

# APRIL 2021



# MEDDAC-K COVID-19 YEAR IN REVIEW

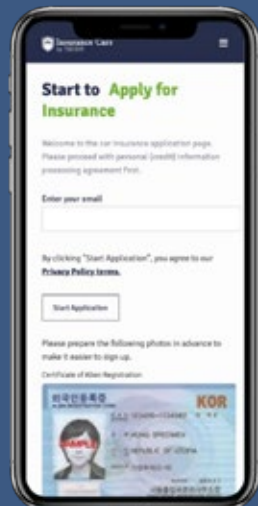
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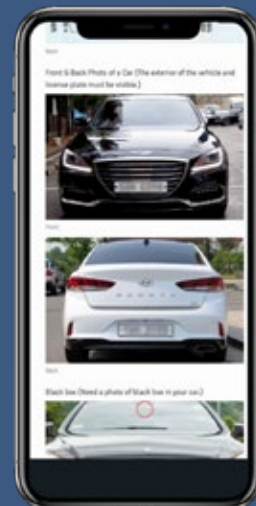
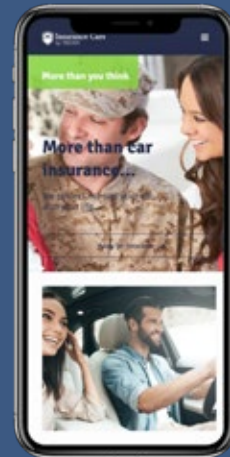
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26

## MEDDAC-K COVID-19 Year in Review

In this month's issue we feature a look back during the pandemic with a special "MEDDAC-K COVID-19 Year in Review."

Sancheong:  
Korea's Number  
One Wellness  
Destination



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E-C International Law Office (1995-2019)  
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- Domestic Violence
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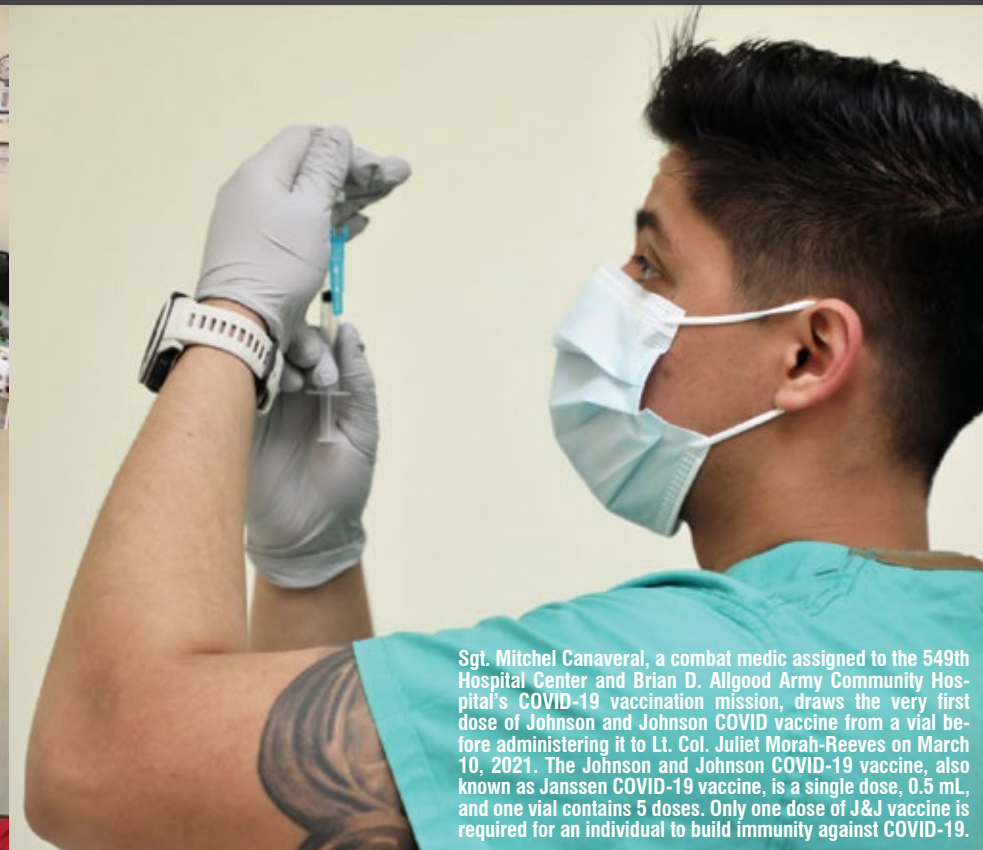
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Sgt. Mitchel Canaveral, a combat medic assigned to the 549th Hospital Center and Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital's COVID-19 vaccination mission, draws the very first dose of Johnson and Johnson COVID vaccine from a vial before administering it to Lt. Col. Juliet Morah-Reeves on March 10, 2021. The Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, also known as Janssen COVID-19 vaccine, is a single dose, 0.5 mL, and one vial contains 5 doses. Only one dose of J&J vaccine is required for an individual to build immunity against COVID-19.

## MEDDAC-K

## COVID-19

## Year in Review

"I am excited to be receive the vaccine and honored to be the first one to get the J&J COVID-19 vaccine in U.S. Forces Korea. As a healthcare professional, I believe both vaccines are safe and effective and want to encourage everyone to get either of the vaccines when it's offered to them" -- Lt. Col. Juliet Morah-Reeves





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# SCENE & HEARD

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL

By Eric Young-Seok Park

## THOUSANDS RALLY IN SERBIA TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT



Protesters in Serbia rallied demanding that the government protect the environment in a Balkan nation that has seen record levels of air pollution and scores of other ecological problems following decades of neglect. Several thousand people gathered outside the Serbian parliament building in the capital of Belgrade for an "ecological uprising" against what organizers say is a widespread environmental devastation in the nation aspiring to join the European Union. Some wore face masks to ward off coronavirus but not all. Serbia has faced mounting problems that include poor garbage management and high air pollution caused by the use of poor-quality coal and other pollutants. Rivers have been polluted by toxic industrial waste and many cities, including Belgrade, lack good sewage and waste water systems. Protesters carried banners reading "Cut corruption and crime, not forests!" or "Water is life" and "Plant a tree!" — referring to shrinking green areas in the cities, particularly in Belgrade, where huge concrete residential areas have sprung up in recent years. The protesters demanded a ban on building small hydroelectric plants, better environmental education, greener urban areas and cleaner air. International studies have suggested that air pollution is shortening the lifespans of people living in the Western Balkans.

## SOUTH AFRICA VARIANT CAN 'BREAK THROUGH' PFIZER'S VACCINE

The coronavirus variant discovered in South Africa can "break through" Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine to some extent, a real-world data study in Israel found, though its prevalence in the country is low and the research has not been peer reviewed. The study, released on April 10, compared almost 400 people who had tested positive for Covid-19, 14 days or more after they received one or two doses of the vaccine, against the same number of unvaccinated patients with the disease. It matched age and gender, among other characteristics. The South African variant, B.1.351, was found to make up about 1 per cent of all the Covid-19 cases across all the people studied, according to the study by Tel Aviv University and Israel's largest healthcare provider, Clalit. But among patients who had received two doses of the vaccine, the variant's prevalence rate was eight times higher than those unvaccinated — 5.4 per cent versus 0.7 per cent. This suggests the vaccine is less effective against the South African variant, compared with the original coronavirus and a variant first identified in Britain that has come to comprise nearly all Covid-19 cases in Israel, the researchers said.



## JAPAN TO ANNOUNCE NUCLEAR FUKUSHIMA WATER RELEASE INTO SEA SOON

The Japanese government has decided to dispose of massive amounts of treated but still radioactive water stored in tanks at the wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant by releasing it into the Pacific Ocean, a conclusion widely expected but delayed for years amid protests and safety concerns. Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga told top fisheries association officials that his government believes the release into the sea is the most realistic option and that a final decision would be made "within days." A formal announcement is expected soon at a meeting of key ministers, Industry Ministry officials said. They declined to confirm reports from Kyodo News and other media that the ministers will meet and have already reached a final decision. A government panel, after seven years of discussion on how to dispose of the water without further harming Fukushima's image and the region's fisheries and other businesses, prepared a report two years ago saying a release into the sea is the most realistic method. The report mentioned evaporation as a less desirable option.



## CONVERSION THERAPY BAN 'WOULD CRIMINALISE CHRISTIAN PARENTS STOPPING CHILDREN SEEKING TRANS-GENDER TREATMENT'

The Government's proposed ban on conversion therapy would criminalise Christian parents who want to stop their children seeking transgender treatment, a leading QC and Church of England minister have warned. In a formal legal opinion sent to ministers last week, Philip Havers QC, a prominent human rights lawyer, wrote banning conversion therapy would unintentionally make it illegal for Christians to tell a child questioning their gender that they should remain in their birth sex. Ed Shaw, the evangelical pastor of a Church of England congregation in Bristol who procured the opinion, said changing the law could "close down freedom of speech, conscience and religion" for him and like-minded believers. For years, Downing Street has insisted it intends to legislate to make conversion therapy — efforts to change or suppress someone's sexuality or gender identity — against the law but has yet to bring forward any concrete proposals. Last month three LGBT advisors quit their posts in protest at the delay, accusing ministers of failing the gay community by dragging their feet on the issue.



## HOTEL WILL HOUSE OLYMPIC ATHLETES WITH COVID-19



Athletes at the Tokyo Olympics who come down with minor symptoms of COVID-19 could be isolated in a hotel lined up by local organizers of the games. The Japanese news agency Kyodo said organizers are working to secure 300 rooms in a hotel near the Athletes' Village. The agency cited unnamed officials with "knowledge of the plan." The rooms would be for athletes and staff who do not need to be hospitalized. The measures underline the risk of trying to hold the Olympics and Paralympics during a pandemic. The Olympics are to open on July 23 and face strong opposition from up to 80% of Japanese polled. The Olympics and Paralympics will involve about 15,000 athletes from more than 200 nations and territories, and tens of thousands of other officials, judges, administrators, media and broadcasters. Organizers and the International Olympic Committee have banned fans from abroad from attending. They have yet to announce the maximum capacity for venues, which is now complicated by rising cases in Osaka, Tokyo and elsewhere.

## KIM JONG-UN WARNS OF NORTH KOREA CRISIS SIMILAR TO DEADLY 90'S FAMINE

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has told citizens to prepare for hard times ahead, following warnings from rights groups that the country faces dire food shortages and economic instability. Speaking at a party conference, Mr Kim appeared to compare the situation to the devastating 1990s famine, estimated to have killed hundreds of thousands. North Korea has shut its borders due to the coronavirus pandemic. Trade with China, its economic lifeline, has come to a standstill. This is on top of existing international economic sanctions over Pyongyang's nuclear programme.



## FRENCH LAWMAKERS APPROVE A BAN ON SHORT DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

French lawmakers voted to abolish domestic flights on routes than can be covered by train in under two-and-a-half hours, as the government seeks to lower carbon emissions even as the air travel industry reels from the global pandemic. The measure is part of a broader climate bill that aims to cut French carbon emissions by 40% in 2030 from 1990 levels, though activists accuse President Emmanuel Macron of watering down earlier promises in the draft legislation. The vote came days after the state said it would contribute to a 4 billion euro (\$4.76 billion) recapitalisation of Air France, more than doubling its stake in the flagcarrier, to shore up its finances after over a year of COVID-19 travel curbs. Industry Minister Agnes Pannier-Runacher dismissed criticism from the aviation industry that a pandemic recovery was not the time to ban some domestic flights, and said there was no contradiction between the bailout and the climate bill.



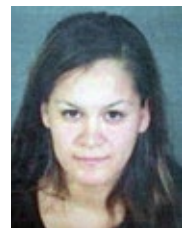
## \$1.3 MILLION IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS AT 'WORLD'S LARGEST FLEA MARKET' IN TEXAS

An estimated \$1.3 million in counterfeit merchandise was for sale at the "World's Largest Flea Market" in Texas, federal officials say. Federal authorities seized over 1,000 items first week of April in Canton during the First Monday Trade Days, a market that has more than 5,000 vendors, according to Homeland Security Investigations Dallas. The seized items included purses, caps, shoes and sunglasses. Felony charges against people accused of selling the items are pending in the county, officials say. "Buying and selling counterfeit items poses a significant threat to our local economy and the dedicated vendors who come to Canton for legitimate business ventures," said Van Zandt County District Attorney Tonda Curry.



## MOTHER ARRESTED AFTER THREE YOUNG CHILDREN FOUND SLAIN IN RESEDA

Liliana Carrillo, who police identified as the main person of interest in the case, was taken into custody in Tulare County after leading authorities on a long-distance chase in which she allegedly carjacked a pickup truck in Bakersfield. The children's grandmother called police after she discovered the children dead at an apartment complex in Reseda and their mother gone. Officers discovered the bodies of the three children — ages 3, 2 and 6 months — inside. Initial reports indicated that the children had been stabbed but authorities did not confirm a cause of death. No motive was given for the slayings. "These are the moments we carry throughout our career," Lt. Raul Joel said at the scene, noting that innocent lives had been lost. "It's hard to process that as a police officer." He said there had been no prior calls to police at the residence. Resident Corina Huertas, 28, said she has lived across the street for two years and was shocked to hear about the slayings. "Who does that to innocent kids?" she said. "They didn't ask to be born."



## RECORD PENALTY FOR MA'S ALIBABA MARKS TUMULTUOUS STRETCH FOR ITS FOUNDER

Once seemingly untouchable, Alibaba founder Jack Ma has endured a tumultuous run that saw his Chinese e-commerce giant hit with a record 18 billion yuan (\$2.75 billion) antitrust fine on April 10, resolving one key uncertainty even as others persist for himself and his business empire. The reversal of fortune for the 56-year-old Ma, who has all-but-disappeared from public view since an October speech blasting China's regulatory system, has been striking for an entrepreneur whose transformation of commerce in China — and his relentless optimism — commanded cult-like reverence. Ma, who stepped down from Alibaba in 2019 but looms large in the corporate psyche and in the eyes of investors, had revelled in pushing boundaries with audacious statements, taking a high profile even as most Chinese peers kept their heads down. Alibaba declined to comment on Ma, and his foundation did not immediately respond to a request for comment.





## USFK Commanding General's Message



Gen. Robert B. Abrams  
USFK Commanding General

I have always said that USFK's number one mission is to protect the force. Beginning in late January 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic exploded in the People's Republic of China and started to spread to Northeast Asia, USFK enhanced its watch team, initiated 24/7 operations and began providing daily updates to the command and staff to monitor and assess the evolving situation. Our efforts were the first actions across the Department of Defense to begin identifying, containing, mitigating, and preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

In many ways, USFK's efforts continue to lead the way for DOD: established quarantine and isolation facilities, measures to care for our community, instituting a 14-day quarantine program, developing contact tracing and cleaning policies and procedures, mandatory entry and exit COVID-19 testing for all those in quarantine, ensuring our frontline healthcare workers and first responders were sufficiently equipped with all personal protective gear, defined HPCON measures and Health Protection Emergency authorities, cancelled school and extracurricular after-school programs – yet instituted online and remote learning – enforced mandatory mask-wear, random and directed surveillance testing. Many of these practices were adopted by DOD and other global countries as a template for success. USFK was among the first DOD organizations to begin receiving and inoculating our community with the COVID-19 vaccines. We are

now offering the COVID-19 vaccine on a voluntary basis to all eligible USFK-affiliated individuals. Thus far we have nearly an 82% acceptance rate and we have fully vaccinated more than 35% of the community. Our medical teams are now providing more than a thousand vaccines daily!

On February 26, 2020, we reported USFK and the Department of Defense's first service member to test positive for COVID-19. Since then, we have had almost 820 additional cases including service members, family members, civilians and contractors, but more than 85% have been imported to USFK from off-peninsula. As of this article, we have had only 35 service members assigned to USFK test positive. Out of a population of 58,000 people that interact with USFK on a daily basis, that is a remarkable accomplishment!

