



“WRAIR Forward”

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COMMANDER’S CORNER



The USAMRU-E staff has been phenomenal in supporting me and my family in our transition to Germany. I feel particularly lucky to be returning to my hometown and look forward to providing my family the same opportunities to explore Europe that I had growing up in Heidelberg. The transition has

been a whirlwind! Less than a month after assuming command, I had the privilege of serving on the first Joint Mental Health Advisory Team 7 (J-MHAT 7) led by COL Bliese, former Commander of USAMRU-E. During the mission to Afghanistan (see column at right), I was impressed by how many USAMRU-E initiatives have had a direct impact on behavioral healthcare and training. I look forward to joining the USAMRU-E team in conducting operationally-relevant research promoting the well-being and performance of Soldiers across the deployment cycle.

-LTC Maurice Sipos

INITIAL OFFICER TRAINING EVALUATED

Dr. Adler briefed LTG Hertling, Deputy Commanding General - Initial Military Training, TRADOC, on the Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC-B) program evaluation of resilience training (19 JUL 10; Hampton, VA). The briefing was conducted together with a TRADOC team that included COL (Ret) Weafer, Combined Arms Center, and representatives from the two program evaluation sites. The brief emphasized that:

- 2LTs found the resilience skill training useful and relevant to their role as leaders;
- 2LTs reported using resilience skills frequently, particularly after stressful training events.

After the brief, LTG Hertling decided that 10 hours of resilience training would be set aside for BOLC-B. Dr. Adler then worked with TRADOC staff to standardize the 10-hour program of instruction (10-11 AUG 10; Ft. Leavenworth, KS).

OTHER RESILIENCE TRAINING INITIATIVES

- Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) invited Dr. Adler, along with MAJ(P) McGurk, to meet and discuss CSF implementation (4 AUG 10; Philadelphia, PA) and provide consultation on the development of social fitness training and research (27 SEP 10; Silver Spring, MD).
- WRAIR scientists (including Dr. Adler) met with COL Castro, Director, Military Operational Medicine Research Program, Medical Research and Materiel Command, to review Advanced Resilience Training (24 AUG 10; Frederick, MD).
- MAJ(P) McGurk, with support from, Dr. Adler, presented a pilot version of “Spouse Resilience Training” for the deployment cycle at the Master Resilience Trainer course for Army Community Services (25 AUG 10; Philadelphia, PA).

J-MHAT 7 DEPLOYS TO AFGHANISTAN

LTC Sipos deployed to Afghanistan from 27 JUL to 15 SEP 10 in support of the first Joint Mental Health Advisory Team 7 (J-MHAT 7) to Operation Enduring Freedom. The J-MHAT 7 is the first Mental Health Advisory Team to have joint representation.

The J-MHAT team collected surveys from Army and Marine maneuver unit platoons across the Afghanistan Theater of Operations. The team processed and analyzed survey data, conducted focus group interviews with Soldiers, Marines, and behavioral healthcare personnel, and wrote the technical briefing and draft report before leaving theater.

The results are being briefed to senior military leadership and the final report of the findings is being completed. Previous MHAT reports are available on-line at:

<http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/reports/mhat/mhat.html>



J-MHAT 7 (LEFT TO RIGHT): CDR ADAMS, LTC SIPOS, COL BLIESE, SGT POLK, MAJ HEINSEN, CPT EDENS, LTCOL SLACK, AND SGT MCGINNIS

INVITED TALK TO IRISH DEFENCE FORCES

Dr. Adler and MAJ(P) McGurk (WRAIR) provided a full-day presentation on the US Army’s Resilience Training program to mental health providers and policy makers of the Irish Defence Force (IDF) and Blue Lights (emergency services) (14-16 JUL 10; Dublin, Ireland). They also met with Brigadier General Michael Finn, IDF Assistant Chief of Staff, and Assistant Secretary General for the Department of Defence Kieran Murphy.



DIFFERENT TRAJECTORIES OF PTSD SYMPTOMS DOCUMENTED

(New Publication)

Dickstein, B.D., Suvak, M., Litz, B.T., & Adler, A.B. (2010). Heterogeneity in the Course of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: Trajectories of Symptomatology. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 23, 331–339.



FORCE HEALTH PROTECTION



CPT Wood presented a paper that demonstrated that combat experiences did not result in benefit finding once Soldiers had been deployed for at least 6 months. This and other papers were presented at the Force Health Protection conference held in Phoenix, AZ (9-14 AUG 2010).

Wood, M. D., Britt, T. W., Wright, K. M., Bliese, P. D., & Klocko, R. P. (2010, August). *Limitations of Benefit Finding as a Buffer to War Stress*. Force Health Protection Conference, Phoenix, AZ.

