



# WRAIR FORWARD



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## COMMANDER'S CORNER

### *An Ending and a New Beginning*

On 20 January 2015, Headquarters Department of the Army officially approved the restationing of USAMRU-E to Joint Base Lewis McChord, WA, with an effective date of 30 June 2015. USAMRU-E has been a vital part of the US Army in Europe for 38 years, providing world class studies that have improved the lives of US Soldiers and Families. In addition, through our strategic engagements with NATO, our research has also impacted how our NATO partners approach behavioral health and resilience to meet the needs of their Service Members. Although USAMRU-E is leaving, MRMC and WRAIR will remain engaged with US-based units and NATO partners here in Europe. US Army leadership recognized the importance and success of USAMRU-E's mission; therefore, our capabilities and competencies will remain the same as we shift our focus to supporting the Pacific.

The February-June 2015 edition of WRAIR Forward will be the final edition where I will put on my unit historian hat and highlight USAMRU-E's accomplishments through its 38-year history.

LTC Jeffrey L. Thomas



## USAREUR TRANSFORMATION STUDY UPDATE

Ciao Italia! In October, LTC Thomas, along with Ms. Salvi, Ms. Eckford, and CPL Thomas traveled to Vicenza Italy to administer surveys to Soldiers, Spouses, and Civilians in the military community. Soldiers at Camp Darby in Livorno also participated. Nearly 500 Soldiers, 40 Spouses, and 40 DA Civilians completed surveys. In addition, interviews with key leaders and focus group interviews with Civilians were conducted (5-11 OCT 14). LTC Thomas, Ms. Eckford, and Ms. Salvi provided a brief, via teleconference, with initial findings of the data to COL Robert Menist Jr., USAG-Vicenza Garrison Commander (30 OCT 14).

January 2015 marked the end of data collection in both Italy and Germany. To date, this study has yielded surveys from over 3,500 Military Service Members, 650 DA Civilians, and 230 Spouses, as well as 23 key leader interviews and nine focus groups interviews. Data analysis is ongoing, but initial study findings have led to the development of the Transformation Triad (see below). The purpose of the model is to help guide community leadership toward improving community health during transformation in closing communities. Each aspect of the triad below was strongly related to community behavioral health.

## RELOCATION TO JOINT BASE LEWIS McCHORD (JBLM) AS USAMRU-W (WEST)

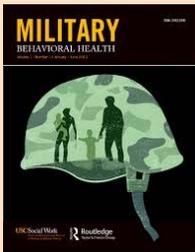
USAMRU-E will inactivate and case our guidon in support of the relocation to JBLM in Washington state. The Inactivation ceremony is scheduled for 19 JUN 2015. On 30 JUN 2015, USAMRU-E will be re-designated as a directorate under WRAIR with the provisional name of USAMRU-W (West).



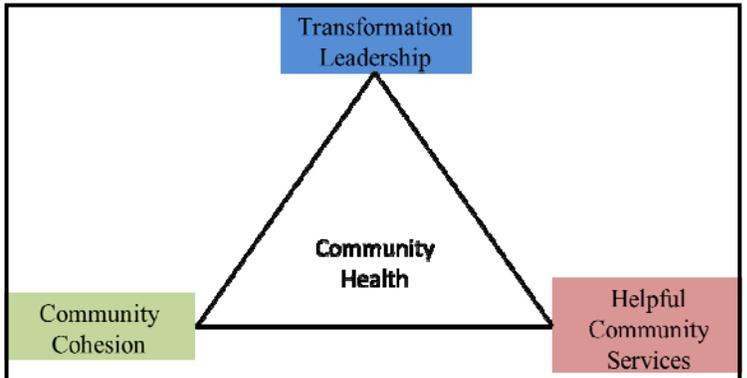
**STIGMA, BARRIERS, AND NEGATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD TREATMENT PREDICT HEALTH PROBLEMS POST-DEPLOYMENT**  
(New Publication)

Wright, K. M., Britt, T. W., Moore, D. (2014). Impediments to mental health treatment as predictors of mental health symptoms following combat. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 27, 535-541.

