



“WRAIR Forward”

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COMMANDER’S CORNER

There are several benefits associated with having a research lab in Europe. First, being in Europe allows our unit to capture accurate data about Soldier health utilization because Soldiers in Europe typically receive care only from the military medical health care system – this is particularly true of mental health care. Second, the unit is geographically close to Soldiers and to places such as Iraq and Afghanistan where conflicts are being fought. Third, being in Europe provides many opportunities to learn about programs in other countries, and to collaborate and share information with researchers and practitioners in these countries. That unit members take this latter task to heart is evident from this current issue of the *WRAIR Forward*.

-LTC Paul D. Bliese

On Point: Testing the Short Screen

Re-Validating the USAREUR Short Form



11D Soldiers participating in the post-deployment psychological screen.

As part of an ongoing research program dedicated to developing a short, valid, and cost-effective method of psychologically screening military personnel following combat deployment, US

Army Medical Research Unit-Europe (USAMRU-E) science staff members put the items in the USAMRU-E short screen to the test. From May 18 to May 24, Soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division (11D) who had been deployed to Iraq completed an expanded version of the US Army, Europe (USAREUR) post-deployment psychological screen. The psychological screen consists of a survey assessing symptoms of post-traumatic stress, depression, relationship problems, alcohol problems, and anger problems. Each of these areas has been found in previous studies to reflect common concerns of Soldiers redeploying from combat. The second part of the screening conducted by USAMRU-E involved a brief structured interview. Soldiers were interviewed if they indicated they would like to speak to a counselor, if they scored high on one of the symptom scales, or if they were randomly selected for an interview. The goal of the interview is to determine whether follow-up mental health services are recommended.

Of the 641 Soldiers screened by USAMRU-E staff in May (see accompanying photo), 329 Soldiers (or 51.3% of the sample) were interviewed. The data from these interviews will be used to guide the selection of survey items for future psychological screens and to guide cut-off points to help medical personnel screen Soldiers effectively at post-deployment. (Protocol #889)

Research Team: Integrating Assets. Coordination for the data collection included a meeting in Schweinfurt with the 1-4 CAV CDR in early April (LTC Bliese, Dr. Kathleen Wright [project Principal Investigator], & SGT Deena Carr) and follow-up training of clinical team members in Schweinfurt and Würzburg (SGT Carr & Ms. Rachel Prayner). The research team consisted of USAMRU-E staff LTC Bliese, Dr. Wright, Dr. Amy Adler, CPT Oscar Cabrera, SGT Carr, SPC Nicol Sinclair, Ms. Prayner, Ms. Angela Salvi, Ms. Christina



CPT Johnson, 11D Psychologist, and USAMRU-E research associates Ms. Prayner and Ms. Salvi (left to right) process screening data on-site.

Terra and Mr. Lance Rahey. Clinical support was provided by 11D Division Mental Health CPT Robert Johnson and SGT Darnell Dobbins; LTC Frederick DuBois, Chief, Social Work Services, HMEDDAC, Heidelberg;

MAJ Stephen Franco, Chief, Health Psychology, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, and SPC Keisha Ferguson, PFC

Sean Carr, and PFC Alexcis Ku, Department of Psychiatry, WMEDDAC, Würzburg. The data collection included a brief back to LTC Chevalier, Commander, 1-4 CAV (25 MAY 05).

Unique Contribution to Screening Research. This study is the third in a series of validation studies. These studies differ from the traditional screening procedure in that the interviewers do not know how Soldiers scored on the psychological screen. By using this kind of research design, researchers are able to compare the scores on the survey with the interviewer’s recommendation. Such a comparison leads to the refinement of the screen for a valid and relevant set of questions for Soldiers.

This most recent round of screening was also unique in that a series of questions that assess sleep problems was included, and Soldiers had the chance to provide feedback on the screening process as part of a program evaluation.

USAMRU-E’s screening work has already led to innovations in screening methods, including a USAREUR Policy Directive that cites the unit’s work. This directive, published 7 JUN 05, requires screening at 3-6 months post-deployment. USAMRU-E’s screening research supports these current screening requirements and provides a basis from which to make future recommendations for the optimal development of a military-wide psychological screening program.

San Antonio Conference: Screening Highlighted

Walter Reed Army Institute of Research scientists COL Charles Hoge, Director, Division of Neuropsychiatry and Neuroscience, and LTC Paul Bliese, Commander, USAMRU-E, presented research related to screening and post-deployment Soldier mental health at a meeting of General Officers. The meeting, called by LTG Kevin Kiley, The Army Surgeon General, was designed to establish a comprehensive behavioral support plan for the Army (26 APR 05).

ATO

Review of Research

USAMRU-E's research is a component of the Army Technology Objective (ATO) “Interventions to

enhance soldier resilience and prevent psychiatric casualties”. USAMRU-E, together with the Department of Military Psychiatry, WRAIR, conduct studies that address the goals of this research program. On 27 MAY 05, the ATO was reviewed by a panel of experts selected by the American Institute for Biological Sciences (AIBS). The Washington, DC review included presentations on the ATO's screening and intervention research program (LTC Bliese, Dr. Adler, & Dr. Wright). Following the AIBS review, the ATO steering committee met to provide feedback and prioritize research efforts. (28 JUN 05).