Other presentations with USAMRU-E authors included:

McGurk, D., Wright, K.M., Wood, M.D., Edens, E., Eckford, R.D., & Salvi, A. (2010, August). *U.S. Army Europe Behavioral Health Assessment Program*.

Kim, P. Y., Britt, T. W., Klocko, R., Riviere, L., & Adler, A. (2010, August). *Beyond Stigma: Negative Attitudes about Treatment Predict Which Military Veterans Seek Needed Mental Health Treatment*.

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATION

This year's American Psychological Association convention included several products featuring USAMRU-E authors (10-14 AUG 10; San Diego, CA).



In a symposium entitled "Mental Fitness Training during Basic Combat Training", chaired by Dr. Adler, talks highlighted WRAIR's two group randomized trials conducted last year with the Army Center for Enhanced Performance and the Research Triangle Institute:

- Adler, A. B., McGurk, D., Williams, J. A., Rinehart, M., & Bliese, P. D. (2010, August). Psychological Resilience in Basic Combat Training: A Group Randomized Trial.
- Holliday, B., Csoka, L., Harada, C., Hammermeister, J., Pickering, M. A., Thomas, T., Bruns, M., & Adler, A. B. (2010, August). Mental Skills Training to Improve Soldier Performance: Development and Implementation.
- Hammermeister, J., Pickering, M. A., Holliday, B., Williams, J., Harada, C., Ohlson, C., Csoka, L., & Adler, A. B. (2010, August). Mental Skills in Basic Combat Training: A Group Randomized Trial.

In a symposium on *Novel measures of soldiers' post-deployment functioning* chaired by Dr. Riviere and MAJ Thomas (Military Psychiatry Branch, WRAIR), Dr. Adler served as the discussant. Talks featuring USAMRU-E authors included:

- Kim, P. Y., Britt, T. W., Klocko, R., Riviere, L., & Adler, A. (2010, August). *Beyond Stigma: Negative Attitudes and Treatment Seeking Among Combat Soldiers*.
- Riviere, L. A., Merrill, J. A., Wilk, J. E., Edens, E. N., & Adler, A. B. (2010, August). *Risk Behaviors among U.S. Soldiers*.

CONSULTING ON REINTEGRATION

Dr. Wright consulted with Dr. Beech, Lead Coordinator for reintegration plans for the 173rd ABCT, on results of assessment of 172nd BCT reintegration strategies (24 AUG 10).

Dr. Wright also continued working with Soldier and Family Support Services, ERMIC, to obtain archived data for the command-directed assessment project of post-deployment behavioral health strategies.

INVITED TALK TO USAREUR LEADERS



Dr. Adler presented Resilience Training Research in the Army at the US Army Europe (USAREUR) Senior Leader Forum (21-23 JUL 10; Grafenwoehr).

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS TO USAMRU-E

MG Gilman, Commander, Medical Research and Materiel Command (MRMC), and CSM Kelley visited the unit (22 JUL 10; Heidelberg). Dr. Wright and CPT Wood briefed MG Gilman on unit research activities.

NATO MEETING ON RESILIENCE TRAINING

The NATO panel on Mental Health Training (Human Factors and Medicine –Research and Technology Group; HFM-RTG 203) met in Tallinn, Estonia (20-24 SEP 10); Dr. Adler attended. The group is planning a multi-national assessment of current resilience training at Basic Training. The group will then develop a NATO prototype of resilience training for Basic Training.



EVALUATING RESILIENCE PROGRAMS IN AN OCCUPATIONAL CONTEXT

(New Publication)

Walter, J. A., Coulter, I., Hilton, L., Adler, A. B., Bliese, P. D., & Nicholas, R. A. (2010). Program Evaluation of Total Force Fitness Programs in the Military. *Military Medicine, Suppl.* 175, 103-111.



RESEARCH PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Dr. Adler attended the Military Operational Medicine Research Program (MOMRP) mid-year meeting as a task area manager on behalf of the program area managers (18-20 AUG 10; Tampa, FL).

Dr. Adler presented findings from the Mental Fitness Study to the MOMRP Resilience Research In-Progress Review (20 JUL 10; Frederick, MD).

PERSONNEL UPDATES

- SSG Williams attended the Safety Officer Course SOC-40 (19-23 JUL 10; Vilseck, Germany).
- Dr. Adler was elected a fellow of the Society for Military Psychology of the American Psychological Association (13 AUG 10).
- CPT Wood began attending the Captains Career Course Phase II (18 SEP – 1 DEC 10; San Antonio, TX).
- SGT Martinez completed the Warrior Leadership Course, graduating on the Commandant's List (31 AUG - 17 SEP 10; Grafenwoehr).

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Commander, USAMRU-E
Editor

LTC Maurice Sipos
Amy B. Adler, Ph.D.