**DESTRUCTIVE LEADERSHIP PREDICTS PTSD IN DEPLOYED SOLDIERS REGARDLESS OF COMBAT EXPOSURE LEVEL**  
(New Publication)



McGurk, D., Sinclair, R. R., Thomas, J. L., Merrill, J. C., Bliese, P. D., & Castro, C. A. (2014). Destructive and supportive leadership in extremis: Relationships with post-traumatic stress during combat deployments. *Military Behavioral Health*, 2, 240-256.





## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH LEADERSHIP STUDY (2CR) UPDATES

The post-deployment phase of the study, conducted in the summer of 2014, did not mark the end of the landmark study with 2CR. In October, USAMRU-E obtained a letter of support to continue the research. The study is part of an existing collaboration with WRAIR's Center for Military Psychiatry and Neuroscience (Mil Psy) examining behavioral health, leadership, sleep, resilience and an assessment of 2CR's Dragoon Total Fitness. In December, a USAMRU-E team, led by LTC Thomas, and assisted by CPT Anderson and SGT Kabiru from the Mil Psy branch, conducted a survey data collection in Vilseck and Grafenwoehr. Sixty-three percent of the Regiment participated with 2,650 surveys collected (2-6 DEC 14). While in Vilseck, LTC Thomas and CPT Anderson briefed COL Meyer, 2CR Commander, with results from the T1 to T4 data collections. The brief was prepared by Dr. Adler, the study's lead investigator. Because of USAMRU-E's anticipated relocation in June, the Military Psychiatry branch will take over for the next phase of the study, planned for late summer 2015.



(Standing L-R) Dr. Adrian, CPT Anderson, Ms. Eckford, SGT Kabiru, CPL Thomas, LTC Thomas; (Top) Ms. Kreilein.

## SCIENTIFIC COLLABORATIONS

The Project Arrangement on Psychological Health and mTBI between the US and UK has been extended for 5 years; both the DOD and MOD representatives signed as of 10 DEC 14. LTC Thomas is the US Technical Project Officer.

On 15 DEC 14, LTC Thomas submitted the FY14 annual report to the International Affairs Officer at US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command.

LTC Thomas participated in a teleconference with WRAIR Military Psychiatry and Fort Hood Mil Psych Field Office investigators on developing an updated version of the Unit Behavioral Health Needs Assessment tool. The survey was developed by WRAIR in 2004 and is used by the US Army Medical Department Center and School (AMEDDC&S) and the Army's behavioral health community to augment command climate with focus on behavioral health (10 DEC 14).

## ERMC-BUNDESWEHR SENIOR LEADER FORUM



LTC Thomas presents USAMRU-E capabilities to multinational attendees.

LTC Thomas and CPL Thomas attended the ERMC-Bundeswehr Senior Leader Forum at Landstuhl from 19-21 NOV 14. At the request of BG Coats, ERMC Commander, LTC Thomas presented data from the Deployed Medical Staff Study to the forum.

## MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

LTC Thomas participated in several key meetings:

- Program Steering Committee Meeting, Task Area Meetings, and initial preparation for Military Operational Medicine Research Program R & A at WRAIR (3-6 NOV 14; D.C.).
- ERMC meetings on implementing the Operating Company Model (10 DEC 14; 22 JAN 15).
- Unit Activities and Relocation Planning Brief to MG Lein and CSM Akana, MRMC Commanding General and Sergeant Major (26 JAN 15; Landstuhl).

## PERSONNEL UPDATES

CPL Thomas was recommended for promotion to SGT by a promotion board (25 NOV 14). On 1 DEC 14, he became eligible for promotion.

SPC Lee received an Army Achievement Medal on 14 JAN 15.



### A Warm Welcome to:

Dr. Amanda Adrian joined the USAMRU-E team as a research Psychologist under the CACI contract (1 OCT 14).

### A Fond Farewell to:

MAJ Wood departed USAMRU-E after serving a the unit for over five years (21 JUN 09 to 22 OCT 14). He is now working with III Corps at Ft. Hood but will contribute to WRAIR's studies through the Psychological Health and Resilience Research Program. MAJ Wood was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for his time at USAMRU-E.



MAJ Wood (Left) receives from LTC Thomas a plaque honoring his contributions to the Unit.

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