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Tripler AMC Year in Review: healing heroes, change and innovation

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Story Highlights

- The year 2015 was a year of change, innovation and heroes for the staff and beneficiaries of Tripler Army Medical Center (TAMC).



HONOLULU -- The year 2015 was a year of change, innovation and heroes for the staff and beneficiaries of Tripler Army Medical Center (TAMC).

While there were too many accomplishments to list for publication, these are the TAMC highlights.

High Reliability Organization.

In 2014, the Secretary of Defense released a memorandum calling into action a review of access to health care, patient safety and quality of care within the Military Health System. This year, TAMC began the first steps of this process which leads treatment facilities toward the path of a High Reliability Organization (HRO). The common attribute of HRO's is a focus on elimination of error as it relates to safety. HROs are distinguished by a single minded focus of the entire workforce on identifying potential problems and high-risk situations before they lead to an adverse event.

TAMC took its first steps toward this transformation by reorganizing the staff based on the Medical Command model of an HRO.

Soldiers Are Our Credentials.

Soldier stories topped TAMC's news this year like Pfc. Lewis Garcia, a medic in TAMC's Medical/Surgical Telemetry Ward, who was on leave in New York City, where he used his newfound medical skills to save an infant's life.

1st Lt. Mary Grace Bagalso a nurse anesthetist at TAMC was filmed for an independent movie, "The Women and the Waves 2." Bagalso is a renowned surfer who has won

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competition after competition and has been featured in surfing magazines.

Col. Jeffery Greene, a medical doctor and adolescent pediatrician at TAMC, deployed on a three-month medical mission to Palau. Greene stated the mission is about influencing and promoting health to bring together cultures for lasting positive relationships.

Capt. Timothy Dreyer, deputy chief, TAMC's Patient Administration Division, received the prestigious Lt. Col. Paul Hatkoff Award in August for his efficient patient administrative and management abilities, and for his willingness to step up and serve in a time of need. "The first chance I got to work inside the hospital walls, I took, so I could experience how to bridge the gap between the clinical and administrative aspects of running a hospital," said Dreyer.

Tripler's Troop Command welcomed home a number of TAMC Soldiers from deployments this past year. Twenty-seven of TAMC's finest deployed around the globe on medical missions in support of AFRI COM and CENTCOM missions. In 2016, almost 100 more of TAMC's finest will deploy on medical missions.

Clinical Milestones

Room Service.
TAMC's Nutrition Care Division began offering room service dining for in-patients in October this past year. "Proper nutrition positively impacts clinical outcomes and can reduce a patient's recovery time," stated Capt. Stephanie Gasper, Chief, Medical Nutrition Therapy, TAMC. "Room service has the added benefit of allowing the patient to select the food they want to eat, when they want to eat it, which encourages patients to improve their overall nutritional status," added Gasper. The menu features an all-day breakfast, made-to-order salads, personal pizzas, grill items, local Hawaiian favorites and desserts while reflecting religious and cultural accommodations.

The Army Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) Relocates.
In May this year, EFMP relocated to the third floor of TAMC at 3B-1, Oceanside. In its new location, the clinic created pediatric-friendly rooms that provide children a fun atmosphere so they feel comfortable while interacting with the EFMP staff. The relocation to the third floor also gave the EFMP staff the opportunity to tailor a space that meets the needs of all the services offered by the program. "The move has...improved work flow and patient satisfaction," said Michael Ching, a developmental-behavioral pediatrician at EFMP.

Da Vinci Surgical System.
TAMC received the latest update to the Da Vinci Surgical System this past year. One of the most important messages to beneficiaries deciding upon surgical care is that they no longer have to look to mainland clinics or go out of TAMC's treatment system for their specialty surgery; patients can have it all done at TAMC. Lt. Col. Jay Schuster, a TAMC Registered Nurse and Perioperative Nursing Consultant to The Army Surgeon General, works with the robotic equipment daily and has seen the technology evolve through the years. "The state-of-the-art technologies that are available to you downtown are also available to you here. We have the latest and the greatest. So if you are a qualifying beneficiary we can do it here," said Schuster.

Orthotic and Prosthetic Facility (OPF).
OPF uses state-of-the-art equipment to fabricate and fit prosthetic devices for all parts of the human body. Advancements in technology have also allowed OPF, a way to produce a cleaner and more accurate prosthetic in a shorter amount of time. TAMC patients not only benefit from a better fit, but with a lighter product. Using three-dimensional technology, orthotists can modify and adjust live scans of various body sections of patients. The scans are then sent to the CAD-CAM machine to create the cast of a custom fit prosthetic for patients. TAMC's OPF serves beneficiaries throughout the Pacific region and provides quality care using this advanced technology to ensure patients are provided with the most sophisticated prosthetics.

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Reunion.
The NICU graduation is a huge event for the families and the Tripler NICU staff. Families even make Oahu their vacation destination, so they can attend the reunions. There are several families that return to Hawaii as a duty station years later. It is at the reunion when many former NICU families once again get to see the providers who helped them through their time in the NICU. It is a time to celebrate and see how much the children have grown, a time for parents to highlight their child's accomplishments.

Non-clinical Milestones

Aloha Center & Traffic Solutions.
The Tripler One-Stop-Shop Aloha Center relocated and combined the services of Personnel Security and Integrated Technology Center to improve work flow processes and better assist in-processing, permanent staff, and visitors. The offices are open for services Mon.-Fri. 0700-1600. In an effort to increase traffic flow exiting TAMC, the offices of the provost marshal and Directorate of Emergency Services have initiated a traffic pattern change that took effect last January. The change made Krukowski Road -- which normally has two directions of travel -- into a two-lane, outbound thruway, allowing twice the number of vehicles to exit TAMC. This new traffic pattern occurs during peak hours of the expected afternoon exodus: Monday through Friday, 2-5 p.m., excluding federal holidays.

Tripler Satellite Unit's Milestones

Warrior Transition Battalion (WTB).

The WTB has held numerous events this year to include a Canoe Regatta in Waikiki and sporting events. These events culminated during November's Warrior Care Month. Lt. Col. Brian Peterson, WTB commander, explained what the battalion's goal is when it comes to helping the military's wounded. "Here at the WTB, we have some access to care priorities that exceed the capability of other medical units out there, which makes us a tremendous asset for Soldiers and their families as they go through the transition and healing process," Peterson said.

Warrior Ohana Medical Home (WOMH).

WOMH began offering adult physical therapy and Pediatric physical therapy and occupational therapy in 2015. In addition to welcoming Maj. William Sherman, a board certified Pediatrician to the team, the WOMH is busier than ever and still has capacity for new patients.

Reserve Support.

Reserve Component Soldiers and Airmen from various units in the U.S. worked more than of 23,000 independent hours, encountered 25,000 patients and generated an estimated revenue of \$2.1 million for the fiscal year.

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