A primary key to success was our immediate response to operationalize our approach in combating COVID-19. The principles of OPERATION Kill the Virus enabled USFK to move with speed and violence of action. USFK immediately instated a command post that solely focused on COVID-19 battle tracking, created battle drill and SOPs, applied analytical tools and predicative analysis to conduct threat analysis, and provided daily update briefings to commanders, staffs, component commands, and supporting organizations to ensure we maintained shared situational awareness and understanding. Another key to success has been open and transparent communications with our communities. For example, we've gone to great lengths in leveraging the information environment with the use of virtual town halls, AFN radio and TV, media engagements, updates to the USFK website and social media posts, and live-stream events to constantly provide the best information to our community that is timely, factual, accurate and relevant to them.

I am exceptionally proud of our community's continued resilience and vigilance to prevent the spread of the virus, adhere to USFK's core tenets, and health protection mitigation measures that have led to the protection of our force and our mission.

Our relationship with the ROK government in combating the COVID-19 pandemic has strengthened the ROK-US Alliance, and more than one year later, we are still leading the fight to "Kill the Virus" – our record is extraordinary!

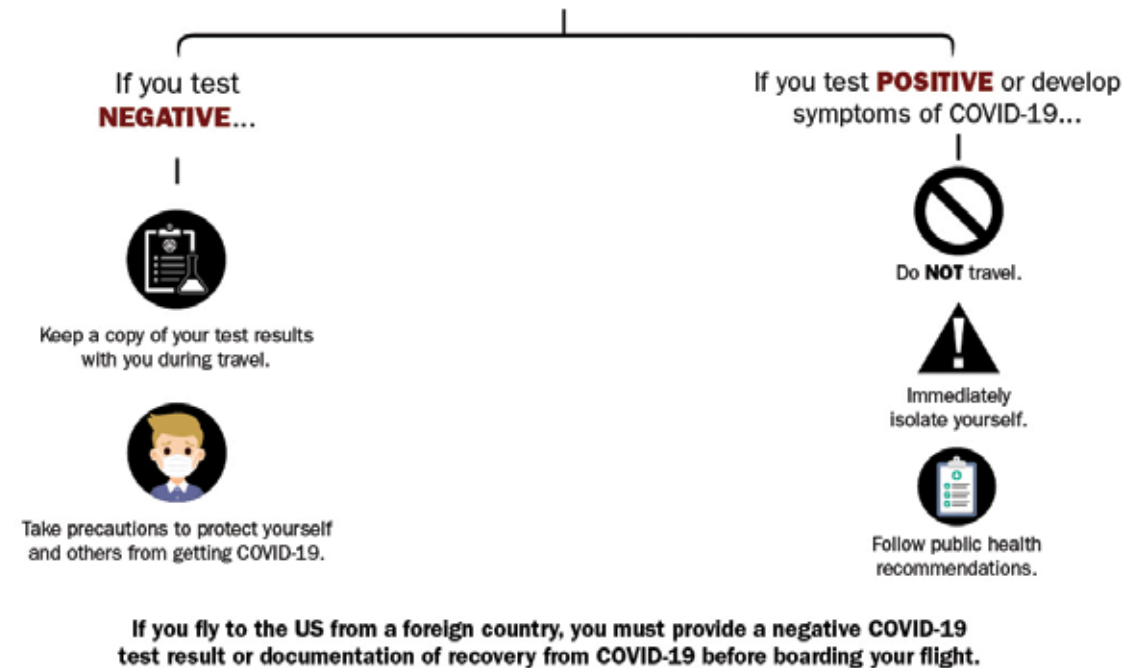
As we have all witnessed and lived every day – killing the COVID-19 virus and stopping the spread, requires a fundamental change to our lifestyle. Together, we all committed to this lifestyle and accepted the new normal to our daily routines. There are no exceptions for rank or position. We remain committed to keep everyone safe while continuing our daily missions. Despite the challenges COVID-19 presented, we balanced the overall health, safety, and protection of the force while maintaining our "Fight Tonight" readiness posture.

We are not out of the woods here in Korea. We must all remain vigilant and everyone must do their part in our efforts to control the virus and stop the spread. So far, everyone within U.S. Forces Korea has been one-hundred percent compliant with our preventive mitigation efforts. I am extraordinarily proud of our USFK staff, all of our component commands, our service members, and our amazing families and employees who are maintaining their vigilance and resiliency during this time. Keep up the hard work!

"KILL THE VIRUS!"

## COVID-19 TESTING BEFORE TRAVEL

Get tested **no more than 3 days before** you travel.  
Postpone travel if you are waiting for test results.  
Watch for symptoms of COVID-19.



MHS Military Health System  
health.mil

[www.cdc.gov/covid19travel](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19travel)



## COVID-19: TESTING AFTER TRAVEL

Get tested **3-5 days after** you travel **AND** stay home and self-quarantine for **7 days** after travel.  
If you don't get tested, **STAY HOME** and **SELF QUARANTINE** for **10 days** after travel.  
If you test positive or have symptoms of COVID-19, **ISOLATE** yourself to protect others from getting infected and follow public health recommendations.



MHS Military Health System  
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[www.cdc.gov/covid19travel](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19travel)





## Eighth Army Commanding General's Message



**Lt. Gen. Willard M. Burleson**  
Eighth U.S. Army  
Commanding General

*As* we mark the one-year anniversary of the pandemic, I think it is important that we recognize the hardships we have faced and the successes we have experienced in protecting the force and our communities. It has been tough, but we have never quit.

Words cannot describe the pride I feel to be associated with the extraordinary people who are Eighth Army. We are united by a culture of discipline and determination that makes us unbeatable in the face of events like the COVID-19 pandemic. You demonstrate incredible resolve, which helps us overcome tremendous difficulties. Your resolve is what has driven us to success and is the key to our continuing efforts to Kill the Virus.

As I look back at what we have experienced during the last 12 months, I am most proud of the accomplishments of our Soldiers and Families. Our U.S. Army Garrison teams have tirelessly worked to keep us informed and adapted to provide us with world-class facilities and services. Our Warriors in the 2nd Infantry Division took on the challenging mission of running our quarantine facilities and leading Team Clean efforts throughout the peninsula. Team 19 Soldiers assisted in these efforts to fuel, feed, and supply those who stayed in the quarantine barracks, and welcomed personnel at airports across Korea. Signalers in the 1st Tactical Theater Signal Brigade ensured we all stayed connected, so the mission never stopped. Just as important as the dedication and commitment of our Soldiers and Civilians is the grit and resolve displayed by our Families – members of the Pacific Victor team who quietly sacrifice in support of their Soldiers, whether here in Korea or back home. Their steadfast commitment and continued support are an inspiration to us all.

COVID-19 has posed an unprecedented threat to our force and we could not have succeeded without the tremendous professionalism and endless hard work of the men and women of the 65th Medical Brigade, Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital, and the medical professionals stationed throughout the Korean Peninsula. If not for them, we would not have succeeded in protecting our communities and leading the Army in combatting the virus.

It is they who formed the tip of our spear treating, screening, and providing public health advice to commanders and our communities. And now these great professionals are leading the effort to vaccinate our people.

While vaccines present a light at the end of the tunnel, we must not let up in our efforts to squash COVID-19. This virus remains dangerous, and we must continue to live up to our obligations here in Korea to remain mission ready. To protect our mission, we must protect our force and our Families. This starts with our Core Tenets, which have successfully kept infection rates extremely low over the last year. It is crucial that we continue to follow these measures if we are to maintain this success.

You have set an incredible example for our Army and by doing so represented our values to our Korean hosts. Command Sergeant Major Robert Cobb and I are humbled and extremely proud to be leading this Pacific Victors team. Thank you for everything you have done and will continue to do to combat the virus. While we must all remain vigilant, we can take pride in our accomplishments and look forward to continued success.

“PACIFIC VICTORS!”

## 65th MED BDE / MEDDAC-K Commander's Message



**Col. Dave Zimmerman, Jr.**  
65th Medical Brigade /  
MEDDAC-K Commander

*The* challenges of COVID-19 in the last year have reminded us of the importance of medical readiness. The 65th Medical Brigade/MEDDAC-K Team worked tirelessly to improve processes and protocols and enabled 24-hour mission command for the COVID-19 Pandemic in February 2020. All 65th subordinate commands played a vital role in this fight.

The 549th Hospital Center / Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital (BDAACH) answered the call to protect the force and our community. The 502nd Field Hospital deployed to Area IV to set up the first-ever quarantine and isolation facility in Korea, developing standard operating procedures that were shared across the DoD. The BDAACH laboratory rapidly acquired all the necessary equipment and supplies to provide COVID-19 testing with same day turn around results and processing thousands of tests weekly.

The 168th Multi-Functional Medical Battalion provided immediate medical command and control to the Daegu Cluster outbreak last year and have not let up since. 168th provides daily medical sick call and oversight to all 8th Army quarantine facilities as well as preventive medicine support to Team Clean Operations.

The 106th Medical Detachment (Veterinary Service Support) and the 618th Dental Company Area Support provided manpower for contact tracing and the COVID-19 hotline at a moment's notice.

The United States Army Medical Material Center at Camp Carroll provided one of the most critical of the BDE's missions, the safe reception and onward movement of the Moderna and Janssen Vaccines throughout the peninsula.

The accomplishments described above, and the world-class medical, dental, and veterinary care that we provide the community, would not have happened without the incredible Pacific Medic Team. Our Soldiers and employees are dedicated, selfless, and more importantly, resilient. They worked tirelessly, missing weekends and holidays, and some worked without any breaks for months. We also want to acknowledge all the medics and surgeon cells outside the 65th Medical Brigade that contributed over the past year. Our battle has not ended but evolved. The entire medical force is engaged in providing upwards of 60,000 total COVID-19 vaccinations to USFK-affiliated personnel in the upcoming weeks to protect the force. This is our duty.

Command Sergeant Major Mark Riddick and I are extremely proud of our team. We owe a tremendous amount of gratitude to each and every one of the 65th Medical Brigade/MEDDAC-K Soldiers and employees, and more importantly, their family members for their support throughout this unpredictable time.

“Pacific Medics, Warrior Care!”

“Pacific Guardians”

“Powerhouse”

“Dragon Dogs”

“Vipers”

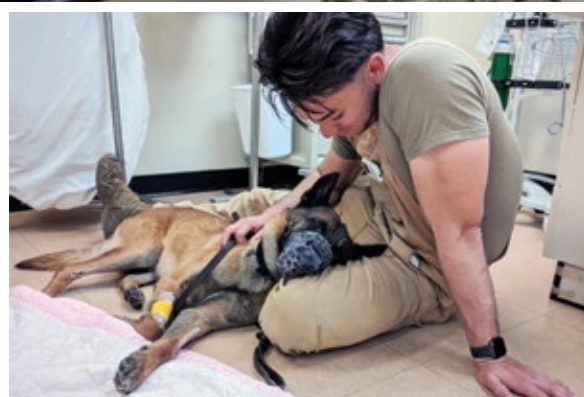
“Never Settle”



## Veterinary Service Team Tackles Dentals of MWDs

Courtesy of 106th Medical Detachment  
(Veterinary Service Support)

Last month, the Veterinary Service Team from Osan Air Base conducted multi-organizational training regarding Military Working Dog dentals as part of the team's field training exercise. The team was comprised of one dentist, one dental hygienist, one Red Cross volunteer, five MWD handlers, one animal care specialist and four veterinary food inspection specialists. Together they were able to complete six MWD dentals including a tooth extraction. This cross-organizational training provided in-depth knowledge of canine anatomy, anesthesia monitoring, and dentistry techniques and fostered greater partnership with other services medical counterparts in dentistry.



## 'Dragon Dogs' Visit ROK Armed Forces Medical Research Institute

Courtesy of 106th Medical Detachment  
(Veterinary Service Support)

On March 26, members of the 106th Medical Detachment (Veterinary Service Support) visited the Republic of Korea Armed Forces Medical Research Institute along with the 53rd Logistics Support Brigade Food Inspection Team to learn about veterinary and food inspection capabilities of the ROK Veterinary Corps. The "Dragon Dog" team toured the AFMRI as well as the Veterinary Clinic within the AFMRI and the Food Storage Facility and Food Laboratory. The visit strengthened the partnership between the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps and the ROK Veterinary Corps establishing opportunities for future collaboration between the two groups.







## Moving with Your Exceptional Family Member

Special to Pulse 65

**P**ermanent Change of Station season is upon us and military moves come with many challenges, but PCSing can be especially overwhelming for military families with an Exceptional Family Member.

The Exceptional Family Member Program is a mandatory reassignment coordination program.

When a family member is identified with special medical and/or educational needs, the special needs are documented through enrollment into EFMP. This enrollment ensures that the family member's documented medical and/or educational needs can be met at their next duty station.

This is especially important on overseas assignments where services may be limited. If you are

PCSing with EFMP dependents there are a few things you can do to make things easier.

First, make sure your dependents EFMP enrollment information is current and up to date. Updates are required when a registered family's special medical or educational needs change, or at least every three years, whichever occurs first.

If a family member's medical or educational needs

change and they no longer meet the eligibility requirements for EFMP, they should be unregistered from EFMP, also known as a disenrollment. The disenrollment removes the EFMP flag from the Soldier's personnel record.

If you have questions in regards to EFMP updates or disenrollments, you can always reach out to the EFMP Medical Case Coordinator.

Another resource to use when you getting ready to PCS is the ACS EFMP – Family Support Team. One of the primary responsibilities of ACS EFMP – Family Support is to help families think through, plan and access specific resources that will help to make the PCS move less challenging.

EFMP Family Support services includes, but is not limited to, information and referral for military and community programs and services, non-clinical case management and warm handoffs when a family transfers to a new location.

The Family Support Team is here to help you navigate the system and get you connected to everything your family needs at your next duty location.

# K-Cosmetics

### *For Women:*

Basic Skin Care, Facial Mask Packs  
Eye Cream, Wrinkle Care Cream  
Lipstick, Mascara  
Whitening Cream, BB (Beauty Balm) Cream  
Mascara, Concealer  
Hair Treatment Products

### *For Men:*

Aftershave Skin Toner  
Aftershave Lotion  
Shaving Gel, Shaving Foam  
Deodorants, Men's BB Cream  
Basic Skin Care Products  
Facial Mask Packs



## K-Cosmetics Beauty Shop

Located in Osan Airbase Exchange Concession

Tel. 010-2698-7427

E-mail: [jjjin34@gmail.com](mailto:jjjin34@gmail.com)



# ACFT 3.0: Exploring a More Inclusive Scoring Assessment, Planks Stay

Story by Thomas Brading  
Army News Service



A Soldier receives instruction on proper form for the Army Combat Fitness Test during the ACFT Trainers Course at the 7th Army Noncommissioned Officers Academy at Grafenwoehr, Germany, July 14, 2020. (Photo by Spc. Zachary Stahlberg)

The latest version of the Army Combat Fitness Test, or ACFT 3.0, is exploring the potential use of a performance tier program that accounts for the physiological differences between the genders, head of U.S. Army Center for Initial Military Training recently said.

The new evaluation system may have five performance categories divided and updated yearly based on Soldier performance, said Maj. Gen. Lonnie G. Hibbard.

Another change also adds the plank as a fully graded substitute for the leg tuck. Soldiers can now select either the leg tuck or plank test as their abdominal core assessment portion of the fitness test. The plank will be scored on a 100-point scale, like the other events.

The announcement is in line with the Army's previous guidance, which has been to make data-informed decisions to improve the Army's cultural fitness, Hibbard said. There are no other changes in the six-event physical fitness test and current changes were informed by compiled information, including Soldier feedback.

"Army senior leaders are listening to what our Soldiers are saying about the ACFT," the general said, adding that the updates address many of their concerns.

## New scoring assessment

The potential new evaluation system may have five performance categories: green, bronze, silver, gold, and platinum. The categories will be developed based on

ACFT performance by male and female Soldiers.

For example, Soldiers in the platinum category may represent the top 1% of all scores, while Soldiers in the green band may represent the lowest 50% of the total force. The scoring averages for male and female Soldiers may vary, but the minimum standard will remain gender neutral.

"Nobody wants to be in the bottom half of the Army," Hibbard said. "[They] want to be in the bronze, or above the top 50% of the total force."

