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Strengthening the Heart of Health Care

Pumping critical supplies and equipment to medical staff, logistics is the heart of any health care system. To broaden their team’s knowledge of logistics strategies and supporting fields and technologies, the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) sent a number of its early-career logisticians through the IDB’s Logistics for the 21st Century (Log21) program. Through feedback, the VA learned that while participants found the course was highly valuable, they were eager for more information related to their highly specialized medical services industry.

CHALLENGE

Based on this feedback, the VA wanted to blend the logistics fundamentals taught in Log21 with curriculum specific to the medical field. They also wanted this customized program to attract medical logisticians from the government, military and private industry.

SOLUTION

The IDB partnered with experienced VA logisticians to develop Medical Logistics for the 21st Century (MedLog21), bringing logistics professionals in the medical services industry together to explore practical tools, learn new skills, and develop a deeper understanding of business practices and processes driving the future of medical logistics.

Through close observation of the organizational culture of the VA, the IDB was able to design a course that addressed topics in direct support of the VA’s mission, such as private sector panels, demand planning, budgeting and forecasting, inventory management, intra-agency communications, and new medical technologies.

RESULTS

- Improvement of materiel forecasting and deployment for effective and efficient operations
- Practice with process analysis frameworks to identify constraints which can be addressed and resolved
- Return to organizations with new tools and knowledge for implementing “pilot” programs for change
- Learn from private sector innovation found at IDB partners like Carolinas Healthcare Systems, UNC Hospitals, and national pharmaceutical companies
- Preparation and delivery of critical communications within the agency