



“WRAIR Forward”

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COMMANDER’S CORNER

As I approach one year in command of USAMRU-E, I look back and am amazed at how fast this first year has gone and how impressed I am with what the staff has accomplished. Some of the highlights include taking part in the Mental Health Advisory Team (MHAT V) mission in Afghanistan; completing the first phase of the post-deployment writing study; conducting multiple training sessions on Battlemind; briefing US and foreign mental health professional on leadership, Battlemind, and other mental health topics; and continuing to publish cutting edge research in peer reviewed journals. I look forward to the next few years.

-MAJ Dennis McGurk

NEW USAMRU-E PUBLICATIONS

Reporting research results in peer-reviewed journals is one of the hallmarks of science. Each of the publications highlighted in this WRAIR *Forward* focuses on applied military psychology problems, supporting screening best practices for service members at post-deployment, assessing the effectiveness of early intervention, identifying leadership needs for mental health training, and determining the appropriateness of PTSD diagnostic criteria for Soldiers returning from combat. Such publications demonstrate the USAMRU-E’s commitment to research excellence.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POST-DEPLOYMENT SCREENING: HOW TO ADDRESS KEY DOMAINS AFTER COMBAT

Wright, K.M., Adler, A.B., Bliese, P.D., & Eckford, R.D. (2008). Structured clinical interview guide for post-deployment psychological screening programs. *Military Medicine*, 173,411-421.



DIAGNOSTIC CRITERION FOR COMBAT-RELATED PTSD: A2 CRITERION NOT VALID FOR COMBAT VETERANS

Adler, A.B., Wright, K.M., Bliese, P.D., Eckford, R., & Hoge, C.W. (2008). A2 diagnostic criterion for combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 21, 301-308.



MILITARY RESEARCH PSYCHOLOGY TALK

MAJ McGurk presented initial findings from the post-deployment writing study at the 71F meeting of the Army’s research psychologists (Washington, DC; 24-25 APR 08).

LEBANON REQUESTS BATTLEMIND TRAINING



At the request of the Lebanese government, two US Battlemind Training experts were sent to Beirut, Lebanon to provide training and a programmatic overview. MAJ McGurk presented on Battlemind Training and Lessons Learned from Iraq and Afghanistan to Lebanese military mental health professionals on 19-21 APR 08.

ADDITIONAL USAMRU-E PUBLICATIONS:

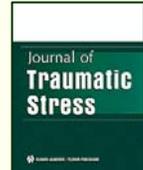
NEW PCL CUT-OFFS AND PTSD SHORT SCREEN: LOWER CUT-OFFS FOR SCREENING CONTEXT

Bliese, P. D., Wright, K. M., Adler, A. B., Cabrera, O., Castro, C. A., & Hoge, C. W. (2008). Validating the PC-PTSD and the PTSD checklist with soldiers returning from combat. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 76, 272-281.



RANDOMIZED TRIAL OF PEACEKEEPER DEBRIEFING: NO NEGATIVE OUTCOMES & SOLDIERS PREFER IT

Adler, A. B., Litz, B.T., Castro, C.A., Suvak, M., Thomas, J.L., Burrell, L., McGurk, D., Wright, K.M. & Bliese, P.D. (2008). Group Randomized Trial of Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Provided to US Peacekeepers. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 21, 253-263.



NATO SURVEY OF MILITARY LEADERS: LEADERS WANT MORE PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAINING

Adler, A.B., Cawkill, P., van den Berg, C., Arvers, P., Puente, J., & Cuvelier, Y. (2008). International Military Leader’s Survey on Operational Stress. *Military Medicine*, 173, 10-16.



MHAT V PRESENTED IN UK

Findings from the Mental Health Advisory Team (MHAT V) report were presented at the annual UK Defence Mental Health Conference in Gosport, England (16-17 JUN 08).

Bliese, P.B., Thomas, J.L., McBride, S.B., & McGurk, D., Mental Health Advisory Team V (MHAT V) OIF and OEF Brief.

USAMRU-E COMPLETES INITIAL PHASE OF POST-DEPLOYMENT WRITING STUDY

USAMRU-E completed the initial phase of a new Battlemind Study designed to assess the efficacy of emotional writing on the adjustment of Soldiers recently returned from 15 months in Iraq (#1171). Updates on this study include:

- The initial data collection was completed 1-3 APR 08.
- In all, 1,663 Soldiers participated in the study.
- COL Sinclair, commander, 172nd INF BDE, was briefed on initial findings by Dr. Adler and MAJ McGurk (14 APR 08).
- The follow-up data collection is scheduled for July 2008.

SLEEP MEDIATES POST-COMBAT HEALTH

Results from WRAIR’s Land Combat Study found that sleep problems mediate post-combat psychopathology.