In the future, the evaluation system, normalized across gender, could allow Soldiers to compete against each other, respectively, since Soldiers are naturally competitive, he said. These numbers would also give Army officials a yearly snapshot that gauges the overall fitness of the force.

Officials may rack and stack ACFT scores by gender, from 360 to 600. The ACFT raw cut scores for green, bronze and the others could be based on the percentage of Soldiers in each distribution.

If 1% of male Soldiers receive a raw ACFT score of 585 or higher the prior year, then 585 could be the brass ring for all male Soldiers to reach if they want to be in the platinum category. Females would have their own respective 1% cut score to achieve a platinum grade.

The new performance categories are expected to evaluate individual levels of fitness by helping Soldiers understand how their fitness level compares to their

gender peers. It could also allow the application of scores for future administrative uses for all genders.

Although the scoring system may eventually open the door for Soldiers to measure their fitness among gender peers, for now, performance will not be used administratively, good or bad, as the data collection period remains ongoing. The Army believes full implementation of the ACFT may start as early as March 2022, but full implementation will only be executed when sufficient data exists for Army leaders to make fully informed decisions.

## Plank alternate event

By making the plank a fully scored option for the leg tuck, CIMT officials expect an uptick in scores.

Before, Soldiers who were unsuccessful on the leg tuck could perform the plank and only receive 60 points for passing the event. Now the plank can be chosen in place of the leg tuck for up to 100 points.

This change also helps officials collect more data on how the performance categories will be divided, Hibbard said.

Part of the justification for the plank resulted from some Soldiers, many years into their careers, who were not asked by the Army to build their upper body strength until recently. By opting out of the leg tuck, the plank will give them time to adapt their physical readiness training to the changing culture of fitness, CIMT officials said.

The leg tuck will still be the primary test of core strength, officials say, because it is a better correlation between the fitness requirements needed for warrior tasks and battle drills.

"Every Soldier should strive to lift themselves, but the plank allows Soldiers the time they need to train on this skill," they said.

## Reducing injuries, maintaining readiness

In 2003, officials began noticing Soldiers who served in Iraq and Afghanistan were unable to conduct basic drills, like firing their weapons, moving to cover, or performing first aid. The Army then developed the warrior tasks and battle drills, a series of basic Soldier skills for

all to train on.

By 2009, officials recognized the Army's physical readiness training, or PRT, lacked the tools needed to prepare Soldiers for combat. Thus, the physical readiness training manual, known today as Field Manual 7-22 Holistic Health and Fitness, was unveiled.

But there was a disconnect between the new PRT strategies and the three-event Army Physical Fitness Test. Soldiers were told they needed to develop more muscular strength and power, but all they needed to be considered physically fit was perform well on push-ups, situps and the 2-mile run. This made it difficult to change the Army's physical fitness culture based on the new physical training manual. In contrast, the ACFT measures a Soldier's physical ability to execute combat-related tasks, and is intended to validate the Soldier and unit's physical readiness training.



Sgt. Demos Moore, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist assigned to the 377th Chemical Company, 485th Chemical Battalion, 76th Operational Response Command, performs a plank pose at a gym in Richmond, Va., Feb. 18, 2021. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Brent C. Powell)

## 'Take the test'

One of the biggest hurdles CIMT has faced has been testing anxiety often caused by online misinformation, Hibbard said. The simplest way Soldiers can overcome this is to just take the test.

"The more you take [the ACFT], the more you understand your strengths and weaknesses and how to train for it," he said. By taking it now, it helps enable them to be successful.

"Take the test," said Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael A. Grinston. "If we do that, I believe we'll see fewer injuries across the force, and we'll have an Army that is fit and ready for wherever we're asked to deploy, fight,



Maj. Mark Douglass, assigned to U.S. Army Central Forward at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, deadlifts 340 pounds for maximum points in the event during an Army Combat Fitness Test Jan. 25, 2021. (Photo by Sgt. Jermaine Jackson)



win, and return home.”

Overall, Hibbard said there is currently an 85% pass rate among the Soldiers who have taken the test. Army leaders expect the pass rate on the leg tuck test event to increase between 30-40% by adding the plank as a core abdominal substitute for the leg tuck.

Many of the changes being explored in the tier program were inspired by what foreign allies are doing, Hibbard said. Most times, when allies have overhauled their fitness tests, which took roughly five years to complete, the positive results were apparent.

As allied troops began training, and testing more frequently, their leaders noticed them building muscle memory. The results were consistently improved overall test scores, Hibbard said, adding that is CIMT’s goal for the Army.

“We expect performance tiers will change the culture of fitness, because as the scores improve we believe the bands will get a little tougher,” he said.

Grinston hopes the tactic will help inspire change in the Army’s fitness culture.

“We are going to make policy decisions informed by the data collected

through implementation,” Grinston said. “Currently, less than 25% of the total Army has taken the test. And most of that is from our [Army Forces Command] units.

“What’s more, is only 7% of the Army has taken it twice,” he added. “So, we aren’t able to see the impacts of these decisions.”

Regardless of the iteration, whether it is 2.0, 3.0 or 4.0, one aspect of the ACFT has not changed: it is here to stay and all decisions have been made to reduce injuries and empower Soldiers’ abilities to perform the basic tasks required of them, Hibbard said.



A 229th Military Intelligence Battalion Soldier races to the finish of the sprint-drag-carry portion of the Army Combat Fitness Test at the Presidio of Monterey, Calif., Nov. 1, 2019. (Photo by Marcus Fichtl)

# Army Extends Timeline for Postpartum Soldiers to Meet Body Fat Standards

Courtesy of U.S. Army Public Affairs

The U.S. Army announced an exception to policy March 19 that extends the timeline from 180 days to 365 days for postpartum Soldiers to meet body fat standards in accordance with Army Regulation 600-9, The Army Body Composition Program (ABCP).

Soldiers will not be entered into the Army Body Composition Program or face adverse administrative actions during this timeframe. In addition, Soldiers who are between 181 to 365 days postpartum and were flagged and entered into the ABCP after their pregnancy ended will have their flag removed and they will be removed from the ABCP program.

“I encourage all leaders to proactively provide education and resources to these Soldiers to help them regain their individual readiness,” said Sergeant Major of the Army Michael A. Grinston.

Dr. James A. Helis, Director of the Army Resilience Directorate, said “leaders should ensure nutrition counseling, weight management, and behavior modification resources are available to the Soldier.”



Army Wellness Centers and medical treatment facilities offer a range of advice and assistance, including informal body fat assessments and education, to help Soldiers maintain optimal body composition through healthy eating, sleep, and physical fitness activities.

This exception to policy applies to the Regular Army and the U.S. Army Reserve.

**THE COVID-19 PCR TEST IS 98.99% EFFECTIVE IN DETECTING COVID-19 ONCE A PATIENT IS SYMPTOMATIC, AND PAIRED WITH PROPER QUARANTINE**

COVID-19 PCR TESTING PREVENTS FALSE NEGATIVE TEST RESULTS WHEN PAIRED WITH QUARANTINE. QUARANTINE GIVES HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TIME TO OBSERVE IF PATIENT BECOMES SYMPTOMATIC

QUARANTINE IS USED BECAUSE PATIENTS CAN BECOME SYMPTOMATIC WITHIN 14 DAYS AFTER CONTACT





# Telemedicine Advances Put to the Test During Pandemic

Courtesy of National Museum of Health and Medicine Public Affairs

In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, the Telemedicine and Advanced Technology Research Center continues to develop technology that increases medical capabilities and provides rapid, flexible critical care expertise at the point of need.

During a recent Medical Museum Science Café, held virtually by the National Museum of Health and Medicine in Silver Spring, Maryland, TATRC director Army Col. Jeremy Pamplin described the implementation of the National Emergency Tele-Critical Care Network (NETCCN) and how telemedicine can improve outcomes for disaster response.

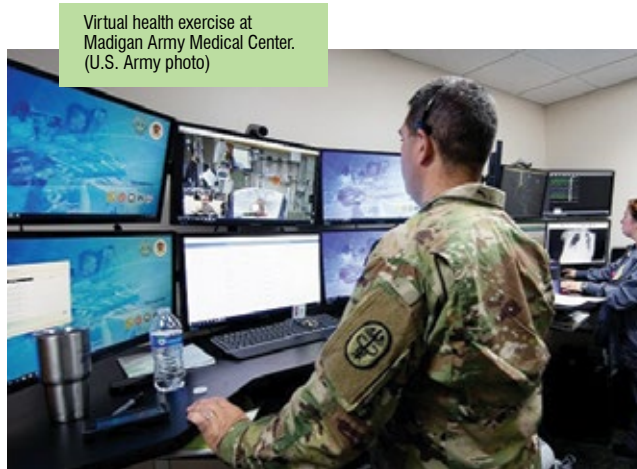
COVID-19 has led to the need for physical distancing and has overwhelmed the capacities of health systems, compelling many to adopt telehealth solutions. Clinicians discovered how telemedicine can enhance communication efforts, reduce exposure and personal protective equipment consumption, improve efficiency and quality of care, increase access to specialty services, and in some cases lower costs and optimize the use of resources.

However, as Pamplin mentioned, the findings fluctuated due to the complex nature of the U.S. health system, which is an intricate mix of local, state, and federal policies and diverse expectations, cultures, and belief systems. For example, the implementation of telehealth may improve outcomes for one organization, whereas the same implementation elsewhere may not.

Pamplin described how he and his colleagues studied the implementation of telemedicine in a military environment.

“Telemedicine in the military has consistently enabled military clinicians around the world to work beyond their typical scope of practice while deployed in austere, resource limited environments by providing reach-back capability to military experts working in referral centers across the globe,” he said.

Pamplin then looked at the potential use of a telecritical health system for large-scale military operations. According to Pamplin, telehealth technology could be adapted to a variety of care contexts including large-



Virtual health exercise at Madigan Army Medical Center. (U.S. Army photo)

scale combat situations or natural disasters that rely on military aid.

Partnering with the civilian sector, Pamplin and his colleagues developed NETCCN, a telehealth system that could consolidate telehealth networks and manage a high patient capacity during an emergency or a national crisis.

When COVID-19 emerged, Pamplin and his team began the implementation of NETCCN to help respond to the current stressed health care system. According to Pamplin, the network brings remote critical care expertise to the point of care, providing e-consult support, remote home monitoring, relief coverage, tiered staffing, and specialty services.

“The NETCCN addresses the lack of critical care clinicians across our nation by shifting these resources where and when needed,” Pamplin said. “In a dynamic, flexible fashion, NETCC links remote expertise to frontline providers, often working beyond their scope of training, using secure, HIPAA compliant applications on mobile devices, thus bypassing the lengthy process of purchasing and installing expensive hardware packages.

Said Andrea Schierkolk, NMHM’s public programs manager: “TATRC’s efforts to address the benefits and challenges of telemedicine were put to the test during the COVID-19 pandemic, and documenting these innovations in military medicine contributes to NMHM’s mission to share the value of the nation’s investment in programs like those of TATRC.”



## Pet Readiness Clinics

19 MAY 2021

8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Rabies vaccines, microchips, pet registration, and assistance with pet travel documentation will be provided on a **walk-in basis**.

\* Payment due at time of service \*

Hosted by 106<sup>th</sup> MD(VSS) and open to pets of all Active Duty, retirees, and dependents at the following locations:

**Camp Humphreys VTF, BLDG 2260**

**Osan AB VTF, BLDG 766**

**Camp Walker VTF, BLDG S341**





## USAMMC-K COVID 19 Efforts

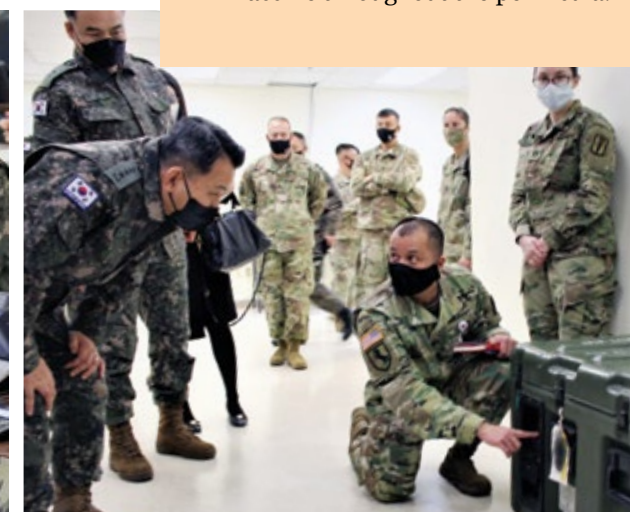
Photos courtesy of USAMMC-K

The United States Medical Mater-  
ial Center-Korea (USAMMC-K)  
in support of the COVID-19  
response efforts were visited by the  
19th Expeditionary Sustainment Com-  
mand Commanding General, Brig. Gen.  
Mark Simerly in March 2020. During  
the tour of the combined efforts of the  
command, the "Never Settle" team de-  
veloped Mission Configured Loads with  
the 2nd Infantry Division in order to  
enable more routine and predicable re-  
supply operations as part of the teams  
ability to meet armistice health care  
requirements whether it is packing for  
ground transport or aerial resupply.



## Eighth Army Leadership Gains Firsthand Look at BDF Capabilities

Photos by William Wight  
65th Medical Brigade Public Affairs Office



Col. Dave Zimmerman, 65th  
Medical Brigade Commander,  
briefed the U.S. Forces Korea  
Deputy Commander Combined  
Forces Command, Gen. Seung Kyum  
Kim, the Eighth U.S. Army Deputy  
Commanding General (ROK) Brig.  
Gen. Tae Keun Heo and the now  
former Deputy Commanding General  
Eighth Army Sustainment, Brig. Gen.  
Michael D. Roache on the capabili-  
ties of the Brigade, its mission, and  
capabilities. The generals were  
given an overview of the transition  
to hostilities role of the host nation  
hospitals and the U.S. ROK interop-  
erability. After the visit, the duo  
was given a tour of the Humphreys  
COVID-19 Vaccination Center led by  
the 549th Hospital Commander and  
Brian D. Allgood Army Community  
Hospital Commander, Col. Huy Luu,  
who briefed on the collaborative  
efforts of the ROK and U.S. medical  
components regarding the delivery,  
storage, and administration of the  
vaccine throughout the peninsula.





U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center-Korea's 563rd Medical Logistics Company Soldiers load Class VIII medical supplies onto a CH-47 helicopter with guidance from the 2nd Infantry Division, 2nd Combat Aviation Brigade 2CAB crew chief. (Photo by Shawn Hardiek, USAMMC-K)

# USAMMC-K Plays Key Role in Fight against COVID-19 in Korea

By C.J. Lovelace, army.mil

**S**oldiers assigned to U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center-Korea (USAMMC-K) maintain a “fight tonight” mindset.

But they never thought “the enemy” would be a virus.

In late December, well before news of a highly contagious coronavirus called COVID-19 began to receive widespread U.S. media attention, USAMMC-K leaders were already at battle -- ensuring U.S. Forces on the Korea peninsula had access to life-saving personal protective equipment (PPE).

“A switch was flipped and it was like: transition to hostilities,” USAMMC-K Deputy Commander

of Operations Maj. Mark Sander said. “We’re enabling all of those things we would be doing in a war-time setting, but [it is] for a public health crisis scenario.”

Sander said USAMMC-K Commander Lt. Col. Marc Welde and the procurement team “saw the writing on the wall,” as they planned for a worst-case scenario for the region.

USAMMC-K, a direct reporting unit of U.S. Army Medical Logistics Command and the theater lead agent for medical materiel, supports roughly 66,000 people, including U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) and the Eighth Army.

Sander said USAMMC-K leadership lobbied for mass procurement

of needed medical supplies and PPE, including surgical masks, gloves and gowns. In the meantime, USAMMC-K was authorized to access a portion of wartime stocks to begin its response immediately.

“We knew that first positive case here in Korea would almost be too late,” Sander said, “so we started increasing stock levels right away.”

Cases of COVID-19 first started appearing in South Korea in late January. Within weeks, the virus continued its spread throughout Asia and beyond. Now a global pandemic, COVID-19 cases exceed 435,000 with over 19,500 deaths worldwide as of March 25, 2020, according to media reports.

