

THE MAGAZINE OF MILITARY HOUSING, LODGING & LIFESTYLES

DEFENSE COMMUNITIES

SUMMER 2016

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Corvias and the Air Force partner
to improve family housing





Critical Care

Across Army installations, newly redesigned health-care facilities are delivering superior medical care to those who need it most

By JoAnne Castagna



cause great anxiety, stress, and depression—complicating their health conditions further.”

Requiring injured Soldiers to be relocated to a major medical facility to receive specialty care may now be a thing of the past. The U.S. Army Medical Department Activity has redesigned its health-care services so that Soldiers may remain at their duty station (installation) with their unit and family members and still promptly receive the critical medical care they require. The new health-care service is available at Fort Drum, home of the 10th Mountain Division (LI), one of the most deployed divisions in the U.S. Army.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, recently completed the construction of two medical clinics on Fort Drum, which will implement the new program design for health-care services. “Many studies have shown that people who are undergoing a healing process or who are trying to recover, that their stress level is directly affected by their ability to heal, so anything we can do to lower stress is just going to be better for the patient,” said Gonzales.

The two new facilities are the Bowe Troop Medical Clinic and the Soldier Specialty Care Clinic. Both facilities were constructed by contractor Structural Associates Inc., of Syracuse, New York, under the management of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The clinics are an integral part of the existing medical complex on the installation, and were added to facilitate the new Soldier health-care design and support medical readiness. The 23,000-square-foot clinics were constructed with energy-efficient features, rendering them LEED-Silver certifiable.

Bowe Troop Medical Clinic

The Bowe Troop Medical Clinic is a one-stop medical clinic where Soldiers receive both primary care and medical readiness services. The clinic also provides medical care for American and Canadian Air Force Service members. The clinic includes 16 examination rooms, a radiology department, a medical records department, a laboratory, a procedure room, and a triage area. “

When a Soldier comes in to see us, we can usually get that Soldier an appointment within 24 hours,” said Major Tranessia M. Hanson, Chief, Bowe Troop Medical Clinic Complex. “You don’t see this type of care in a lot of places. In the past, this would take three days, and now we can get treatment in less than 24 hours.” Soldiers who are patients at this clinic and may need additional medical care will receive a referral and treatment at the recently completed Soldier Specialty Care Clinic.

Soldier Specialty Care Clinic

The Soldier Specialty Care Clinic is connected to the Guthrie Ambulatory Healthcare Clinic and provides

When Soldiers leave home to fight for their country, many return with a variety of injuries. “To get critical health treatment, many Soldiers have to be transferred to a large medical facility like Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland,” said Staff Sergeant Elizandro Gonzales, noncommissioned officer in charge of occupational therapy at Fort Drum, New York, Medical Department Activity. “Often, the relocation to a medical center results in separation from their units and uprooting their families so they can remain together. This can



Photos: JoAnne Castagna, Public Affairs.

(TOP LEFT) The Bowe Troop Medical Clinic. This clinic provides primary care and medical readiness for Soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division and Air force stationed at Fort Drum.

(TOP RIGHT) Soldiers sitting in the waiting room of The Bowe Troop Medical Clinic

(LEFT) The Living Room is where some of the daily activities which are part of the occupational therapy are conducted in the Soldiers Specialty Care Clinic at Fort Drum. Designed as a fully functional home setting (which includes a kitchen), therapists help Soldiers perform self-care tasks so they can gain their independent again. The clinic provides several occupational therapy services all under one roof to include Orthopedic, Traumatic Brain Injury and Warrior Transition Battalion.

occupational therapy services and traumatic brain injury (TBI) care. "Soldiers can receive functional fitness treatment, which will allow them to return to duty faster and better," said Gonzales. "They can receive both functional and capacity evaluations, which are assessments of their capability to perform. This has implications. It can return a Soldier to duty with a better explanation for his or her chain of command of their capabilities, or it can provide a medical board a very clear picture of the deficits that these Soldiers have."

The Soldiers who come to this clinic benefit greatly because the facility is consolidated and offers three occupational therapies in one building, said Gonzales. "In the past, Soldiers needing a variety of treatments would have to go to different medical centers spread out on the installation. Now all occupational therapy treatment is under one roof," said Gonzales. "This allows for interspecialty consultation. A provider from the TBI section, who suspects that a patient might benefit from something the orthopedic section has to offer, can just walk right down the hallway. They can consult with the providers in each section and come up with a better, clearer treatment plan. This holistic approach will be more effective in returning the Soldiers back to duty or more quickly return them to a level of independence they may not currently have."

Helping Soldiers during the recovery process requires a

variety of techniques and practices. One of the treatments includes occupational therapy, practicing everyday life activities using the newly designed Daily Living Room. "This is a room that is set up like a functioning home and helps Soldiers practice performing self-care tasks, including bathing, eating, grooming, feeding, and taking care of others. Health-care providers work with Soldiers, sometimes with the assistance of family members, and help them practice daily activities, such as making the bed or coffee and cooking dinner. Just outside the Daily Living Room is a Healing Garden where Soldiers can rest before or after therapy. The garden also is part of the Army's new health-care design.

"We want Soldiers to be in an environment that is conducive to their rehabilitation and guided by skilled therapy staff, which is what we have here," said Gonzales. "Overall, it's going to be much better for our Soldiers. This facility is one of the redesigned Army-wide health-care facilities. It is exciting to be able to better serve and care for our Soldiers." ■

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