



# “WRAIR Forward”

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## COMMANDER’S CORNER

Being stationed in Europe and co-located with US Army, Europe (USAREUR) units ensures that our research priorities remain responsive to the needs of Soldiers across the deployment cycle. This relationship has resulted in USAMRU-E research that has led to Army- and DOD-wide programs such as the Post-Deployment Health ReAssessment program. In the past three years, USAMRU-E has conducted six command-directed studies to evaluate new behavioral health initiatives launched in USAREUR. The latest of these studies examined an alternative reintegration strategy fielded by the 1AD and is featured in the current edition of the WRAIR *Forward*. It was extremely rewarding for me to lead this study and see the talented USAMRU-E team in action. In less than six weeks, we collected and analyzed the data and out-briefed the 1AD leadership on the results.

Finally, on behalf of the unit, I would like to wish Mr. Steve Terry well as he returns to the US to complete his education. Steve served the unit as a Soldier, as a contractor, and as a DA civilian.

-LTC Maurice Sipos

## ALTERNATIVE REINTEGRATION STUDIED

USAMRU-E conducted a study with the Special Troops Battalion (STB), 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division (1AD) to assess the impact of a front-loaded reintegration program. In December 2010, the 1AD provided expanded behavioral health support and training prior to returning home to Germany after a year in Iraq and then conducted a very brief reintegration with troops in Germany. In all, 306 Soldiers were surveyed and 22 Soldiers were interviewed in 6 focus groups about reintegration.

Data were collected by LTC Sipos (Study Lead), CPT Wood, Dr. Wright, Dr. Foran, Ms. Eckford, Ms. Salvi, Mr. Terry and SGT(P) Martinez in Wiesbaden (4-7 APR 11). An alternative form of assessing anxiety was also piloted in this study and involved a computer-based dot-probe task.



SET UP FOR ON-SITE COMPUTER-BASED TASK

## LOW LEVELS OF COMBAT MAY BE KEY

Results confirmed that the unit had not experienced much combat and that Soldiers appreciated the alternative reintegration strategy. When compared to a different STB that used the standard 7 half-day reintegration approach, behavioral health and unit climate outcomes were basically similar. Several Soldiers noted, however, that while the front-loaded approach worked for their unit, they were not sure such an approach would be appropriate for a unit that had experienced significant levels of combat (Protocol #1480F).

## BRIEFINGS ON STUDY RESULTS

- BG Tovo, Deputy Commander, 1AD, COL Calvert, Chief of Staff, IAD, LTC Turner, Commander, DSTB, and LTC Barnhart, 1AD Surgeon (LTC Sipos and Dr. Adler; 11 MAY 11; Wiesbaden).
- BG West, Commanding General, Europe Regional Medical Command (LTC Sipos and Dr. Adler; 6 JUN 2011; Heidelberg).

## J-MHAT 7 REPORT RELEASED

The Joint – Mental Health Advisory Team (J-MHAT 7) report was released on 19 MAY 11 and is available at: [http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/reports/mhat/mhatvii/J\\_MHAT\\_7.pdf](http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/reports/mhat/mhatvii/J_MHAT_7.pdf)

## PCL INSTRUCTIONS DON’T CHANGE SYMPTOM REPORTING POST-COMBAT

(New Publication)

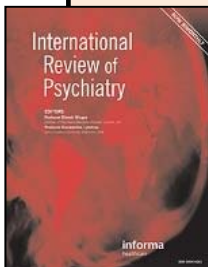
Riviere, L. A., Edens, E. N., Adler, A. B., Bliese, P. D., Klocko, R. P., & Hoge, C. W. (2011). Modifying Instructions on the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist for Military Populations Does Not Change Symptom Reporting. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 199, 199-202. doi: 10.1097/NMD.0b013e31820caee4



## REVIEW OF US RESEARCH ON MENTAL HEALTH IMPACT OF CONFLICT

(New Publication in Special Issue)

Wells, T. S., Miller, S. C., Adler, A. B., Engel, C. C., Smith, T. C., & Fairbank, J. A. (2011). Mental Health Impact of the Iraq and Afghanistan Conflicts: A Review of US Research, Service Provision, and Programmatic Responses. *International Review of Psychiatry*, 23, 144–152.





## NATO SYMPOSIUM AND RESEARCH GROUP

Dr. Adler attended the NATO

Symposium Mental Health and Well-Being Across the Military Spectrum (MP-HFM-205) in Bergen, Norway (11-13 APR 11). Presentations included:

- Adler, A. B., Delahajj, R., Bailey, S. M., Van den Berge, C., Parmak, M., Fonne, V., Virbicks, V., McGurk, D., Kreim, G., & Castro, C. A. (2011, April). NATO Study of Mental Health Training in Army Recruits.
- Bailey, S. M., Adler, A. B., Delahajj, R., Van den Berge, C., Parmak, M., & Fonne, V. (2011, April). Comparative Analysis of NATO Resilience Training Programs.
- Riviere, L. A., Merrill, J. C., Wilk, J. E., & Adler, A. B. (2011, April). Marital Status & Risk Behaviors Among U.S. Soldiers.