While some countries are seeing

significant increases in new cases, South Korea has received praise for its aggressive response to limit the spread of the virus through widespread testing and quarantines.

Similar protective measures were quickly implemented at USFK military installations and facilities, including screening at installation entrances and quarantining people returning from known hot spots. Sander said they developed quarantine kits that included masks, gloves and a thermometer to self-monitor a fever that often develops with the disease.

“It was really just about stopping the spread, so it meant more of the same materiel was needed in more locations,” he said.

Those additional locations included quarantine facilities set up by USFK and isolation centers activated by the 65th Medical Brigade, both needed to protect healthy individuals as active cases increased.

While waiting on orders of supplies, Sander said the center also was able to locally procure thermometers and critical COVID-19 specimen collection kit materials for testing.

“Our good job forecasting back in January paid off,” he said. “We were seeing our first big supply of masks coming in by the first week of March, so now we had materiel almost right when we needed it. The arrival of large volumes of materiel increased our stock levels and we didn’t have to go out and look locally as much, which means we aren’t competing with the Koreans for materiel.”

Defense Logistics Agency-Troop Support played an instrumental role in USAMMC-K’s response, working around the clock on behalf of the Department of Defense to access very limited commercial stocks



A 563rd Medical Logistics Company Soldier unloads a delivery of medical supplies to support the medical materiel response to COVID-19. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Gerald Sim, USAMMC-K)

in support of the effort, Welde said.

“On most days, we start and end our days with calls to their medical division’s senior leaders to ensure the right materiel, in the right amount, was in the pipeline to support the USFK commander’s operational requirements to combat the virus,” he said.

USAMMC-K also closely synchronized its fight by leveraging tactical assets for distribution with the 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command and 2nd Infantry Division, including CH-47 helicopters from the 2nd Combat Aviation Brigade and combat vehicles assigned to the 563rd Medical Logistics Company and the 498th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

Welde said he was proud to see his team’s quick and tireless action, in concert with partner agencies, to achieve the mission of supporting the joint force and their families.

“Our response really tested all of our combat systems in a game where winning matters,” he said. “So far, we are winning.”

As of late March, Sander said there remains less than 40 people in quarantine, with only 10 confirmed COVID-19 cases across

USFK installations. No cases have been recorded at USAMMC-K.

Sander said the pandemic has been an “emotional event for everyone,” but for the workforce and USAMMC-K’s partners to understand how critical medical logistics remains in the fight against a health crisis, “it’s really incredible.”

“Every link in the chain, all the way back to the Pentagon, saw that we had a great need and acknowledged the good work and analysis of the staff and understood how important it was to support us,” he said.

With new infections slowing in Korea, Sander said it frees up USAMMC-K’s available stocks and pending supply orders to be used elsewhere in the world where the need is greater.

“The big lesson out of this was that we know exactly how much we can store and how ready we can be without creating a single penny of waste,” he said. “... The joint staff made the decision to build to that stock level and maintain, so we’re going to be ready for a worst-case situation if something happens and there’s another big outbreak.

Added Sander: “We’re ready today.”



# Ask the Health Coach

The U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys Army Wellness Center's Health Educators take your questions to help YOU to stay FIT. This month, AWC Health Educator *Jonica Davis* will answer a health question.



*Hi, Coach,  
What are some stress management techniques that can be incorporated to help deal with the stress of the coronavirus (COVID-19)?*  
- Marissa W.



## Stress Management Techniques during COVID-19

**That** is a great question. It can be terrifying to know that you may be at risk of contracting a virus such as the Coronavirus (COVID-19). However, organizations such as the Centers for Prevention and Disease (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the U.S. Forces Korea Command are taking all precautions to limit exposure to this illness. Feelings of fear, anxiety, sadness, and uncertainty are normal during pandemic. While fear and anxiety about the illness are high, there are some things that can be done to keep both your mind and body strong.

- **Read news from trustworthy sources**

It is tempting to want to check for updates throughout the day. However, try to avoid over checking as it will keep the mind in an escalated state of anxiety. This anxiety can be transmitted onto your children or those around you creating more panic. Avoid focusing on the catastrophic prediction often posted on social media outlets. Instead, stick to reliable

sources such as information from the CDC, WHO, or the 65th Medical Brigade.

- **Reduce anxiety by limiting exposure**

The WHO recommends that the best measures for limiting exposure is good hygiene practices. Washing your hands thoroughly and frequently. Keeping a social distance (3 feet) between yourself or anyone who is coughing or sneezing. Avoid touching eyes, mouth, or nose as they may be an entry point for the virus. If you are presenting symptoms such as cough, fever, or difficulty breathing and think you may have been in contact with someone with the illness, follow the instructions of your local health agency.

- **Be mindful**

It is important to create a sense of mindfulness when interacting with others. Being mindful will help aid with our ability to be compassionate in such a stressful time. Everyone reacts differently to stress. Being mindful of others' reactions, realizing that stress levels are high, will help us to react with kindness and understanding. We want to create peace and a sense of comfort for those we encounter.

- **Know what resources are available**

Be sure to know what resources are available when dealing with stress. Contact your primary care provider, chain of command, or the Army Wellness Center (AWC). AWC provides Stress Management Education and Individual Stress Management Training to aid clients in identifying stress levels, decrease those stress levels, and support an effective and sustainable practice of self-regulation and energy management skills. The AWC Stress management core utilizes stress management techniques (i.e. deep breathing, guided imagery, muscle relaxation) by facilitating Individual Stress Management Training. (AWC cannot treat or diagnose stress-related disorders.)



Here are some great resources to utilize if you're feeling the stress of COVID-19:

- Information: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- This website offers several free guided meditations to reduce stress: [www.mindful.org](http://www.mindful.org)

## Every May is MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

An estimated 1 in 5 adults experience a mental health disorder each year. Many of these conditions are treatable, but many suffer in silence because of stigma or shame.

If you know someone in crisis, contact the Military Crisis Line: 800-273-8255 or Website: [militaryonesource.mil/health-wellness](http://militaryonesource.mil/health-wellness)



[armymedicine.health.mil](http://armymedicine.health.mil)







# Premature Twins Evacuated Through Joint Services Efforts Midst a Pandemic

Story and photos by William Wight  
65th Medical Brigade Public Affairs Office



Having children for the first time can be one of the most exciting moments in a couple's life. Giving birth to twins in a foreign country, more than four months early, was not the excitement newlyweds Spec. Cody McFall, 21, and Pvt. 1st First Class Cheyenne Evans, 20, both military police with the 188th Military Police Company/94th Military Police Battalion at Camp Walker, said they were expecting.

The twin boys, Parker and Laine were born prematurely on

February 17 in Daegu's Yeungnam University Medical Center during the COVID-19 outbreak. The new family were air evacuated on a specially designed C-17 Globemaster III, equipped with a neonatal intensive care unit on board, to receive care at Maryland's Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, where the boys will receive outpatient care that is difficult to accommodate here in Korea.

"These infants are going to need seven or eight different pediatric subspecialties, none of which we have," said Col. Joseph Hudak,

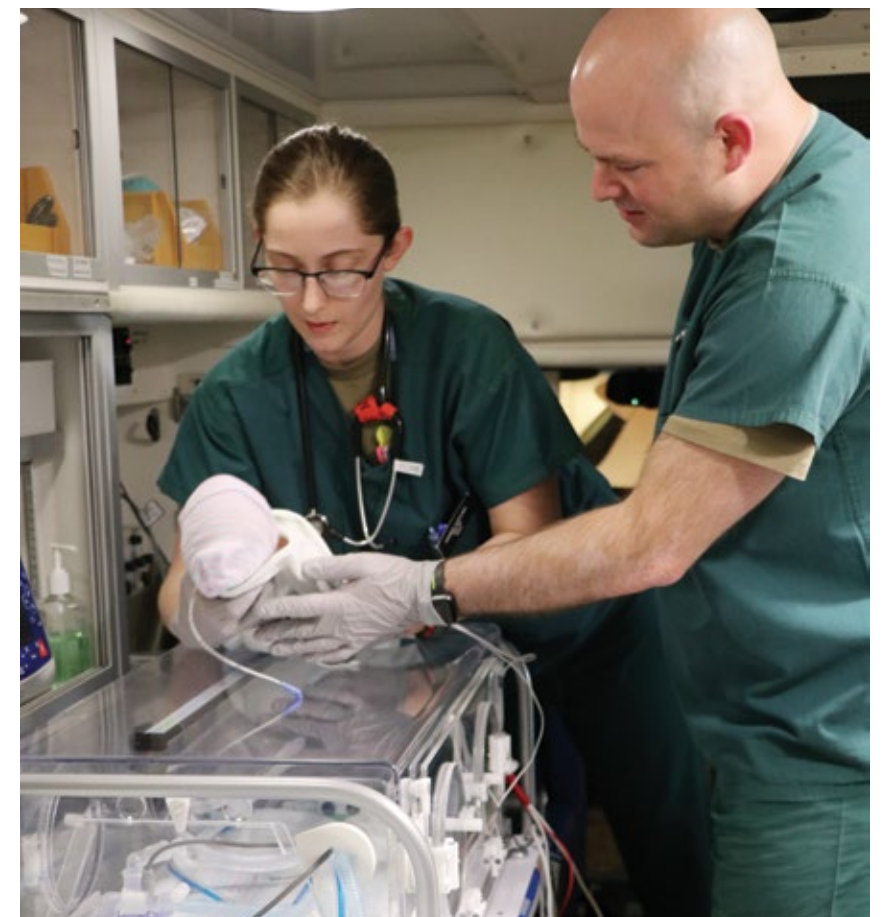
deputy commander for clinical services and neonatologist with the Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital. "They are available in Korea with our host nation hospital network, but they are more challenging to coordinate, and these babies are going to need a lot of specialty care."

The U.S. Army's 65th Medical Brigade, the U.S. Air Force's 51st Medical Group, the USAF's 18th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron out of Kadena Air Base, Okinawa Japan along with Hawaii's Air National Guard's 154th Wing from

Hickham Air Force Base lifted off from Osan Air Force Base March 30 for the 18-hour direct flight to Joint Base Andrews Maryland with follow on care by the U.S. Navy at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

"The capabilities of that neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) on the aircraft are exactly the same as any NICU in the United States that is in a fixed facility," said Maj. Phillip Strawbridge, chief of medical staff for Osan Air Base's 51st Medical Group. "We just put it in the air in the back of a C-17."

"The C-17 is a robust platform for doing air medical evacuations, especially for critically ill people," Strawbridge added. "It has the power built in, it's got oxygen and medical gas built in, so we don't have to bring a lot of equipment on there."







Hudak said that this is a significant movement of an Army family, that needs care not readily available in Korea, half-way around the world using Air Force assets to transfer to a Navy hospital in the midst of a pandemic.

Strawbridge echoed Hudak by saying that the operation demonstrated the incredible capabilities of the military health care system by taking these infants across the other side of the planet with no risk.

In a press release from the 51st Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office, the 18th AES from Japan's Kadena Air Base is one of the few Neonatal Critical Care Air Transport Teams in the world. The squadron's ability to mobilize quickly with the most advanced equipment available gives patients the critical care they need. Advanced precautions were made to protect the infants, parents, medical providers and aircrew



coming from across the region to support the critical care transport.

Neonatal Critical Care Air Transport Teams give children access to the higher echelon of care they need, and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center is the only facility currently able to accommodate the infants' specific needs.

The twins each weighed less than 2 and a half pounds when they were born, McFall said and are now closer to 4 pounds of weight.

Throughout the flight, the twins flew in the comfort of their incubators. Cody and Cheyenne were able to give their twins bottles and change their diapers.

"We didn't have any problems at all with the babies on the flight," Cody said. "It was a smooth flight and both Cheyenne and I are very grateful for all the assistance we have been given during this process. I don't know where we'd be without the military health care system or how we would have gotten everything done."

The young couple were compassionately reassigned to a military police detachment at Fort Meade, some 25 miles from Walter Reed.





# 'Pacific Medics'

Special to PULSE65

Since the cases of COVID-19 first began appearing on the peninsula back in January, the “Pacific Medics” sprang into action assisting the USFK leadership’s efforts with protective measures across the Peninsula, providing medical screening at installation entrances, establishing quarantine and isolation facilities, shipping medical materiel such as masks, gloves, thermometers and testing kits and establishing a 24-hour phone hotline. Here are some pictorial highlights of the 65th Medical Brigade COVID-19 response efforts throughout the peninsula.

# Combat COVID-19





# 'Pacific Medics' Combat COVID-19



# 'Pacific Medics' Combat COVID-19





# U.S. Soldiers Help South Koreans Disinfect Area in City at Center of Outbreak

Courtesy of Stars and Stripes

**A**merican soldiers recently donned protective gear to help South Koreans disinfect a housing complex in Daegu in the first such joint operation since the coronavirus outbreak began in the southeastern city.

The 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command and South Korea's 2nd Operations Command, both headquartered in Daegu, spent just over an hour to clean the area, according to the 19th ESC's public affairs office.

Soldiers wore hooded jumpsuits, goggles, face masks and blue plastic booties as they sprayed the cleaning agent on the street outside the housing complex.

The South Korean Army had thoroughly disinfected the interior after the apartment building saw several people infected by the virus more than a week ago but had not yet cleaned the outside.

Daegu and surrounding areas have suffered the majority of confirmed coronavirus cases in South Korea after a woman tested positive in mid-February and proved to be a carrier.



Soldiers from the 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command join Republic of Korea Soldiers in a disinfectant operation after a coronavirus outbreak in Daegu. (Photo by Kevin Bell, 19th ESC Public Affairs Office) ▲



Two U.S. Army Soldiers and a Republic of Korea Soldier spray a COVID-19 infected area with a solution of disinfectant in downtown Daegu. (U.S. Army photo by Hayden Hallman) ▲



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2nd Lt. Hannah Shiflet, with the 630th Clearance Company, 12th Engineers Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Humphreys, Republic of Korea, puts a protective mask on her face as she prepares to interact with occupants of the quarantine barracks, building 371. Shiflet, a native of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, and a West Point graduate, became an occupant of building 371, where she is the officer-in-charge, after visiting a COVID-19 hotspot, March 27, on Humphreys.



2nd Lt. Hannah Shiflet carries quality control surveys to the occupants of the quarantine barracks, building 371. Shiflet, a native of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, and a West Point graduate, became an occupant of building 371, where she is the officer-in-charge, after visiting a COVID-19 hotspot, March 27, on Humphreys.



2nd Lt. Hannah Shiflet, poses for a photo at the quarantine barracks, building 371. Shiflet, a native of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, and a West Point graduate, became an occupant of building 371, where she is the officer-in-charge, after visiting a COVID-19 hotspot, March 27, on Humphreys.

**A** quick pit stop inside an Exchange Shoppette is rapidly becoming a questionable endeavor for many, yet on March 27, 2nd Lt. Hannah Shiflet went inside despite her second thought. Had she continued ahead to work instead of stopping to purchase pens, she would have been working at the quarantine barracks instead of staying there for a 14-day quarantine.

“A lot of people were at the 24-hour shoppette trying to get supplies. It was the day we went to HPCON C+ (Health Protection Conditions Charlie Plus),” Shiflet said. “It was really crowded, and I remember thinking to myself, ‘gosh, I really hope I don’t end up on CCTV footage’...and I did. It was unfortunate.”

Shiflet, the officer in-charge of building 371, known as the quarantine barracks with the 630th Clearance Company, 12th Engineers Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, thought she would spend the day working, until she checked her email.

“I had just gotten on shift and I had an email from a major with the 65th Medical Brigade. She asked

# A Shiflet in Roles

Story and photos by Sgt. Broderick Hennington  
65th Medical Brigade Special Correspondent



if it was me on page four of the camera footage.” Shiflet continued with a laugh, “undeniably it was me.”

Discovering she was on video at a hotspot wasn’t as difficult for Shiflet as it is for others.

Staff Sgt. Dylan Ledbetter, a combat engineer, with the 630th Clearance Company, is currently serving as a shift noncommissioned officer at building 371, assisted in identifying the pictures.

