



WRAIR FORWARD

SEPTEMBER 2013, No. 65



THIS ACTIVITIES REPORT IS PUBLISHED BY THE U.S. ARMY MEDICAL RESEARCH UNIT-EUROPE, WALTER REED ARMY INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH, U.S. ARMY MEDICAL RESEARCH AND MATERIEL COMMAND

COMMANDER'S CORNER

Auf Wiedersehen Heidelberg

Our Heidelberg era came to a close on 31 July. USAMRU-E relocated to Sembach Kaserne in Rheinland Pfalz after serving proudly for 36 years from Nachrichten Kaserne in Heidelberg. It is a bittersweet feeling for the whole USAMRU-E team but we are proud of the things we achieved in support of Soldiers, and we will cherish our memories of - - - hands down the best duty location ever! As Geoffrey Chaucer said many years ago, "all good things must come to an end." Speaking on behalf of the entire USAMRU-E team, present and past, we bid Heidelberg a fond farewell.

LTC Jeffrey L. Thomas

END OF AN ERA: USAMRU-E MOVES FROM HEIDELBERG TO SEMBACH

At the final flag ceremony in Heidelberg, Nachrichten Kaserne was officially closed on 2 JUL 13. The unit relocated on 29 JUL 13 after being situated on the same top floor of the clock tower building since 1977. The move marked the end of an era, as Nachrichten Kaserne and other Heidelberg facilities were turned over to German authorities. The unit's new location is in Sembach, about 30 minutes east of Landstuhl Hospital and Ramstein Air Base.

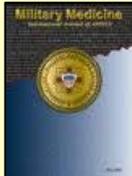


CONFERENCE TALK ON BENEFIT FINDING

MAJ Wood spoke via Webinar at the DoD Public Health Conference: Behavioral Health Webinar Series (3 SEP 13; Sembach). The talk, entitled "Buffering effects of benefit finding and leadership on combat-related PTSD symptoms," indicated that multiple resources, to include personal coping resources (i.e., benefit finding) and social resources (i.e., military leadership), were important factors for buffering the combat-PTSD symptom link.

NATO-WIDE STUDY EXAMINES BASIC TRAINING RESILIENCE NEEDS

(New Publication)



Adler, A. B., Delahaj, R., Bailey, S. M., Van den Berge, C., Parmak, M., van Tussenbroek, B., Puente, J. M., Landratova, S., Kral, P., Kreim, G., Rietdijk, D., McGurk, D., Castro, C. A. (2013). NATO Survey of Mental Health Training in Army Recruits. *Military Medicine*, 178, 760-766

NOVEL COGNITIVE MEASURE OF ATTENTION SHOWS BIAS LINKED TO PTSD SYMPTOMS

(New Publication)

Sipos, M. L., Bar-Haim, Y., Abend, R., Adler, A. B., & Bliese, P. D. (2013). Post-deployment Threat-Related Attention Bias Interacts with Combat Exposure to Account for PTSD and Anxiety Symptoms in Soldiers. *Depression and Anxiety*. [on-line] doi: 10.1002/da.22157



ALTERNATIVE REINTEGRATION STRATEGY FOR LOW-COMBAT UNIT IN USAREUR WELL-RECEIVED

(New Publication)



Sipos, M. L., Foran, H. M., Wood, M. D., Wright, K. M., Barnhart, V. J., Riviere, L. A., & Adler, A. B. (2013). Assessment of an Alternative Post-deployment Reintegration Strategy with Soldiers Returning From Iraq. *Psychological Services*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1037/a0033308



SLEEP WATCHES ASSESS PRE-DEPLOYMENT SLEEP LEVELS

How important are sleep patterns before a deployment in predicting adjustment during and after deployment? A watch that tracks amount of sleep is being used in a new study assessing behavioral health over the course of deployment. More than 50 Soldiers were fitted with an actigraph watch that measured their sleep over a 2 week period prior to deploying. After the watches were collected, participants completed a brief survey (9 JUL 13; Vilseck). Dr. Adler (Principal Investigator) and LTC Thomas collected the sleep surveys while the rest of the USAMRU-E team (with support from Center for Military Psychiatry and Neuroscience research assistants) processed more than 3,000 surveys collected in June as part of the larger study. Sleep results will be connected to these larger surveys in order to prospectively assess the impact of sleep patterns on deployed Soldiers.

The results of the pre-deployment surveys were provided in a brief sent to the Commander of 2CR, COL Sims, in Afghanistan. The next step in the study is to assess behavioral health and resilience training initiatives during the deployment both in Afghanistan and in garrison.

