

**TITLE:** Heroes to Healers (H2H)

**DESCRIPTION:** The Academic and Strategic Initiatives Committee received an overview of the new initiative, Heroes to Healers (H2H), which is a two-fold initiative that builds upon credit for prior learning afforded to veterans who have experience in medical training within the 68 MOS series.

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**COMMITTEE'S REVIEW**

The Academic and Strategic Initiatives Committee received this information update at their September 9, 2024, meeting. It will not be covered or presented in detail at the board meeting; however, staff will be available for questions.

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Over 200,000 U.S. military service members transition to civilian life annually, including approximately 3,000 who return to Kentucky. Many veterans with healthcare Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) find their skills do not directly translate to civilian healthcare positions, leading to underemployment or unemployment. Kentucky's healthcare sector, experiencing significant growth and in high demand, represents a promising target industry for these veterans.

The Heroes to Healers (H2H) aims to help those veterans to have accelerated pathways to further healthcare certifications.

Staff are working on proposed legislation that will enable military medics the opportunity to enroll in accelerated bridge programming that yields the credential of a licensed practical nurse and promotes civilian employment while accessing additional educational preparation through postsecondary enrollment. Though the details of the legislation are not yet defined, CPE staff is working with legislators, Kentucky licensure boards, and higher education leadership to develop the project.

A second aspect of Heroes to Healers is a pathway partnership with the Department of Defense (DOD) SkillBridge initiative that will allow veterans with medical training the opportunity to enter the workforce as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) while seeking career credentials and academic pathways as Paramedics. This provision enables veterans to gain civilian healthcare experience and employment as EMTs while simultaneously entering a paramedic education pathway leading to full licensure.

Both aspects break down barriers to employment for our veterans and allow them to leverage their military training and expertise. This initiative also addresses Kentucky's healthcare workforce shortage by allowing for immediate entry into the workforce and exposing veterans to the return on investment afforded by higher education.