“When we pulled it up, she turned red,” Ledbetter said. “I was dying laughing. We all knew what was about to go down, but her mind went to how she could get out of this. She just crumbled.”

Everyone knew there was no avoiding quarantine because it’s meant to protect the force.

Pvt. 1st Class Joshua Davis, a combat engineer, with the 630th Clearance Company, is currently working at building 371, understands that nobody is immune to the virus or at least exempt from the protective measures it triggers.

“We’ve had colonels, majors, and every other rank go through this process,” Davis said. “So why not ma’am? It can happen to anyone.”

Still, as Shiflet and everyone else made light of the situation, they all remained professional.

From the moment she saw herself on CCTV, Shiflet understood what steps she needed to take throughout the process and what to expect.

“I knew I had to call the force health protection line,” Shiflet said. “I called my company commander and gave an update, and I followed the protocols from there.”

Shiflet was then escorted to be tested. After several hours, she returned to her office now her new home for the next 14 days.

Upon arrival she was able to see the direct effect of her leadership.

“They treated me like any other

occupant. They gave me the brief that I normally would give,” Shiflet said. “I know they’ve listened to me brief it, and they did it perfectly. They were very professional.”

While quarantined, she noted improvements that she felt could be made to increase efficiency of the process and improve the quality of life for the occupants.

Shiflet said she didn’t enjoy being quarantined, but it was good to see the process from start to finish. It allowed her to see what could be done better.

Although quarantined, Shiflet didn’t relax, nor ignore her duties. She received updates from her NCOs about the status of the barracks and the team’s tasks.

She also utilized the discipline she obtained attending West Point by waking at 7:30 a.m. daily, implementing a rule of not returning to bed after it was made and sticking to a strict workout plan.

“I would start my workout around lunchtime. I’d workout for about two hours, Shiflet said. “I like to run. I’d do a few runs in my room. I ran six miles wall-to-wall, it was

six steps to each wall, and then turned around.”

While discipline and professionalism are vital to the team running building 371, they still found time to help raise her morale.

“One of them put my food in a box and pushed it to me with a broom because I was ‘infected,’ it was all in good fun,” said Shiflet.

During the time she spent in quarantine, Shiflet said she gained a different perspective of those her team assists.

“I used to get annoyed when occupants would ask for new trash bags. Two plates isn’t full,” Shiflet said. “After being in quarantine I realize it’s not just your trash being full. It can also smell. Now I tell people in-processing, at any point if it smells, put it in the hall and we’ll take it.”

Shiflet was released after her 14-day quarantine. She tested negative for COVID-19 and received a warm reception upon returning to her post.

“She was out-processed in the morning and came back to work she changed,” Ledbetter said. “That’s when the jokes started. We were like she’s free! She’s out! She’s not infected! When she came back we were all excited. It was nice.”

Since she’s been released, Shiflet has eagerly rejoined her team and began using her experience to improve the environment at building 371.

“I was definitely happy to get out but more happy to get to work. I could hear my guys working while I was quarantined and felt guilty I wasn’t with them,” Shiflet said. “I think my Soldiers here do a good job of getting occupants what they need. An operation like this takes a while to perfect but we’re making changes everyday to make it better.”

MEDDAC-K COVID-19  
Year in Review

# Pyeongtaek Thanks Eighth Army NCO for COVID-19 Info Sharing

Story by Kenji Thuloweit  
8th Army Public Affairs

People make up the bonds that hold the Eighth Army and Republic of Korea alliance together. One of those people is Staff Sgt. Daniel Velez of Eighth Army’s G9 staff. The Civil Information Management NCO was recognized July 10 at Pyeongtaek City Hall for his work in compiling COVID-19 data for Eighth Army, which is also shared with the city of 500,000 people to help with its plans and operations combatting the virus.

Mayor Jung, Jang-seon, presented Velez and U.S. Air Force Capt. Gregory Smith of Osan Air Base with plaques of appreciation. The mayor said the relationship between Pyeongtaek and U.S. Forces Korea is strong and thanked the two for their efforts in helping the city prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Since the beginning of the pandemic here in South Korea, Velez has been crunching and compiling COVID-19 data from both local and continental United States sources. The data is then sent to U.S. Forces Korea for its coronavirus operations and ultimately shared with Pyeongtaek City.

“They’re able to see what is currently happening on post and what is currently happening off post,” Velez said. “When we had the occurrence of cases on Camp Humphreys, they were able to see how quickly and actively we were tracing each one. They were seeing how quickly we



Pyeongtaek City Mayor Jang-seon Jung elbow bumps Staff Sgt. Daniel Velez, Eighth Army G9 Civil Information Management NCO, at Pyeongtaek City Hall July 10. Velez received a plaque of appreciation for his work with managing COVID-19 data. (Photo by Cpl. Seung-hyun An, 8th Army Public Affairs)

were organized and taking care of the response to include all the other posts on the Korean peninsula.”

Being the home to U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys, it’s vital for information to be shared between Pyeongtaek and Eighth Army headquarters. Velez’s Eighth Army COVID-19 data helps Pyeongtaek officials see where virus hotspots are occurring on and around Camp Humphreys and also helps the city plan by seeing virus data from Army post locations in the U.S. where Soldiers coming to Korea are leaving from.

“When the virus began to hit Camp Humphreys personnel, we were managing all the informa-

tion,” said Velez. “We were tracking each case, what roads (a person drove on), bus and taxi routes, and supplying the data to USFK and Pyeongtaek. Pyeongtaek City was given access to our COVID-19 data including what was happening in the continental United States.”

Velez said he’s honored and humbled to be recognized by the Pyeongtaek mayor and continues to manage Eighth Army information on COVID-19 cases so “we can develop a clear understanding for the commander so he can make the right decisions.”

Velez hails from Palm Desert, California, and arrived in South Korea last November.





Pvt. 1st Class Micah Lewis, a veterinary technician with the 106th Medical Detachment, 65th Medical Brigade, holds a puppy after its surgery, April 9. Lewis was quarantined after visiting a "hot spot" on Humphreys, tested negative for COVID-19 and was released after 14 days.

## Confined within a Bubble

Story and photo by Sgt. Broderick Hennington  
65th Medical Brigade Special Correspondent

**M**aking a quick purchase in an Exchange Shoppette is something that many people do without giving it much thought - and that's exactly what Pvt. 1st Class Micah Lewis did on March 19. Little did she know that quick purchase, now forgotten, would land her in a 14-day quarantine.

"I was at the shoppette near Eighth Army (headquarters)," said Lewis. "It was around noon. I was there for maybe 15 minutes. I don't even know what I bought. Then, I went back to work."

Lewis, a veterinary technician with the 106th Medical Detachment, 65th Medical Brigade, wasn't aware

that visit to the shoppette would get her quarantined.

"I was doing a surgical training exercise and began getting really sick. I was throwing up, coughing, sneezing and had a really bad headache," Lewis said. "Then, my first sergeant got a list of hot spots, I was at one of them a few days prior."

Over the last month, amid calls to "protect the bubble" and #KilltheVirus, Humphreys still has seen cases of the coronavirus.

The unpredictable nature of the virus has altered the way Humphreys operates. Soldiers are currently limited to only takeout dining options both on and off the installation and visiting bars and off-post restaurants is restricted in an attempt to quell the

spread of the virus.

The virus pops up unexpectedly and creates "hot spots" like random checkpoints in a video game.

In the midst of all the preventative measures on March 19, a contractor visited the Sentry Village Starbucks, Zoekler Shoppette and many other locations on post. The person then tested positive for COVID-19 on the following Saturday, which made all those places hotspots and caused many to be quarantined.

Lewis was one of many quarantined across Humphreys.

"We have 73 occupants in this building right now," said 1st Lt. Jonathon NG, executive officer for the 630th Clearance Company, 12th

Engineers Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division. "We have 100 rooms."

The coronavirus has spread across the world and has become a global pandemic. Many people were not prepared for it and Lewis wasn't prepared when she was sent into quarantine.

"They didn't give me a packing list. They didn't give me anything. I went to the quarantine barracks with what I had on, the clothes on my back, my phone and my wallet," Lewis said. "The next day I had to call my NCO and have her bring me clothes, a toothbrush, shampoo...things I needed as a person, to be hygienic."

Sgt. 1st Class Alexander Pagel, a combat engineer also with the 630th Clearance Company, is currently serving as the noncommissioned officer in charge at the quarantine barracks.

"There's three different ways 65th Medical screens people," Pagel said. "The first one is going to the emergency room and having the COVID-19 test. Then they are placed into

quarantine until the results come in. The second is calling the hotline and explaining their symptoms. If instructed to go to quarantine, they are then picked up by a drive team and brought to the barracks. The last is being identified by CCTV footage as being at a hot spot."

Lewis admitted her quarantine experience completely surprised her.

"I don't own a laptop, just a TV," Lewis said. "I didn't expect things to be like that. Not empty. I was assuming we'd have more stuff. We didn't even have Wi-Fi in the barracks. It was really boring."

NG acknowledged that it is difficult to be quarantined within the current circumstances, but he emphasized their efforts to help maintain positive morale.

"Maintaining morale is important, but difficult, because it feels like solitary confinement for some," NG said. "Most of the interaction they get is when we bring their food or when there is a package for us to deliver."

Being quarantined can be difficult,

Lewis used her time to partake in less modern forms of entertainment.

"I told my NCO to bring my notebook, books and pens," Lewis said. "For the next two weeks I sat there and drew. I finished reading 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' 'The Taming of the Shrew' and I started 'A Handmaid's Tale.'"

Although there are alternative, less modern forms of entertainment, the leadership of the barracks is working to improve the current situation.

"In this building we didn't have Wi-Fi," NG said, "A team came and it is now installed."

NG continued to say that the Soldiers have received care packages from many different organizations and unit leadership has dropped off additional comfort items.

After testing negative at the end of her 14-day quarantine, Lewis was released.

Lewis said how glad she was about being out of quarantine and able to go back to work.





# 501st Military Intelligence Brigade UMTs Continue Ministry Despite COVID-19

Story by Kurt Van Slooten  
501st Military Intelligence Public Affairs



Capt. Michael Anderson, chaplain, 3rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 501st MI Brigade, and his two children, work to fill care packages for U.S. Army Soldiers and KATUSA (Korean Augmentation To the United States Army) Soldiers in quarantine on Humphreys during the COVID-19 outbreak. (Photo by Krista Anderson)

**D**uring this time of uncertainty with COVID-19 in communities around the globe, the Unit Ministry Teams (UMT) in the 501st Military Intelligence Brigade are doing their part to bring a light in the darkness.

“Religious support in this time matters, it’s a source of hope, it’s a source of normality,” said Maj. Karlyn Maschhoff, brigade chaplain for 501st Military Intelligence Brigade.

UMTs, commonly composed of military chaplains and enlisted religious affairs specialists, are tasked with maintaining the spiritual portion of a Soldier’s resiliency and caring for Soldiers, civilians, contractors and families that are within their communities. The UMTs have taken that call and doing what they can to make a difference, especially amongst their isolated and quarantined populations.

Maschhoff explained that when a person is able to continue to connect with the things that give them faith, it provides purpose and allows them to keep going and work through the difficulties.

“We want to enable people to continue to practice their faith, we just have to be creative with how we are going to do it, so that we are protecting the force,” said Maschhoff.

Staff. Sgt. Kendra Brandon, the brigade’s religious affairs specialist, said the teams realized that the families in quarantine also needed support and they have been coordinating commissary trips for families unable to leave their quarters. She also emphasized to the UMTs to engage in self-care and take care of themselves so they will be able to support others.

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, Capt. Michael Anderson, 3rd MI Battalion chaplain, hosted Motor Pool Monday resiliency training with his Soldiers at

the motor pool. He continued the program during the outbreak at the motor pool, increasing the frequency now to two a week, but instead of in-person, he makes aspirational and motivational videos for his Soldiers to watch over the internet to continue to speak to his community. He also conducts virtual bible studies to take the place of in-person meetings.

Unfortunately, during this time, some of the brigade’s Soldiers, KATUSA (Korean Augmentation To the United States Army) Soldiers and contractors, were put into quarantine or isolation pending COVID-19 testing results following possible exposure to infected personnel. The 3rd MI Battalion was hit the hardest in the brigade.

When Anderson’s daughter, Elizabeth, heard about it she said, “Daddy, you should put gift bags at their doors with a note that says, ‘Have Hope!’”

So, that’s what he and his religious affairs specialist did; they put gift bags outside the isolated and quarantined Soldiers doors with a business card with Anderson’s contact information so personnel who received a bag could call him if they felt inclined to talk.

Capt. Oleksandr Ishchuk, 524th MI Battalion chaplain, said he with the assistance of his religious affairs specialist, Pfc. Summer Williams, try to make sure they speak with every member of the battalion on a weekly basis to check on them. Those that are emergency essential they see while at work, but the rest he and Williams call personally.

Ishchuk also said he makes an extra effort to stay connected with the Soldiers and families that are stationed in Daegu, Waegwan, and Busan, away from the headquarters at Humphreys. He has reached out to the Family Readiness Group leader for Bravo Company, in Daegu to better keep a pulse on how things are going there and to see who might need some extra attention.

During a typical week, Ishchuk conducts his bible study, “A Slice with Christ,” where participants eat pizza together and study the Bible. However, now in the time of social distancing, he continues to conduct his Bible studies online and is able to deliver 10 pizzas that were donated by the Agape Humphreys Protestant Service to quarantined Soldiers.

Capt. Justin Wax, chaplain for 532nd MI Battalion, said he has also transitioned to digital gatherings to minister to his community. In addition to providing digital religious and motivational outlets, he commented that he is working with his chain of command to coordinate to meet the physical needs of the Soldiers that are in quarantine. This includes supplying them with

things they may have forgotten to pick up like laundry detergent and other nice to have items like snacks to make those individuals’ lives a little easier.

Pvt. 1st Class Christian Bailey, one of the religious support specialists assisting Wax, said, “We are trying our best to make sure Soldiers have what they need and helping them to feel at ease.”

Wax also said he has done some Facetime counseling with Soldiers in quarantine, as well as limited face to face counseling while maintaining social distancing.

“It’s shifted to using digital means, but at the same time, we’re adapting and overcoming to do what we normally do,” said Wax. “We want the Soldiers to know that the digital doors are always open.”

Wax also mentioned that both the Humphreys community and his local community back in the states have been very supportive to the needs of the quarantined Soldiers. His home church and various other churches, as well as the Daughters of the American Revolution chapter from his hometown, have provided multiple shipments of Girl Scout cookies and other care pack-



Capt. Oleksandr Ishchuk, chaplain for the 524th Military Intelligence Battalion, 501st MI Brigade, continued to offer weekly Bible study sessions virtually with the Soldiers and family members on Humphreys during the COVID-19 outbreak.

ages to brighten the mood for Soldiers.

Maj. Daniel Korie, 719th MI Battalion’s chaplain, said he reaches out to his Soldiers in quarantine, adopting what he called tele-chaplaincy, as well as providing virtual religious support to his congregation that celebrates its services on Saturdays. During this time, he said, you may not be able to pray with your Soldiers, but you can pray for them. He said the chaplains will provide whatever help they can and ask Soldiers to continue to flatten the curve by adhering to the brigade directives for isolation and keeping social distance.

Maschhoff ended with a positive message, saying that after the COVID-19 threat is over, “we have a reunion ahead,” and asked everyone to remember to keep people struggling with the virus, both back in the United States and around the world, in their prayers.





# Care from within

Story and photo by Sgt. Broderick Hennington  
65th Medical Brigade Special Correspondent

**C** OVID-19 continues to infect people worldwide and disrupt the lives of millions, but USFK and specifically workers of Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital remain at the forefront of preparedness and readiness combating the invisible enemy while protecting the bubble.

Lt. Col. Rick Sonnier, a BDAACH psychiatric nurse practitioner was informed he had recently conducted a session with a patient who was positive for COVID-19.

“I received a call in the middle of the night and was told I had been exposed to a COVID positive patient the day before,” Sonnier said. “I was told to get to the emergency room and undergo the screening process. I was also told I’d undergo a 14-day quarantine.”