NEW Mailing Address & Phone Number:



US Army Medical Research Unit-Europe
ATTN: MCMR-UWV
Unit 29423
APO AE 09136
Comm (49) 6302-67-7087
DSN: (314) 496-7087

SHOWCASING VIRTUAL RESILIENCE: THE WARRIOR RESILIENCE CONFERENCE



The Defense Centers of Excellence (DCoE) hosted a virtual conference by web, and Dr. Adler represented the Army on a resilience panel at the request of COL Riddle, Director, Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness (CSF2). Dr. Adler (2nd from left) participated in the panel that was broadcast live across DoD (14 AUG 13; Washington, DC).

CONSULTING WITH EXTERNAL SCIENTISTS

In-progress reviews (IPRs) provide an opportunity for researchers to update funders on their studies and to share lessons learned about how to conduct applied research in a military setting. This quarter, the Military Operational Medicine Research Program (MOMRP) at the Medical Research and Materiel Command hosted two IPRs for scientists working on projects with the military.

- Dr. Adler served as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) for an IPR on Resilience Research and also gave an invited presentation on WRAIR's resilience research (27-28 AUG 13; Frederick, MD).
- Dr. Adler also served as a SME at the IPR on Stigma Research (DATE SEP 13; Frederick, MD).

University of Miami scientist Dr. Jha met with representatives from CSF2, MOMRP, the Navy, and WRAIR at a meeting coordinated by Dr. Adler to discuss recent findings on mindfulness research (29 JUL 13; Silver Spring, MD). The goal was to plan the next round of Dr. Jha's train-the-trainer mindfulness study and consider the possibility of involving CSF2 Training Centers as a research platform, thus ensuring direct relevance and applicability of the findings.

Clemson University stigma researcher Dr. Britt met with WRAIR researchers and LTC McGurk, the Deputy Director of MOMRP, at a meeting coordinated by Dr. Adler to review his newly developed training material on reducing stigma associated with seeking behavioral health care (12 SEP 13; Silver Spring, MD).

TRANSFORMATION STUDY PILOT COMPLETED IN HEIDELBERG/MANNHEIM

The end of September marked the closing chapter for U.S. Army Garrison Baden-Württemberg and the completion of the Transformation Pilot Study in Heidelberg and Mannheim. The pilot, led by MAJ Wood (Principal Investigator), is the first of several being conducted in various military communities in USAREUR to assess the psychological impact of community transformation on the well-being of Soldiers, Spouses, and Department of the Army Civilians.

For the pilot study, MAJ Wood and Ms. Salvi collected anonymous surveys addressing both well-being and specific transformation demands and coping strategies. Several units provided time for Soldiers and Civilians to participate, and individuals could also pick up surveys at local community centers and return them by mail. In total, 109 surveys were completed (61 Active Duty, 37 Civilian, and 11 Spouse) and three key leader interviews were conducted. Data from the pilot study are currently being analyzed.

The full study is set to be launched in late fall and will continue to be conducted with Garrison commands in Europe throughout 2014. A web-based survey is also being developed to facilitate participation.

INVITED TALK TO BUNDESWEHR

Dr. Adler gave an invited talk to the German military's Psychological Service meeting (11 JUL 13; Bonn). The talk, entitled "The Importance of Peers in a Military Occupational Health Model," was coordinated by Mr. Kreim, director of the Bundeswehr Psychological Service.

COORDINATING WITH WRAIR

LTC Thomas and Mr. Rahey, USAMRU-E's Office Administrator, met with WRAIR staff to address personnel and budget issues. LTC Thomas also met with COL Braverman, WRAIR Commander, to discuss the unit's future in Germany (20-21 AUG 13; Silver Spring, MD).

ERMC CHANGE OF RESPONSIBILITY

LTC Thomas participated in the Europe Regional Medical Command (ERMC) Change of Responsibility as part of "Army Medicine in Europe" (30 JUL 13; Sembach).

SENIOR ARMY LEADERS BRIEFED ON UNIT

LTC Thomas participated in a brief to LTG Horoho, the Army Surgeon General, as part of the ERMC Command and Staff (30 JUL 13; Sembach).

LTC Thomas briefed MG Longo (USAREUR DCG) on unit research as part of ERMC's presentation on Army Medicine in Europe (17 JUL 13; Wiesbaden).

PERSONNEL UPDATES

Ms. Kreilein was promoted from Research Assistant to Research Analyst on 1 JUL 13.

This is an unofficial Army publication, authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1, published quarterly in the interest of the U.S. Army Medical Research Unit-Europe. Material has been reviewed by the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. There is no objection to its presentation and/or publication. The opinions or assertions contained herein are the private views of the author, and are not to be construed as official, or as reflecting true views of the Department of the Army or the Department of Defense. For information on our research initiatives, visit <http://usamru-e.amedd.army.mil> or contact MRU-Webmaster@hbg.amedd.army.mil