Following the symposium, Dr. Adler participated in the semi-annual meeting of the NATO Research Group on Mental Health Training along with US colleagues COL Castro (chair), LTC McGurk and Dr. Bates. The research group is working on designing prototype mental health training for basic training across NATO (14-16 APR 11; Oslo, Norway)

## STUDY TO LOOK AT ADVANCED POST-DEPLOYMENT TRANSITION TRAINING

A new study was approved to assess a pilot version of advanced transition training for high-combat units (protocol #1826; PI: Dr. Adler). The new study will obtain Soldier feedback about the Army Stress Management and Resilience Training (ArmySMART) material. This feedback will be used to improve the training prior to conducting a group randomized trial.

- In preparation for the pilot study, Dr. Adler conducted several training development meetings in Silver Spring, MD (7 and 25-26 APR 11, 23-26 MAY 11, 16-17, 20, and 24 JUN 11) with LCDR Toblin and other WRAIR staff.
- Dr. Adler and COL Bliese coordinated the ArmySMART pilot and an upcoming Land Combat Study data collection with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) leadership in Fort Campbell, KY (21-22 JUN 11). Meetings were facilitated by LTC McCord, Division Surgeon, and his team. MAJ (P) Thomas, Chief, Branch of Military Psychiatry, WRAIR, conducted the initial coordination.
- Ms. Merrill, lead research associate on the ArmySMART pilot study, trained with USAMRU-E staff on protocol file management (17-18 MAY 11; Heidelberg).

## UNIT RESEARCH FILES INSPECTED

WRAIR's Division of Human Subjects Protection (DHSP) assessed USAMRU-E compliance with human subject research regulations. The DHSP team, Ms. Cancel and Ms. Cicatelli, reviewed protocol records and discussed research policies and procedures with staff (9-11 MAY 11; Heidelberg).

## INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION

LTC Sipos and Dr. Wright met with Col Miller, AFRICOM Surgeon, to discuss potential collaborations (23 MAY 11; Stuttgart).

LTC Sipos met with Dr. Gunga, Universität Medizin Berlin, Institut für Physiologie, Zentrum für Weltraummedizin (Berlin Centre for Space Medicine) to discuss donating USAMRU-E Biofeedback testing equipment from several years ago (23 JUN 11; Heidelberg).



## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

### FAMILY RESILIENCE

Deployment-cycle resilience training for Spouse/Couples developed by WRAIR was presented at the DoD/USDA Family Resilience Conference in Chicago, IL.

- McGurk, D., Adler, A. B., Merrill, J., Riviere, L., & Keller, R. (2011, April). Resilience Training for Army Spouses/Couples.

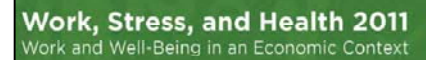


### WORK AND STRESS

Two talks involving USAMRU-E were

presented at the International Conference on Occupational Stress and Health in Orlando, FL, as part of a symposium on “Evidence-based Practice in Developing and Maintaining Resilience in the US Army” chaired by Dr. Sinclair and MAJ(P) Thomas.

- Britt, T. W., Adler, A. B., & Kim, P. (2011, May). Why Don't Military Veterans Seek Mental Health Treatment? An Occupational Health Agenda.
- McGurk, D., Adler, A. B., Rinehart, M., Keller, R., & Best, A. (2011, May). U.S. Army Resilience Training for the Career and Deployment Cycles.



## SENIOR LEADERS VISIT USAMRU-E

CSM Stuart, Medical Research and Materiel Command, met with LTC Sipos and military staff (10 MAY 11; Heidelberg).

COL Kester, Commander, WRAIR, and LTC Blow, Director, Overseas Laboratories, WRAIR, met with LTC Sipos and conducted a site visit of facilities in Sembach, Germany. COL Kester presented awards to USAMRU-E staff (21-22 APR 11; Heidelberg).

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Task area plans that cover most USAMRU-E and Branch of Military Psychiatry, WRAIR efforts were presented by Dr. Adler at the Integrating Integrated Product Team meeting held by the Military Operational Medicine Research Program (MOMRP) in Frederick, MD (5-6 APR 11).

Dr. Adler participated in a Psychological Health and Resilience Research Program meeting on the Millennium Cohort Study at the Naval Health Research Center (13-14 JUN 11; San Diego, CA).

As a follow-up to coordination of an upcoming WRAIR Land Combat Study with the California National Guard, Dr. Adler supported MAJ (P) Thomas in a meeting about evaluating the embedded civilian behavioral health provider program in coordination with TRIWEST (15 JUN 11; Phoenix, AZ).

## PERSONNEL UPDATES

- PFC Bean began working at USAMRU-E as a 91X (21 APR 11).
- SSG Martinez was promoted to his current rank (1 MAY 11).
- Mr. Terry, research associate, left the unit to return to school (24 JUN 11).

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