Sonnier knew a stay at building 371, the quarantine barracks, was on the horizon, but he still had important work to complete for his patients.

Fortunately for the patients here, Sonnier is experienced and BDAACH is well equipped to accommodate these types of situations.

“I had patients scheduled for the next day so I was given a government phone with hotspot capabilities. My laptop has a webcam and I’d use Facetime and Google Duo. I’d access the pharmacy and lab systems remotely. I continued to see my patients throughout my time in quarantine, basically it was telehealth, which I’ve done for years.”



BDAACH has made patient care a priority. There are also protocols for retrieving prescriptions, even for those confined within the bubble.

“A few of my patients were also in quarantine barracks,” Sonnier said. “Their chain of command would pick up the prescriptions and deliver them here. It’s quick. Once I input the order, it’s ready simultaneously in the lab.”

Sonnier said because of the hospital’s readiness and the personnel at building 371, he was able to transition to the quarantine barracks seamlessly, and still complete his daily work tasks.

“Quarantine was very smoothly run. The staff was phenomenal,” Sonnier said. “So, It didn’t affect me at all as far as what I do for a living. It was easy to keep going. My environment changed drastically, but for me, it was a regular day.”

## Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):

# 10 Tips for At-Home Quarantine or Self-Monitoring

If you have been directed to quarantine or self-monitor at home because of possible COVID-19 contact:

**1 Stay home** from work, school, and away from public places. If you must go out, avoid using public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.

**2 Monitor for symptoms** and take your temperature twice daily. If you develop symptoms or a fever, then call your healthcare provider immediately.

**3 Get rest, stay hydrated, and exercise** if possible. If you are able to exercise, do so in your home or yard. Avoid the gym or other locations where you may come into contact with others.

**4 If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider** ahead of time and tell them that you have been exposed to COVID-19.

**5 For medical emergencies, call 911** and **notify the dispatch personnel** that you have been exposed to COVID-19.

**6 Take everyday actions** to prevent the spread of germs.

- Clean your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Cover your cough/sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Wear a cloth face covering when you cannot maintain 6 feet of social distance in public areas or work centers.

**7 As much as possible, stay in a specific room** and **away from other people** and pets in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.

**8 Avoid sharing personal items** with other people in your household, like dishes, towels, and bedding.

**9 Clean all surfaces** that are touched often, like counters, tabletops, and doorknobs. Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.

**10 Make the best of your time at home** by teleworking if you’re able or catching up on reading, exercising, or other hobbies.

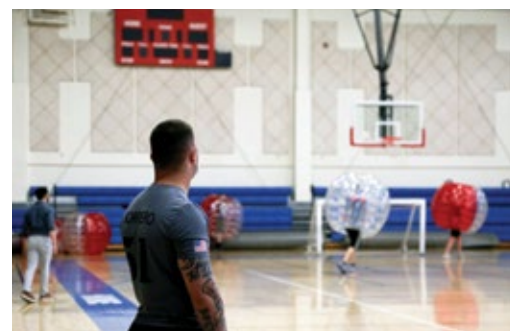
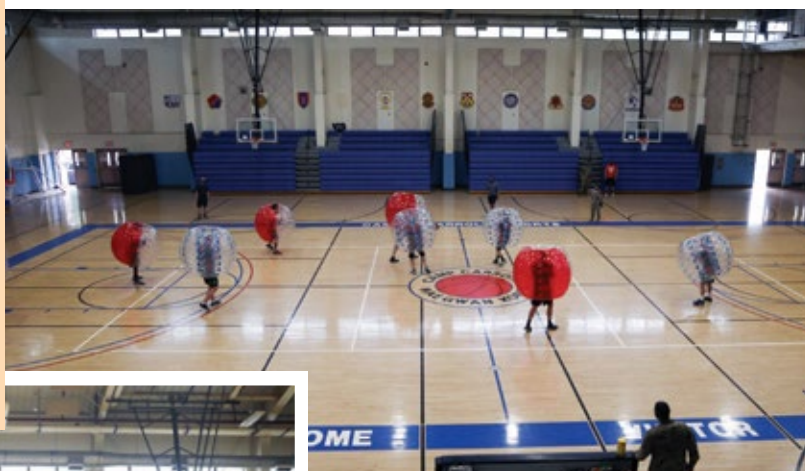


## Medical Logisticians Hold Bubble Soccer Tourney

Courtesy of USAMMC-K



In May 2020, the Soldiers of U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center- Korea (USAMMC-K) at Camp Carroll decided to have some different type of physical activity. With a strong desire to play soccer, the unit was unable to do so due to the social distancing restrictions in place for COVID-19. Using some ingenuity, the “Never Settle” team took their motto one step further and decided to have a bubble wrap soccer tournament.



## 'Pacific Medics' Brief Eighth Army

Photos by William Wight  
65th Medical Brigade Public Affairs



The Eighth U.S. Army Deputy Commanding General - Sustainment, Major General Daniel J. Christian, awarded coins of excellence July 27, 2020 to six outstanding 65th Medical Brigade Soldiers during the Troop Leader Development Brief in the 65th Medical Brigade Headquarters Emergency Operations Center. Due to COVID-19 conditions, the brief was conducted via video teleconference with the Eighth Army staff. It gave the Brigade the opportunity to discuss their current status of manpower, training, equipment and overview of the unit across the peninsula.





# 'CLEAN TEAM' ON FOREFRONT OF COVID-19 FIGHT

Story and photos by Sgt. Broderick Hennington  
65th Medical Brigade Correspondent



and United States Forces Korea have combined to not just effectively 'KilltheVirus' and not only protect the force, but to set a standard for the rest of the world. One unit at Humphreys, the 61st Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Company of the 2nd Infantry Division, works tirelessly and

COVID-19 rages on throughout the world, but it appears that the Republic of Korea

selflessly to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus, at literally, every location the silent enemy shows up.

The Soldiers of the 61st CBRN are tasked with cleaning the hotspots, or locations where personnel who tested positive for COVID-19 visit while on Humphreys, and they can receive a call to duty at any moment.

"Knowing I could get that text at any time you have to always be ready, said Pvt. 1st Class Zachary Bullock, a CBRN specialist, with

the 61st CBRN Co. "The mission was motivating. It was exciting. It was purposeful. I felt useful. I was doing my job."

The Clean Team as they are known as, is composed of the entire company, and configured into eight separate teams of CBRN trained personnel. CBRN training aided some Soldiers with their clean team transition.

"Decontamination is a bit different from sanitization, but some parts of the CBRN training helped,"

said Pvt. 2nd Class Philip Pizzolotto, a CBRN specialist with the 61st CBRN Co. "Avoiding contamination contact was similar in both, and we were wearing the white suits towards the end. It was like wearing the Js-list."

Even with the CBRN personnel, there was still training required for the mission. Preventing the spread of a pandemic is not the same as reacting to nuclear fallout, and not all members of the teams were fully CBRN trained.

"The first step was getting to know everyone because we had maintenance, and everybody mixed together. There was no platoon integrity," said 2nd Lt. Grace Carey, a platoon leader with the 61st CBRN Co. "We trained the basics, then moved on to cleaning the buildings. We trained wearing and removing gloves. It's simple but you'd be surprised how easy it is to forget not to touch the outside of the gloves when taking them off."

To their credit, nobody on the

clean team tested positive for COVID-19, nor have had any Coronavirus contact scares.

The feat is even more incredible considering less than a week after receiving the mission, a planned capabilities demonstration was cancelled because the team was called to cleanse the first hotspot, and then continuously received nonstop calls for a month thereafter.

"There was shock and surprise when we started. We thought it was another dry phase scenario.





Once we realized it was real, we got through it immediately,” said Staff Sgt. Maurice Ward, a CBRN specialist with 61st CBRN Co. “With the rehearsals, we knew what we were doing, and we knew what was expected of us going in.”

The clean team has been protecting the bubble since March 1. The Soldiers have been displaying the core values of the Army, but there have been some difficulties.

Humpherys remains COVID-19 free, due to the ability of the 61st CBRN Company’s ability to sanitize at a moment’s notice, but that notice hinders their personal time.

“You can’t really make plans,” said Pvt. 2nd Class Alexzandra Jones, a quartermaster and chemical equip-

ment repairer, with the 61st CBRN Co. “Once it gets calm and you begin to relax that’s when you get the call and have to go. You can’t even plan to go grocery shopping.”

As it appears the mission of protecting the bubble from COVID-19 is close to completion, the mission of the 61st, is also winding down. Capt. Catherine Coyner, company commander of the 61st CBRN Company has nothing but praise for the response of her Soldiers.

“The execution was flawless,” said Coyner. “There are always things to improve, but once we were able to rapidly assemble teams, acquire supplies and disinfect buildings, it moved more naturally because of how prepared

the Soldiers were. They did a fantastic job.”

Coyner gave high praises to her Soldiers for all their work, but she also acknowledged the sacrifices of the USFK community at large.

“Not only do I want to thank the Soldiers for their outstanding efforts, but I’ve noticed we haven’t gotten a call in quite some time,” Coyner said. “Community spread from the Super Gym to the Shoppette to the Commissary doesn’t happen any longer. It is largely in part to the USFK personnel as a whole. Their patience and adherence to guidelines as a whole is the reason my Soldiers now get rest because everyone wants to kill the virus.”

**MEDDAC-K COVID-19**  
Year in Review

## Multiple USFK Individuals Recovered from COVID-19

Courtesy of USFK Public Affairs Office

Since March 15, including USFK’s first confirmed case and its first active duty service member, 17 USFK-related civilians, contractors and dependents have been declared COVID-19 virus-free.

All recovered individuals were cleared from isolation after meeting the following four conditions: remain asymptomatic for at least seven days, remain free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, successfully pass two consecutive COVID-19 tests with negative results at least 24 hours apart, and be cleared by a medical provider.

USFK medical professionals have implemented a proven treatment plan for those in isolation to aid in recuperation: rest, remain hydrated, eat healthy and nutritious meals, and exercise.

USFK has kept its number of confirmed cases low - less than a 1% infection rate among its 58,000 strong USFK-related population - due to its aggressive preventive control measures, testing asymptomatic individuals before releasing them from quarantine, directing individuals to go home if feeling sick and seek medical care, encouraging rigorous hand hygiene, maximizing social distancing and use of masks when social distancing cannot be achieved, detailed contact tracing, and thorough cleaning and disinfection of known on-post facilities and areas visited by those confirmed with COVID-19.

The above policies and practices stand as a testament to USFK’s aggressive approach to stop the virus’ spread as USFK maintains its “Fight Tonight” readiness posture.

USFK remains at a high level of readiness, and continues to maintain a robust combined defense posture to protect the Republic of Korea against any threat or adversary while implementing and maintaining prudent preventive control measures to protect the force.



# 618th Dental Company Provides Dental Support during COVID-19

Story by Sgt. Broderick Hennington  
65th Medical Brigade Correspondent



just comes up and it makes it difficult to go places. It's a big help because now we don't have to miss work."

The DCAS team comprised of two providers and two dental specialists departed Humphreys around 5:30 a.m., after staging their convoy and packing their equipment so they could provide care to the Soldiers at the air base.

Once the small detail arrived at the aid station, they unloaded their equipment and prepared to service about 40 Soldiers who had scheduled their appointments. Although the 618th regularly performs this exercise, with the COVID-19 threat their mission now helps protect the force from exposure.

"If they weren't coming here to perform dental it would be inconvenient and take away our ability to complete work," Lopez said. "With COVID-19 going on I feel better knowing that they come here."

While at the aid station, all the protective measures implemented throughout USFK are observed, but protecting the force from COVID-19 has also caused the 618th to eliminate teeth cleanings and provide only exams during their visits.

"Dentistry is unique because we deal with people's mouths and aerosols regularly. Some of the precautions we use to prevent COVID are social distancing, use of protective masks and wear of proper personal protective equipment," said Cpt. Kevin Tran, a general dentist with the 618th. "Normally when we perform a

dental exam, we use an air/water syringe. It's basically an air tube which shoots air into the mouth and creates visibility, but we're going to refrain from using that to limit aerosols."

The dental goal of the 618th is to keep Soldiers category one or two, which means a Soldier is in deployable condition. Still, the 618th cannot provide all the necessary dental services from their shop in the aid station in Suwon, even without the threat of COVID-19.

"Everyone needs to be 100 percent ready to go. We don't need Soldiers dental status class three or class four," said Sgt. Renee Macaluso, a dental specialist with the 618th. "Class Four means there isn't an exam on file within the last year and class three requires a dental surgery. These make someone non-deployable. Class three issues require the Soldier to go to Humphreys."



The 618th provides care throughout the entire peninsula and rotates all the clinical staff through this detail. The monthly exercise not only maintains the readiness of Soldiers dental needs, but also allows the DCAS to stay sharp and mission ready.

"It's not just about dental readi-

ness, it helps us (DCAS) with our military readiness by maintaining a fight tonight posture while improving the deploy ability of our service members on the peninsula," said Tran. "We get to practice convoy operations, vehicle maintenance and deploying field dental assets."

## There is

a saying, "In the Army we accomplish more by 9 a.m. than most people do all day", and on a regular day that involves completing physical training, performing personal hygiene, eating breakfast and commuting to work. For the 618th Dental Company Area Support (DCAS), some days it involves setting up a makeshift dental clinic to perform dental services for service members who are not conveniently located near a clinic.

With the disposition of United States Forces Korea personnel in a variety of locations on the peninsula, many service members do not have access to services such as dental care such as the case at Suwon Air Base.

Suwon is composed primarily of Republic of Korea Soldiers, but the U.S. service members stationed there are without access to certain services one would find at other USFK installations.

This lack of access makes it difficult for Soldiers to maintain readiness, but the 618th DCAS has made it their mission to provide Soldiers access to dental care.

"There isn't a dental clinic here, so we have to take the bus really early, at 5:15 a.m. to get to Humphreys," said Pvt. 1st Class. Emily Lopez, an air defense enhanced early warning systems operator, with the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery 6-52 Air Defense Artillery, at Suwon Air Base. "It takes an entire day to go there and back. When working stuff



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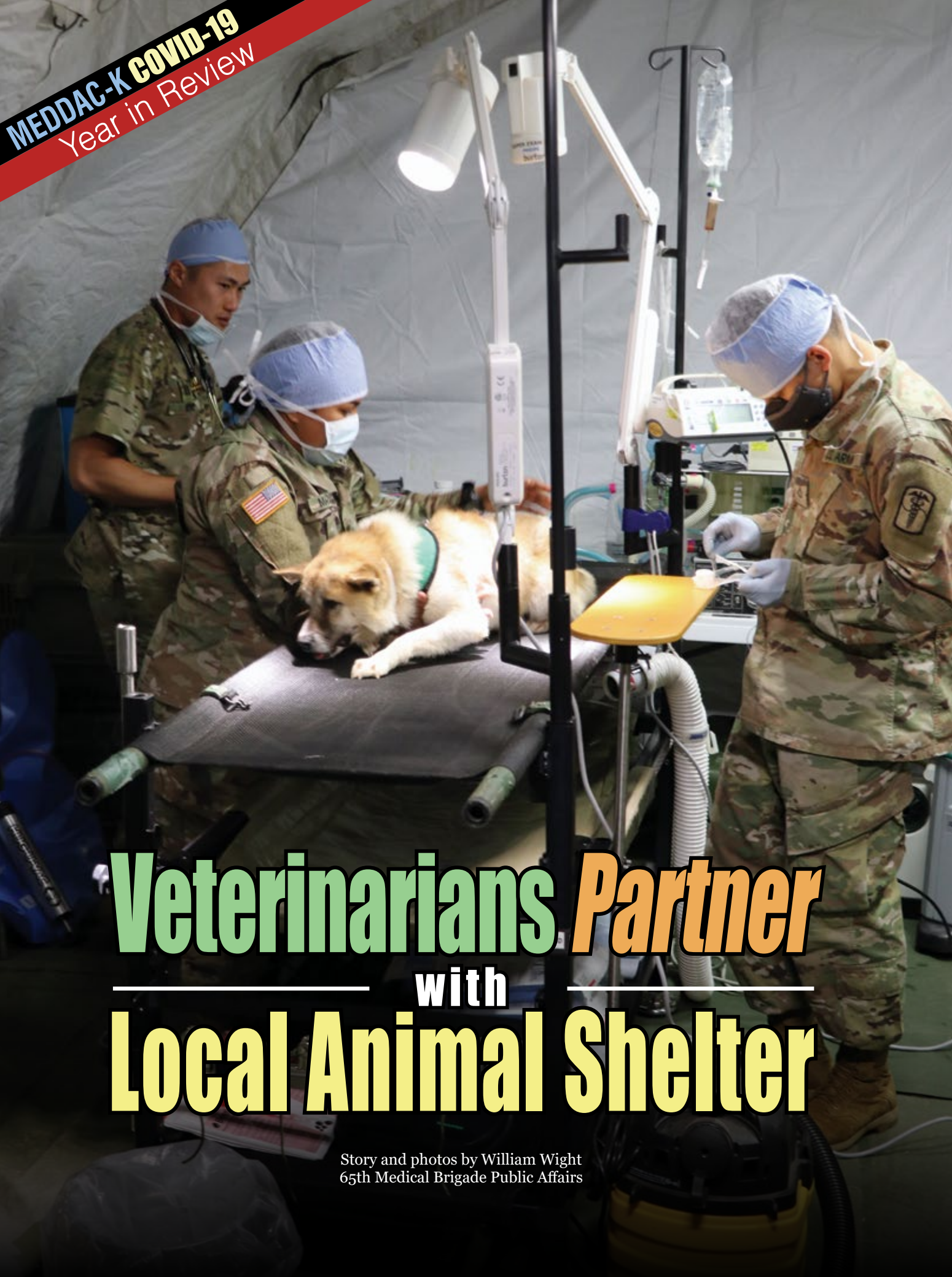
관, 사이판, 워싱턴DC에 자격증이 있는 미국변호사로서 영주권 신청 및 갱신, 가족초청, 시민권 신청, 재입국허가서 등의 이민업무와 미국법원에서의 이혼 등의 업무를 처리해드립니다.

