



Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs *Good News*



Volume 2 Issue 4

Welcome to Good News. This Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) newsletter highlights the accomplishments and sharing activities at both the local and national levels.

Real Warriors Campaign Launches to Dispel the Stigma of Mental Health

On May 21, 2009, the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE) launched a multiyear public education campaign to combat the stigma associated with seeking psychological health care and treatment and encourage service members to increase their awareness and use of these resources.

The Real Warriors Campaign will encourage warriors, veterans and their families to overcome this stigma associated with psychological health care. The campaign will promote the processes of building resilience, facilitating recovery and supporting reintegration for those with psychological wounds via the interactive campaign Web site, www.realwarriors.net, and radio and television public service announcements.

To reach the broadest audience possible, the campaign features a variety of strategies including outreach and partnerships, print materials, media outreach, an interactive Web site and social media tools. The campaign includes real service members who have sought treatment and are continuing to maintain successful military or civilian careers.

In addition, DCoE established the DCoE Outreach Center, a 24/7 call center staffed by health resource consultants to provide confidential answers, tools, tips and resources about psychological health issues and traumatic brain injury. The Outreach Center can be reached toll-free at 866-966-1020 or via e-mail at resources@dcoeoutreach.org.

"We must encourage warriors who experience emotional or psychological health wounds to seek professional treatment, and reducing the stigma associated with seeking such care is crucial," said BG. Loree K. Sutton, M.D. BG Sutton is the highest ranking psychiatrist in the Army and director of DCoE.

Advances in Cancer Treatment at David Grant Medical Center Joint Venture

Veterans and active-duty service members dealing with cancer are on the verge of getting better treatment at David Grant Medical Center thanks to a new linear accelerator going online soon. "This allows us to treat any cancer that we can target," said Lt. Col. (Dr.) Roland Engel,

radiation oncology element chief at David Grant. "This brings us to state-of-the-art." The machine, designed by Varian Medical Systems of Palo Alto, is capable of specifically pinpointing the cancer to be treated by radiation from different angles as part of the machine revolves around the patient. It can also vary the amount of radiation put out as needed to protect tissue that the doctors don't want affected. "It is a big leap forward, giving what modern technology can give to the treatment of patients," Engel said. "We are pretty excited about this." The new linear accelerator has been made possible by a long-standing and expanding partnership between David Grant Medical Center and VA. This is just the latest of a series of joint ventures between the Air Force hospital and VA to treat active duty service members and the region's veterans.

The VA will provide the personnel to operate the linear accelerator while the Air Force provides the medical personnel and the facility. A proposal to replace the hospital's current 20-year-old machine was started in 2004. Not long after, funding for joint projects came available so David Grant and VA teamed up to get a second linear accelerator that will be even more advanced than the one being brought online now. David Grant is in the process of testing the new linear accelerator and expects to start treating patients soon. The hospital's older machine will stay around a few more months before it is removed and replaced with a second new linear accelerator, according to Engel. "The older machine is incapable of being upgraded," Engel said. More than half the patients that Engel is treating are veterans. Without the VA as a partner, David Grant would not have been able to get the new machinery which will allow the hospital to better treat patients, Engel said.

Las Vegas Joint Facility Training

The clinical, nursing and administrative staff at Mike O'Callaghan Federal Hospital (MOFH) in Las Vegas, NV recently underwent a week of intensive training called TeamSTEPPS to support patient safety and clinical operations. TeamSTEPPS was developed by the DoD Patient Safety Program in collaboration with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. One hundred eighty-six VA and AF staff members now routinely utilize TeamSTEPPS tools in response to patient safety event reports and as action plans for Root Cause Analyses, spreading these evidence-based interventions throughout the organization. The collective AF and VA staff also utilize the Universal Protocol and the "time out" process in the delivery of care and treatment to their patients. They demonstrate that the consistent application of these safety processes has enhanced their collective patient safety efforts in the delivery of health care services to their VA and DoD beneficiaries at the MOFH.

For questions please contact the appropriate point of contact below.

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If you have any good news stories and or accomplishments from your local teams, please send them to Maura Brady at maura.brady.ctr@tma.osd.mil and your stories may be included in a future issue of the newsletter.