and MMAC Partner Healthcare Systems are participating in the US Chamber Foundation/VDVS virtual “Hire Vets Now” hiring events.

13. What are the biggest challenges facing the service area/program at present?

VTAP: Disruptions to the flow of inquiries into VTAP due to military installation restrictions, current staffing levels of VTAP, and state budget shortfalls are the biggest challenges facing VTAP. We are working internally and with the Secretary to address staffing concerns. We are also currently seeking legislative adjustments to the V3 code that will codify the VTAP services and provide clear operating areas between VDVS and the VEC. Commissioner Hess and Commissioner Maxwell are nearing completion of the legislative adjustments, however support during the next legislative session would provide another layer of stability to the program.

MMAC: The MMAC team of three must maintain relationships as well as educate clinical and HR/Talent Acquisition (TA) staff at over 15 major health systems and employers in the Commonwealth of Virginia who collectively have over 100,000 employees. The MMAC team is tasked with educating the clinical and non-clinical staff regarding what the candidates can do and where they fit into their hospitals and physician offices.

Though the team has been very successful at building and maintaining those relationships, it remains difficult to convey MMAC information on a large and effective scale across the major health systems and to those who need the information most, such as registered nurses and physicians.

The MMAC team typically works with TA personnel and at times clinical personnel. Maintaining those relationships can be difficult as TA Points of Contact (POCs) frequently change and few have a succession plan for maintaining relationship continuity.

When an MMAC TA or clinical POC is changed, a new POC may or may not be chosen by the health system. Additionally, if a new person has been designated the “MMAC POC”, they may have very little information about the MMAC Program and will have to be briefed and trained on how the program works, regulatory approvals, and the processes and responsibilities inherent in the partnership.

There were efforts underway this past spring to enhance engagement with the staff and leadership of the MMAC Partner Healthcare Systems. The production of a video targeting clinical staff, a series of on-site MMAC “Lunch and Learn” seminars and, the launch of the proposed “Governor’s Doctor-To-Doctor Challenge” were underway but have been temporarily delayed due to the constraints of COVID-19. However, virtual options are being planned.

14. What strategic opportunities are there for the future?

VTAP: Official partnerships with military transition offices through the U.S. Department of Labor, Virginia DHRM, OPM, and the Virginia Employment Commission represent strategic opportunities for the future of VTAP. The incorporation of initiatives targeting skilled trades, veteran employment in Southwest Virginia, wind energy, and resilience industry careers present additional opportunities for VTAP's strategic growth. VTAP revised its original Virtual Office Hours format, which debuted in May 2020 and provided a more intimate setting for transitioning service members to voice their concerns and receive individualized assistance. The current iteration of this service is the Military Employment Spotlight, a virtual collaboration between the USO Pathfinder Program, VTAP, and a featured V3 certified employer. The average attendance of Military Employment Spotlight events is more than triple what they were for the Virtual Office Hours. The continuation of and growth of this event will also factor into VTAP's strategic growth.

MMAC: Two key strategic opportunities are proposed for the current session of the Virginia General Assembly. DVS-1 would expand the types of healthcare facilities allowed to participate in MMAC and enter into an MMAC MOA to become an MMAC Partner Healthcare System.

A larger pool of MMAC Partner Healthcare Systems offers a wider range of veteran employment opportunities and augments healthcare staffing in a greater number and type of healthcare facilities. This is especially helpful with the DVS/MMAC/healthcare system response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The current language only allows MMAC MOA with hospitals, physician practices that are Professional Corporations, and workplace health facilities with physician supervision. With this change the program could expand the MMAC Program to Urgent Care Centers, Dialysis Centers, specialty surgical practices, and non-profit community clinics. This change would also expand the number of available employment locations where the MMAC applicant lives or may potentially wish to reside.

This legislation would help boost employment among veterans, generate tax revenue, and offset healthcare staffing costs, all while supporting healthcare staffing needs throughout the Commonwealth.

DVS-2 would create additional pathways to employment for former military medical personnel. Not everyone who applies to be part of the MMAC program meets the legislative and regulatory requirements to be considered "MMAC-Qualified" and practice advanced clinical skills without civilian credentials. This proposal would permit DVS to help all veterans who apply to the MMAC program find pathways to employment in the Virginia healthcare sector regardless of their backgrounds or experience. The proposed legislation will more fully utilize the relationships and network of healthcare employers that the MMAC program has built over the past four years.

15. What else do you want the Board to know about this service area?

VTAP: VTAP continues to provide exemplary transition and workforce development services, meaningful referrals to vetted resource providers for direct assistance, and connections to V3 certified employers despite current challenges and limitations. VTAP's Regional Transition Coordinators have maintained their relationships with military installations and regional partners established prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, has expanded its presence in Northern Virginia at Fort Belvoir, and has fielded an increase in inquiries from employers seeking military talent to fill job vacancies.

As of the writing of this report, the average salary reported by VTAP clients is \$84,639.00 for FY21. The three VTAP Regional Coordinators carry current career services, resume writing, and higher education credentials to lend credibility and expertise to the services we provide. For FY20, this small but mighty force reached over 109,000 transitioning military, veterans, and military spouses through outreach and the Transition Connection newsletter, hosted or co-hosted 221 events, conducted 149 visits to military installations, and provided a combined 2,433 responses to inquiries and direct services. VTAP services include career coaching, HVNFP consultation, assistance in locating job opportunities, locating opportunities for credentialing and education programs, referrals to employers, referrals to vetted resource partners to provide direct services, and résumé writing. We provide these services as veterans, members of military families, proud citizens of Virginia, and staunch advocates for our military families.

MMAC: The MMAC Program exemplifies effective legislation that resulted in productive and proactive public-private partnerships. MMAC leads the nation with an innovative and effective approach to addressing two key issues facing the Commonwealth and our country: veteran employment and healthcare staffing shortages.

The program is an example of the successful collaboration of state, local, and federal government agencies, non-profit healthcare associations, Veteran Service Organizations and major healthcare systems. Multiple committed individuals and organizations throughout the Commonwealth work together as a team to serve our citizens, employers, and especially those who served our country.

The quote below from an MMAC Applicant says it best. The VTAP team also receives similar messages on a regular basis from their clients. The quote succinctly illustrates our joint mission and collaboration, and the successful execution of our shared goals.

“This program is so dedicated to the Veteran that it is unbelievable sometimes. Without my job I have now, I would have never known about my new employers’ nursing program that I will be attending. Without MMAC, I would not have the extra income needed to support my family nor myself. MMAC was an opening of one door that led me to a hallway of hundreds of other doors.”