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MEDDAC-K COVID-19  
Year in Review



# Veterinarians *Partner* with Local Animal Shelter

Story and photos by William Wight  
65th Medical Brigade Public Affairs

A

memorandum of understanding was recently signed by the 106th Medical Detachment, Veterinary Service Support, and the Asan Cheonsawon Animal Shelter.

The MOU allows the Detachment to train their wartime mission on live patients provided by the shelter who in turn receive back healthy animals for adoption.

From May 25-26, 2020, the Detachment deployed one of their veterinary service support teams to establish a fully tactical veterinary care facility on Humphreys.

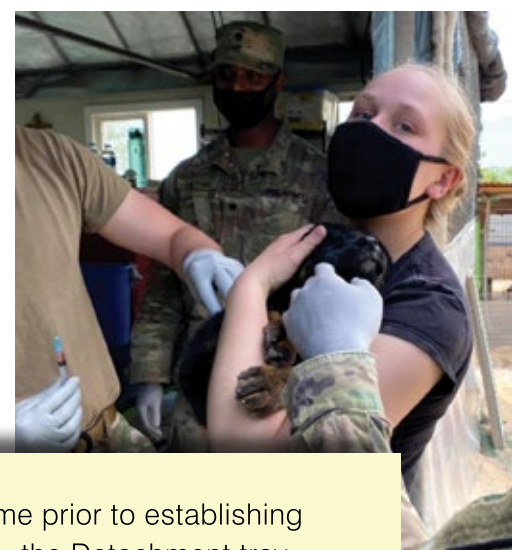






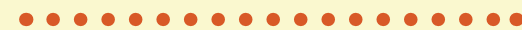
Veterinary Service Support Team 1 of the Detachment established a fully functional site at the Humphreys Small Unit Training Area. Commander of the Team, Capt. Raymond Wong spoke on the benefits of the partnership.

“Our primary mission is military working dogs and during a time of hostilities, we deploy and establish triage facilities on the battlefield for our four-legged service members. This field operation is critical in the ability for the (Detachment) to exercise our capabilities and train for our mission using real live patients by providing complex, realistic, and challenging training in an expeditionary, field-based environment,” said Wong.



A short time prior to establishing the field site, the Detachment travelled to the shelter to provide support in the way of heartworm tests, parvovirus, and distemper vaccinations to the inhabitants there. The vaccines, syringes and test kits were provided by Dr. Mina Seo from Busan Pet Care Animal Hospital.

The 106th is designed to operate in small teams dispersed throughout Korea. This field operation is critical in the detachment's exercise of its capabilities and its continued ability to complete its mission of veterinary service support on the peninsula.





# ROK Army Medical Officers 'Patched' to 65th Medical Brigade

Story and photos by William Wight  
65th Medical Brigade Public Affairs



The 65th Medical Brigade Commander, Col. Dave Zimmerman, welcomed the incoming 131st cycle of Republic of Korea Army Medical Officers as part of the Integrated Service of Republic of Korea Military Health Care Personnel Program July 13 at the Brigade Headquarters building on Humphreys.

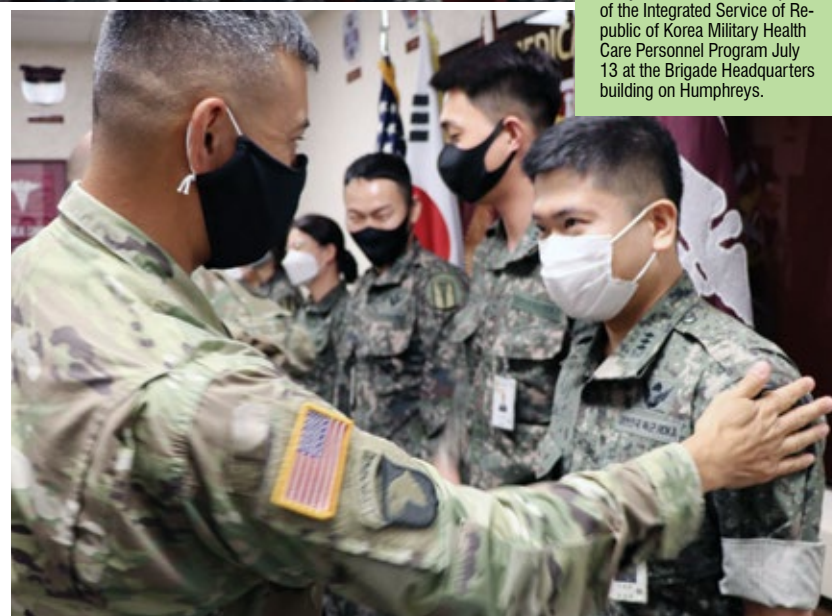
**T**he 65th Medical Brigade Commander, Col. Dave Zimmerman, welcomed the incoming 131st cycle of Republic of Korea Army Medical Officers as part of the Integrated Service of Republic of Korea Military Health Care Personnel Program July 13 at the Brigade Headquarters building on Humphreys.

As part of their welcome, the officers were "patched" to the Brigade.

The ISRMHCPP was established in 1955 to facilitate wartime coordination between the U.S. and ROK military health care support system in the event of hostilities.

ROK army officers work with their U.S. counterparts for six months, sharing expertise and increasing cultural understanding while gaining an appreciation of the U.S. military and its' health care system.

More than 500 students, including



veterinarians, physicians, dentists, nurses and medical corps officers have graduated from this mutually beneficial program and gone on to serve distinguished careers in both the military and civilian sectors in

the Republic of Korea.

Captains Jin Sook Cho, Se Lim Oh, Jae Young Ha, Min Ji Yu, Kyung Don Lee, Eui Hyon Song and Yong Ju Yoo all recieved their Brigade uniform patch.



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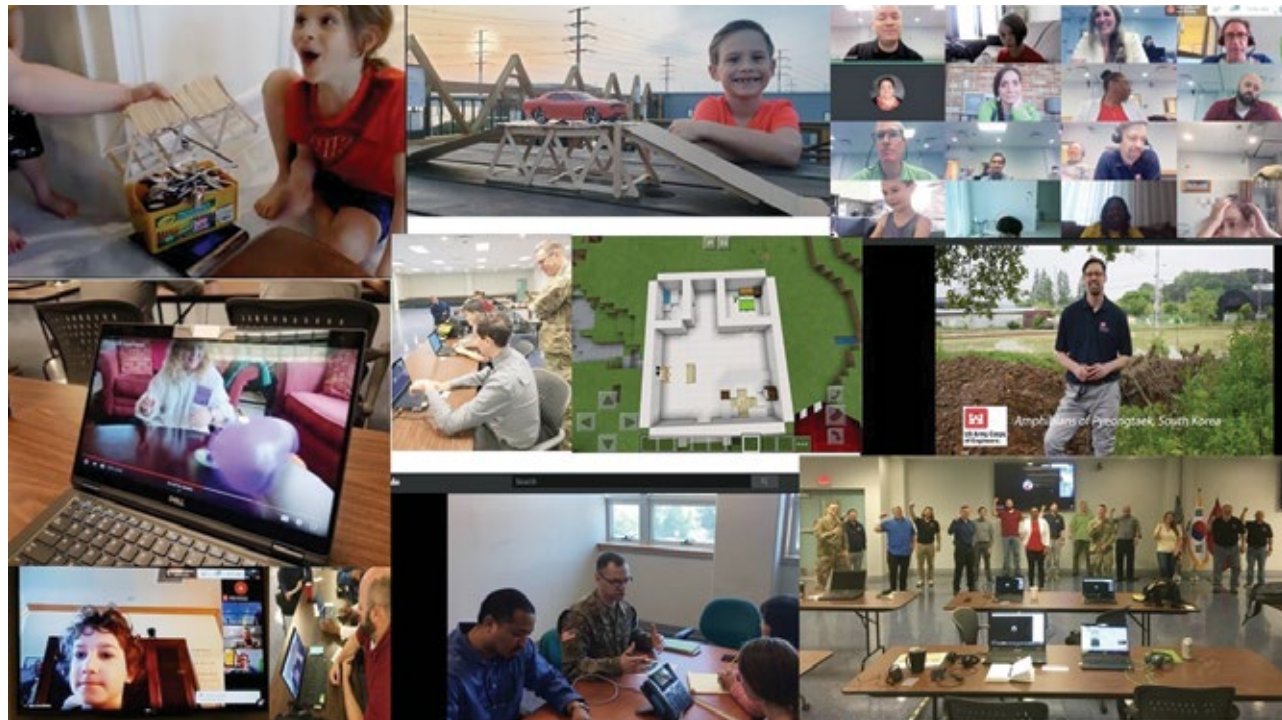
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# Despite COVID19, Students' Thirst for Learning Continues

Story by SeukHwan Son  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Far East District



**"Here is my hovercraft!"**  
— Annabeth F. 2nd Grade

**"My Bridge could take 18 rocks before  
my basket was too full"**  
— Alice A. 4th grade

**"Our 2nd grader and 4th grader  
watched every video lesson the engineers  
posted then picked their activities to  
submit! The quality of the videos and  
sense of humor used in the presentations  
were two things we all loved!"**  
—Christine Arzt-McGee, HCES Parent

**F**or the very first time in a complete digital e-learning platform, students from kindergarten through 4th grades of Humphreys Central Elementary School (HCES) posted and shared videos of their experiments and exchanged live questions and answers with members of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Far East District (FED) and 11th Engineer Battalion on their various Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) activities, May 29.

In years past, FED has done a hands-on event during the school day where every student rotates through a station designed by our FED team focused on different disciplines and aspects of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, sometimes hosting over 500 students in one day.

"The social distancing requirements due to COVID-19 prevented us from rolling out the hands-on experiments and the distance learning at the schools made this a very unique year, after some brainstorming and creative thinking with Mr. Rick Taylor from HCES, I approached our District Commander and Deputy District Engineer with the idea to do something with videos and hosting on an e-learning platform. COL Crary and Mr. Byrd saw that our community on Camp Humphreys needed a break from some of the telework/e-learning stress and saw an opportunity for the Far East District to give some joy to the students, while also helping out the teachers and parents by providing this activity," said Jennifer Moore, Chief of the Air Force Program and STEM Facilitator for FED.

The team of 25 volunteers from FED and 11th Engineer Battalion were comprised of professionals in various disciplines including: engineering, science and biology, logistics, architecture, and computer technology. The team gathered quickly and created eight pre-recorded video clips, focusing on various scientific activities: Structural survivability (Egg Drop), speed and vibration of sound (Making Music with Water), structural engineering (design and construct a bridge with popsicle sticks), biology (Amphibians of South Korea), air cushion and volume (Hovercraft), computer programming, soil engineering and particle settlement, architecture and design (Design your dream house!).

"We have worked in partnership with USACE for a number of years. Those events have always been in the spring and hands-on at the school with the students participating and engineers setting up stations. About a month and a half ago, Ms. Moore and I started having our annual discussion about what we can do this year, especially with students out of school. We talked about having some virtual activities and Ms. Moore was able to get lots of FED volunteers to participate and create these amazing videos for the kids. We hoped the kids would be able to do these activities at home and then provide some documentation of their participation through videos and pictures that the engineers and volunteers could view on the website," added Mr. Rick Taylor, Humphreys Central Elementary School STEM coordinator.

Jennifer Moore brought the event full circle by holding a live question and answer session through the Google Meet platform with students and teachers, engaging in discussions with the students and giving them a chance to "ask an engineer" anything about their experiment, allowing FED STEM Team volunteers

a chance to give feedback to the students and words of encouragement about their scientific mind, their creative ideas, and prompts for what to try in the future.

Over 50 video clips and photos were posted by the students and shared at [https://padlet.com/richard\\_taylor8/h07v06s936fpiaf](https://padlet.com/richard_taylor8/h07v06s936fpiaf). These included the students' creative approaches to the experiments. Responses ranged from a student turning a Popsicle Stick Bridge into a ramp for a toy car, another student load tested their bridge with what was sure to be every piece of silverware from the kitchen, another made a mock YouTube channel called "Kid's Zone! Science!" with her self-built hovercraft, we saw designs for a "dream home" that included floor plans designs with Legos and Minecraft, chocolate swimming pools, coffee showers, and new features in architecture such as a "Change seasons Room" that could create Christmas in July with a touch of a button.

"Each of our volunteers engaged so thoughtfully and kindly with the students. They took time out of their busy days, evenings, and weekends to review the student submissions so when the students started logging into the digital platform, they were ready to ask them questions," said Moore.

**C**had McLeod, Chief of Construction, and his dream house design team really took this to the next level. They would ask why certain rooms were designed how they were, what it meant to the student, and complimented them on the engineering and eye for architecture.

"We couldn't have done the live question and answer event without people like Chad McLeod, Mario Fuquene, Todd Hill, Dave Chai, and CPT Bill Saeur. When they interacted with the students and told them they had a scientific mind or have a future in STEM and showed that they listened and watched the ideas they came up with, the kids smiled ear to ear and I feel like it really made such a positive impact on them. My favorite moment was when one 2nd grade student walked us through her dream house and told us about the hot chocolate swimming pool and the bottomless pit to get rid of the trash. It was so much fun hearing our FED Engineers ask serious questions about if the hot chocolate was potable and complimenting her on accounting for waste disposal," said Moore.

The FED volunteers answered the call for creativity this year, with every station coming up with a unique



way to show STEM initiatives while also being mindful to use items from around the house and provide easy to follow instructions. Aaron Schuff, Resident Engineer, and member of the dream house design took the time to write each student a letter as if it was from a customer, recommending suggestions and showing the students commonly asked questions that engineers may receive when designing a building.

The event left amazing memories to not only the students but also the volunteers said Jessie Lindor, FED property book officer.

"I thought this is very endearing especially in the circumstances with COVID we were able to come together and create a virtual STEM project and the kids were very interested in designs and projects they were doing. We are very proud that they were able to

participate and do such an awesome job for their little minds being kindergarten through 4th grade. [They are a] very creative and very intelligent group of students. Thank you to teachers, students, and parents that helped and supported this great project and we look forward to doing this again next year," said Lindor.

The event also included prizes to the most creative and well-done student experiments. These prizes were provided by the individual volunteers and team leaders as a personal commitment to the program and a way to inspire the students and get them more excited to try their best at all of the experiments.