Conference Presentations

Spring Medical Surgical/Behavioral Science Conference in Sonthofen, Germany (17-21 APR 05)

- LTC Bliese presented on “Psychological Screening: Development, Validation, and Latest Findings” in one of the meeting's plenary sessions
- LTC Bliese presented on “Modeling the Role of Organizational Variables in US Army Research on Psychological Health”
- Dr. Adler presented on “Psychological Debriefing Effectiveness: Research Initiatives and Challenges”



Society for Industrial-Organizational Psychology Meeting in Los Angeles, CA (15-17 APR 05)

Presentations:

- Bliese, P.D., panelist, in G. Chen (Chair), *Homology Models: Generalizing Organizational Theories and Practices to New Levels*
- Chen, G., Ployhart, R.E., & Bliese, P.D. Explaining Turnover Intentions: Changes Over Time in Job Attitudes Matter, in G.L. Stewart (Chair), *Modeling Dynamic Criteria: New Insights for Theories Involving Longitudinal Change*.

Posters:

- Ippolito, J., Thomas, J.L., Bliese, P.D., & Adler, A.B. *Variations on the Demands-Control Model: Examining Role Clarity and Gender*.
- Adams, G.A., Woolf, J.L., Castro, C.A., & Adler, A.B. *Leadership, Family Supportive Organizational Perceptions and Work-Family Conflict*.

Military Family Conference

LTC Bliese served as a subject matter expert for the USAREUR conference entitled “Deployments as a Family Affair - Lessons Learned”. The conference was organized by the USAREUR G1 as a way to capture information to help improve support to families and Soldiers during and following deployments (Heidelberg, 9-10 MAY 05).

Continued Innovation in Stats

LTC Bliese, serving as COR for a grant to design mathematical algorithms for estimating random coefficient models, met with representatives from Toyon Corporation and the University of Wisconsin, in Santa Barbara, CA. (16-18 JUN 05).

Update on Psychophysiology

Dr. Bernd Johannes, scientist at the German Space Agency, and Mr. Frank Fisher, visited the unit to coordinate technology updates for assessing psychophysiological activity in response to stress (31 MAY – 2 JUN 05).

NEW PUBLICATION

Adler, A.B., Huffman, A.H., Bliese, P.D.; Castro, C.A. (2005) The impact of deployment length and experience on the well-being of male and female soldiers. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*. 10(2), 121-137.



International Science Activities

The USAMRU-E science team participated in numerous international meetings involving exchange of information, and collaborations on screening, measures, and early intervention research plans. These exchanges included:

NATO Research and Technical Task Group 020 meeting (11-14 APR 05) in Quebec City, Canada (LTC Bliese & Dr. Adler, 05).



The Technical Cooperation Program

(TTCP) meeting of Action Group 21 (4-7 MAY 05) in Portsmouth, UK (LTC Castro, Chief, Department of Military Psychiatry, WRAIR, & Dr. Adler).

NATO Advanced Research Workshop on Novel Approaches to the Diagnosis and Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (13-15 JUN 05), Cavtat-Dubrovnik, Croatia (Dr. Adler).

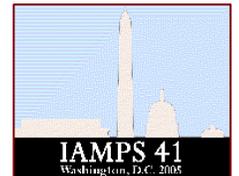
- Hacker Hughes, J., Adler, A.B., Tichy, V., & Cuvelier, Y. RTG 020: *Stress and Psychological Support on Modern Military Operations*.
- Bliese, P.B., Wright, K.M., Adler, A.B., & Thomas, J.L. *Psychological Screening Validation with Soldiers Returning from Combat*.

World Congress on Military Medicine (6-10 JUN 05), St - Petersburg, Russia (LTC Bliese).

- LTC Bliese presented: *Psychological Screening: Validation Studies, Key Findings and Future Directions*

International Applied Military Psychology Symposium (IAMPS)

on Ensuring Psychological Readiness and Resilience for Deployed Forces (23-27 May 05). Washington, D.C. Chaired by LTC Carl Castro, CPT (P) Jeffrey Thomas (research psychologist, Department of Military Psychiatry), & Dr. Adler



- Bliese, P.B., Wright, K.M., Adler, A.B., & Thomas, J.L. (2005, May). *Psychological Screening Validation with Soldiers Returning from Combat*.
- Gonzales-Morales, M.G., Bliese, P.D., Wright, K.M., & Thomas, J.L. *Collective Efficacy, Cohesion, and Leadership Perceptions at Post-Deployment: Effects on Soldiers' Anger*.

European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology

- Gonzales-Morales, M.G., Bliese, P.D., Thomas, J.L. & Wright, K.M. *Interpersonal Conflict and Two Levels of Supervisory Leadership Perceptions: Effects on Psychological Health*.

Personnel Updates

Ms. Christina Terra, research associate, joined the unit as a CACI contractor (6 MAY 05).

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