- Picchioni, D., Cabrera, O., McGurk, D., Thomas, J., Castro, C., Balkin, T., Bliese, P., & Hoge, C. (2007). Sleep pathology is a partial mediator between stress and psychopathology in combat veterans [Abstract]. *Sleep*, 30, A338-A339.

SUPPORTING THE US ARMY, EUROPE

- MAJ Hill, psychiatrist, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC), visited the unit to discuss research (5 MAY 08).
- Dr. Wright consulted on US Army, Europe’s (USAREUR’s) revised post-deployment reintegration guide (30 MAY 08).
- USAMRU-E coordinated/facilitated a presentation to Dutch military mental health professionals by Dr. Brown, psychologist, LRMC (21 MAY 08).
- MAJ McGurk coordinated and participated in a teleconference between COL Johansen, psychiatrist, LRMC, and LTC Bliese, WRAIR, in preparation for the Mental Health Advisory Team VI mission to Iraq (11 JUN 08).



MEETINGS FOCUS ON INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH

Technical Panel 13 (“Psychological Health and Operational Effectiveness”), a 5-nation research group within The Technical and Cooperation Program (TTCP), met 19-23 MAY 08. The US is represented by COL Castro (TP-13 Chair), Dr. Adler, and LTC Hull (DoD). Several projects have resulted from TP-13, including a study assessing the efficacy of post-deployment Battlemind Training in the UK (Victoria, BC, Canada).

In support of this project, COL Castro and Dr. Adler spent a day presenting Battlemind to UK military mental health providers at King’s College in London (19-20 JUN 08). They then met with the research team, led by UK SURG CDR Greenberg, to discuss methodological issues and ways of adapting the US training to a UK military audience.

MILITARY OPERATIONAL MEDICINE PLANS

COL Castro, Research Area Director for Military Operational Medicine (RAD3), Medical Research and Materiel Command, and RAD3 staff MAJ Rule and Dr. Hall met with MAJ McGurk, Dr. Wright, Dr. Adler and CPT Cabrera to discuss programmatic plans (Heidelberg; 14-17 APR 08).

In addition, Dr. Adler attended the Integrating Integrated Product Plan meeting hosted by the RAD3, as a representative of the research program’s steering committee (Fort Detrick, MD; 22-24 APR 08).

BELGIAN MILITARY INVITES USAMRU-E TO PRESENT



At the invitation of the Belgian military, MAJ McGurk and Dr. Adler presented at the 10th anniversary celebration of the military’s mental readiness advisors hosted by Commandant van den Berge at the Military Academy in Brussels (3 JUN 08).

- Adler, A.B., Bliese, P.D., & McGurk, D. (2008, June). Leadership and the Psychological Fitness of US Soldiers Deployed to Combat.

BATTELMIND TRAINING SYSTEM UPDATE

The 2nd Battlemind Training program meeting was held in New Orleans (13-14 MAY 08). The meeting goal was to integrate efforts of the Army Medical Department’s Battlemind Training office, WRAIR’s Battlemind Transition office, and WRAIR’s Battlemind researchers. MAJ McGurk and Dr. Adler provided the group with an overview of Battlemind Training research.

COLLABORATING ON SCIENCE

Several projects were the focus of collaborative meetings among WRAIR scientists:

- LTC Bliese, Chair, Department of Military Psychiatry, WRAIR, met with USAMRU-E science staff to collaborate on 8 writing and research projects including Battlemind validation papers, an upcoming book, and a manuscript on pre-deployment risk factors (7-11 APR 08; 16-20 JUN 08)
- COL Hoge, Director, Division of Psychiatry and Neurosciences, WRAIR, met with Dr. Adler and Dr. Wright to collaborate on Advanced Battlemind as well as two writing projects (23-27 JUN 08).
- COL Hoge also met with Dr. Adler in Silver Spring, MD to work on Advanced Battlemind (21 APR 08).
- COL Castro and Dr. Adler worked on developing a new Battlemind Training project for basic training (Victoria, BC, Canada; 24-25 MAY 08)

BUDGET DETAILS FOCUS OF VISIT TO DC

MAJ McGurk and Mr. Rahey, budget officer, USAMRU-E, met with WRAIR and MRMC staff to discuss budget and contracting issues (Silver Spring, MD & Fort Detrick, MD; 28 & 29 APR 08).

PERSONNEL UPDATES

- CPT Cabrera PCSed from the unit back to the Department of Military Psychiatry, WRAIR (17 JUN 08).
- Mr. Terry joined the unit as a CACI contractor (28 APR 08).
- Ms. Eckford completed the Warrior Transition Training course hosted by the Army Center for Enhanced Performance (Heidelberg; 24-25 JUN 08).

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