



# TRIPLER ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

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*For Immediate Release*

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## **Tripler Year in Review**

TRIPLER ARMY MEDICAL CENTER-- The year 2009 found Tripler Army Medical Center (TAMC) right where it always is – leading the way in Army medical initiatives.

**Soldiers Evaluation for Life Fitness Program.** TAMC conducted the Soldiers Evaluation for Life Fitness Program in May, the Confidential Alcohol Treatment and Education Pilot Program in July and the Virtual Behavioral Health Pilot Program in October and November. Data being collected will provide the Office of the Surgeon General (OTSG) with results and recommendations. All with the goal of providing better ways to address behavioral health issues, to include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, suicide ideations and alcohol and drug abuse, issues that are often recognized upon a Soldier's return from deployment.

**Behavioral Health Campaign Plan.** Aspects of the OTSG Behavioral Health Campaign Plan are prevention and resiliency, both major parts of the Department of the Army Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Program. The goal of the CSF program is to build emotional, social, spiritual and family fitness and resilience within our Soldiers. TAMC brought Dr. Martin Seligman, director of the University of Pennsylvania Positive Psychology Center and the leading authority on resiliency training to speak to unit leadership and medical staff at Smith Theater, Schofield Barracks and Kyser Auditorium, TAMC, on Dec. 29. Seligman stressed “just as we teach physical fitness, we can teach psychological fitness”. The first leg of the program is underway as Soldiers complete the Global Assessment Tool.

**Access to Care.** The Access to Care campaign increased appointments by six per cent from January to October 2009. The TAMC phone system expansion doubles the number of calls that can be received a one time, the hiring of appointment clerks and the installation of a new 800 line, (800) 322-8262 contribute to this increase. The Adult Medicine Clinic expanded its hours to 6 p.m., while the Pediatric clinic hours expanded to include a Saturday clinic allowing for more appointments, and the TRICARE Online campaign and upgrade of the system provides for faster, easier access to appointments online.

**Tripler Emergency Department.** The Emergency Department spent in excess of \$6 million on manpower, equipment and technology improvements in 2009. Staff expansion, to include seven new Physician Assistants on board for the Gold Team acute care area, where triage patients are treated and a new 10-minute triage program, reduced the time it takes for patients to be seen, worked up and admitted. The test site for the Army computer system documenting patient

procedures, such as tracking medications prescribed and medical history enables Emergency Department staff the capability to schedule electronic follow-up appointments.

**Tripler Pharmacy.** The TAMC Pharmacy established online and call-in services, allowing patients to visit [www.tamc.amedd.army.mil](http://www.tamc.amedd.army.mil) or call (808) 433-6962 for next business day prescription pickup.

The new prescription WILL CALL system provides prescription pickup within two hours and the new Self Care program requires only a military ID card for certain over-the-counter medications.

The TAMC Pharmacy hours extended to Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-9 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. The Naval Exchange Refill Pharmacy hours extended to Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., provides more opportunities to our patients for prescription pickup.

**H1N1 prevention and vaccination.** Since the first patient was diagnosed with the H1N1 influenza virus in April, TAMC staff worked with other services and the State of Hawaii to ensure updated information on vaccinations reached all beneficiaries in a timely manner.

**Integrative Pain Center.** Opened in March 2009, TAMC's Integrative Pain Center combines conventional medical therapies and complementary/holistic therapies to optimize pain treatment outcomes for active duty military and veterans suffering from chronic musculoskeletal pain, post-traumatic and post-concussive symptoms, to improve the quality of their health care.

**da Vinci Surgical System.** Installed in April, the da Vinci Surgical System® is a unique robotic platform that enables complex surgical procedures using a minimally invasive approach. Its high-resolution 3D stereo view provides surgeons improvement over conventional laparoscopy. Receiving the minimal invasive procedure has allowed the seven prostate surgery patients to leave the hospital one day earlier and the three open kidney operation patients were released 2-3 days earlier – all with good surgical outcomes.

**Heartsounds FDA approval.** In August the Food and Drug Administration approved the TAMC-developed Heartsounds device. With the electronic stethoscope pediatric cardiologists can accurately diagnose an innocent heart murmur by auscultation alone, eliminating the need for more costly studies and unnecessary air-evacuations. Six devices were deployed to remote locations throughout the Pacific in September.

**Graduate Medical Education Training.** The 13 Graduate Medical Education Training Programs at TAMC currently consists of 210 residents. In June, 114 students graduated from TAMC's medical and dental internship and resident programs, to include 105 Army, two Navy, one Air Force officer and six civilian students. Also graduating were 14 physician assistants and three nurse anesthetists who completed their field training at TAMC. In August an additional 5 physician assistants graduated.

**Soldiers Strong Bonds Program.** The TAMC Department of Ministry and Pastoral Care provided three married couples and one single Soldiers Strong Bonds training in 2009. These "retreats" brought married couples closer to one another through relationship building,

communication skills and insights on how best to deal with stress, especially following a Soldier's return from deployment. In educating single Soldiers, the training provided information on how to better understand oneself and information useful in future relationships and finding a mate.

In addition, the TAMC Chaplains provided nearly 50,000 pastoral care contacts to patients, staff and family members. They conducted joint training in pastoral care for victims of sexual assault, PTSD and traumatic brain injury to members of all the services as well as suicide prevention training for over 3,000 TAMC staff members.

The initiatives begun in 2009 will grow stronger in 2010 while TAMC staff continues to provide quality health care to our service members and their families.

More information on the groundbreaking programs and initiatives provided at TAMC can be found on our website at [www.tamc.amedd.army.mil](http://www.tamc.amedd.army.mil) or by calling the Public Affairs Office at 808-433-2809.