"There was a lot of participation on the website. When students did the experiments and got the feedback from engineers, I think it went fantastic. I know that the kids really appreciated hearing about their projects and being encouraged to pursue careers interested in STEM in the future. I think it went great!" said Taylor.

Col. Christopher Crary, FED commander said he was encouraged by the fact that FED employees were able to continue the tradition of STEM outreach to the Department of Defense Education Activity schools in Korea.

"This is a highlight for the kids every single year,

but this is also a highlight for the workforce. These events take a lot of energy and a lot of passion and my staff looks forward to this. When COVID hit, schools closed, and we questioned whether we would be able to do it but, this is important for our workforce as a way to give back to the community and our volunteers came together to find new ways to share our STEM expertise," said Crary.

Crary further thanked the school, "I appreciate all the volunteers for their ability to find engineering solutions to difficult problems and making this process work. Also, I am sure that there was a lot of coordination on school's end to set this up and put the kids all in the virtual environment to make this happen. Thank you and thank your team and I have no doubt that it was a benefit to the kids."

Richard T. Byrd, Deputy District Engineer, noted he was appreciative of all the hard work done by FED employees to make the event possible.

"I appreciate the FED team for volunteering. It is amazing the amount of effort that went into it, to include our 11th Engineer guys. The kids had a fantastic time and it's going to pay a big dividend and helps us build future leaders."

Taylor said he is already looking forward to the event next year.

"FED and Ms. Moore have done a fantastic job over the past five years that I've personally worked with them, I hope we can continue our partnership and

maybe next year get back to the hands-on activities. It is really valuable for the students to get this interaction and to be able to participate in these activities" said Taylor.

This successful event can best be summarized by one impressed parent, "[Our kids] loved that the engineers took time to engage with every grade level and talk to them about their submissions. It was motivating and heartwarming for them as budding scientists and as parents we loved their level of interest and we so appreciated the heart and joy that went into the week from the Far East District. Thank you so much," said Christine Arzt-McGee, parent of two HCES student participants.

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or visit <https://www.health.mil/I-Am-A/Media/Media-Center/NAL-Day-at-a-glance>

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# 154th Medical Detachment Confronts Coronavirus

Courtesy of the 154th Medical Detachment



ince the pandemic propagating throughout Daegu began back in February, the first Coronavirus-positive area where U.S. Forces held a presence. The Daegu outbreak catapulted the 154th Medical Detachment (Preventive Medicine (PM DET)), aka “The Reapers,” to the front lines of defense.

Pioneering the PM DET response to a pandemic, “The Reapers” efforts became highly sought after during Area IV’s ongoing #KILLtheVirus campaign, including deployment of a PM DET Team, creation and training of Clean Teams, and the development of a COVID-19 specific workplace sanitation assessment.

Before the onset of COVID-19, detachment doubled down on a new training concept coined ‘The Reaper Deployment Package’ (RDP). The design of the Reaper Deployment Package facilitated the ability for each preventive medicine team within the 154th to operate autonomously providing prompt and sustainable Role III PM support throughout Area IV.

Training up the RDP proved invaluable as demand for PM support skyrocketed during the pandemic, beginning with the deployment of Reaper Team 2 to Camp Carroll during the initial spread of the virus. Reaper Team 2 provided preventive medicine support and guidance to the 502nd Field Hospital as they established patient care operations, and Team 2 conducted numerous habitability assessments

at future quarantine facilities to ensure the health and safety of projected patients.

Additionally during onset of the pandemic, a Contact Trace Team was assembled consisting of Preventive Medicine doctors, Army Public Health Nurses, and the detachment. Initially, the role of the PM DET was undefined, so it was imperative that “The Reapers” quickly brand how best to utilized their skills in the fight against the Coronavirus.

Preventive Medicine Specialists (68S), the mainstay of every PM DET, inherently possess a solid background in sanitation. Leveraging their knowledge, “The Reapers” developed and standardized a Clean Team Training curriculum.

A Clean Team is a unit-level team that disinfects potentially virus-contaminated locations. Immediately, the curriculum was put to use training Clean Teams across the peninsula. Creation of Clean Teams was a unified effort with Area Garrison Safety and Occupational Health offices working together with the Detachment to rapidly train new Clean Teams and provide a Clean Team LNO at every cleaning event. Clean Team LNOs provided direction and guidance on safety measures, proper disinfection techniques, and waste disposal procedures.

As spring progressed, the numbers of positive COVID-19 patients declined throughout Daegu; however, the fear of a second wave of cases still loomed. As the pandemic transformed, so did “The Reapers”.

The Detachment developed a comprehensible workplace sanitation assessment program that focused on sustainable public



health measures. This workplace sanitation assessment provided unit commands a letter grade to help gauge workplace conditions and recommendations that encouraged behavioral changes for sustainable public health interventions. One of the more popular recommendations was positioning tubes of disinfectant wipes near high touch community surfaces, such as printers, to encourage wiping items down after each use, similarly to gym equipment.

Since the pandemic began, several members of “The Reapers” have been recognized for their efforts in the fight against COVID-19. Sgt. Brianna Scott’s workplace sanitation assessment and preventive medicine measures allowed the USO at Camp Walker to remain open throughout the pandemic. The Camp Walker USO being only one of two USO’s to remain open throughout the world during the pandemic. Scott’s assessment was later shared among USO’s globally.

The Detachment continues to put forth their efforts in the development and training of Clean Teams, providing sanitation assessments all while continuing to support the 168th Multifunctional Medical Battalion of the 65th Medical Brigade and the day to day mission.





# In the Time of COVID-19, Don't Let Your Guard Down from Getting Diseases from Mosquitoes, Ticks, Fleas, Chigger Mites, and Rodents

Story by Dr. Terry Klein  
MEDDAC-K Chief Entomology, Force Health Protection and Preventive Medicine

**Mosquitoes**, no-see-ums/biting gnats, deer flies, chigger mites, fleas, and ticks emerge with the advent of spring, summer, and fall periods. Many of them are “nuisance biters” and don’t transmit diseases, while others that transmit diseases can be fatal.

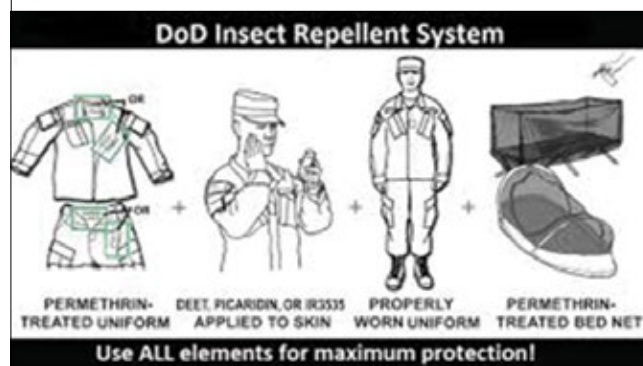
The Entomology Section of the 65th Medical Brigade’s Force Health Protection & Preventive Medicine with support from the 5th & 154th Preventive Medicine Medical Detachments of the 168th Multifunctional Medical Battalion, 65th Medical Brigade and Public Health Activity-Korea, provide the backbone for medical entomology surveillance. These groups work together to reduce the potential risks for the transmission of diseases that are transmitted by mosquitoes such as Japanese encephalitis and vivax malaria; or ticks with thrombocytopenia syndrome (SFTS), rickettsioses, and Lyme disease; or chigger mites with scrub typhus; or fleas (with Rickettsia and rodents with hantaviruses and leptospirosis).

Additionally the team conduct surveys for pests such as bed bugs and provide recommendations for their control. Through the hard work of the PM teams and the vigilant use of personal protective measures, service members, DoD Civilians, and their Families can enjoy the South Korean outdoors confident that all efforts are being made to protect them from diseases transmitted by mosquitoes, other biting flies, ticks, chigger mites, fleas, and rodents.

**DON'T BE MOSQUITO MEAT!**  
**USE DEET**



In addition to professional pest surveillance and control, personal protective measures are crucial for enjoying the outdoors throughout the warmer seasons. These measures include wearing long sleeved shirts and long pants outdoors when biting insects are active and to applying repellents to exposed areas of the skin. For military personnel while conducting field training, sleeves should be worn down and trouser legs tucked into the boots.



Do not use blousing rubbers as this allows mosquitoes, ticks, and chiggers to bite the exposed area. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends using products with ingredients approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to deter biting insects. Repellents containing DEET, picaridin, and IR-3535 for family members over 2 months of age. DEET concentrations of 20-33% are recommended for longer lasting protection (8-12 hrs), while lower concentrations provide limited time protection. The use of DEET concentrations >33% do not provide greater protection and is increasingly toxic. For those 3 years and older, oil of lemon-eucalyptus is also an effective ingredient, but provides limited time protection. Outer clothing and camping gear can be treated with permethrin – the same active ingredient in military factory-treated uniforms – to repel and kill mosquitoes, ticks, and chiggers.

Some diseases, e.g., Japanese encephalitis, are vaccine preventable, while effective antibiotic treatment is available for others, e.g., malaria and scrub typhus, when correctly diagnosed. However, for some diseases, e.g., severe fever with thrombocytopenia syndrome, or SFTS, there are no

specific treatments, only supportive care. In all cases, the early recognition of disease by medical providers at all levels is important for positive outcomes. This includes patient history as some diseases, e.g., Hantaviruses may present up to 50 days after infection, while vivax malaria cases may become present 6-18 months after infection.

Here is a partial listing of some of the vector-borne diseases (transmitted by arthropods and rodents) that are present in Korea and pose a medical risk. Keep in mind that when traveling to other parts of Asia, that other diseases may be present and any travel should be discussed with medical providers to ensure that the potential for getting sick is reduced.

## MOSQUITOES AND OTHER BITING FLIES

Mosquito and other biting fly (e.g., biting gnats and deer/horse flies) surveillance is initiated at U.S. installations and selected training sites, throughout the peninsula as biting populations increase in the spring. Mosquito surveillance includes additional installations, training sites, Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, and Daeseongdong near/in the DMZ. Mosquito surveillance continues through the fall, ending in November as mosquito populations rapidly decrease.

At Humphreys the use of Mosquito Magnets were introduced to effectively capture all species of mosquitoes, including vectors and non-vectors (pests). Trap sites include near the Child Development Centers, family housing, and the Brian D. Allgood Community Army Hospital to determine the numbers of potential biting mosquitoes in those areas.

Due to the nearby river system and numerous ponds, some periods reflected close to 1,000 mosquitoes being trapped. To identify where larval mosquitoes are found, larval surveillance is also done that identifies pools of water and ponds where larvae is found. Upon collection of the insects, the team makes recommendations for larval control in efforts to reduce the population resulting in decreasing adult biting numbers.

**VIVAX MALARIA:** Vivax malaria is one of five human malaras that is transmitted only by Anopheles spp. that are present from late spring through early fall in Korea. Only vivax malaria is present in Korea. While transmission occurs more frequently among Soldiers that train near the DMZ, cases are reported south of Seoul, including occasionally at Humphreys.

Symptoms include sudden onset of chills, followed by a high fever greater than 103°F, and intense sweats that usually lasts for 2-6 hours followed by a period of being very tired (malaise).

**These paroxysms occur initially at 24 to 48 hour intervals, but later when the parasite reproduction becomes syncho-**

**nixed, they only occur at 48 hour intervals.** Other symptoms that may also occur are headache, body aches, vomiting, diarrhea, and loss of appetite.

The mortality rate for vivax malaria is extremely low with less than 4,000 cases here in Korea that have resulted in no deaths. Vivax malaria presents in two ways, a non-latent form with disease symptoms occurring within 21 days after infection, and a latent form that usually presents 6-18 months after infection. Outbreaks of malaria can occur, e.g., 11 cases of vivax malaria among an Army unit training at Dagmar North over a 3-day period. Two of the cases were diagnosed in Korea (non-latent), while the other 9 cases were diagnosed 6-18 months later (latent) in the US. About 60% of vivax malaria infections result in latent malaria when the female mosquito injects the malaria parasites during a blood meal that then go to the liver and remains “dormant”. After a period of 6-18 months, the parasite replicates parasites that rupture the liver cell and go into the blood stream. While in the blood, the parasites replicate and rupture the red blood cells, resulting in a sudden onset of chills followed by high fever and subsequent malaise. Non-latent malaria results when the parasites go to the liver and immediately begin to divide and rupture the liver cell. Diagnosis of malaria can only be done during the blood stage, resulting in personnel infected often carrying the infections back to their next duty station.

**JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS (JE):** JE is a viral disease that is transmitted by Culex spp. from late spring (southern part) through the fall.

The primary vector appears in the southern part of the peninsula as early as March and then migrates northward, appearing at Humphreys and near the DMZ in late June/early July. While only 1 in 200 people ever show symptoms, the mortality rate among those that do ranges from 15-30%, while those that survive may have severe neurological impairments.

Transmission is focal, with outbreaks occurring from the southern part of Korea to areas near the DMZ. While there are relatively low numbers of infections reported (3-40 cases annually), with only 1 out of 200 persons demonstrating symptoms, that equates to mosquitoes transmitting the virus to 600-8,000 people. Because most Koreans are vaccinated, the number of persons infected (but no symptoms) is far greater than 8,000 annually. JE is a vaccine preventable disease that consists of a two-vaccine series (30 days apart). The vaccine is mandatory for U.S. Soldiers and highly recommended for civilians and family members. Even though persons receive a vaccine, they should apply preventive measures, as described below, when mosquitoes are biting.





#### NUISANCE BITING FLIES:

Biting gnats (no-see-ums), deer/horse flies, and other non-vector mosquitoes are considered to be nuisance biting pests that can rapidly degrade military operations, in addition to being an annoyance when outside.

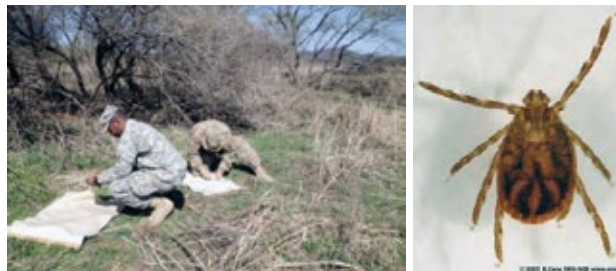
Biting gnats and deer/horse flies can carry pathogens on their mouthparts from one victim to another, since they have "scissor-like" mouthparts that become contaminated with blood from previous hosts that may have disease.



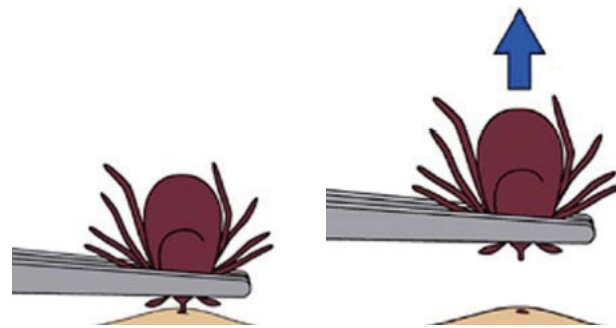
#### TICKS AND MITES

**TICK-BORNE DISEASE SURVEILLANCE.** The team also conducts tick-borne disease surveillance throughout Korea.

Collected ticks are then sent to various agencies for detection of pathogens and other novel agents of unknown pathogenicity. A number of pathogenic agents that are causative agents of SFTS, TBE, Lyme disease, relapsing fever, anaplasmosis, ehrlichiosis, and babesiosis, as well as novel viruses, which are not known to cause disease, have been identified.



Ticks should be removed as soon as possible to decrease the risk of transmission of disease. For example, most Lyme disease patients become infected after the tick has been attached for 24 hours. When possible, medical personnel should be informed and remove biting ticks by placing a fine-tipped forceps between the tick mouthparts and as close to the skin as possible and then gently pulling it directly away. Pull upward with steady pressure and do not twist or jerk the tick out as this may leave the mouth parts in the skin causing a secondary infection. After removal, **cland** the bite areas and **wash** hands with alcohol, iodine scrub, or soap and water.



Do not apply hot wax, petroleum jelly, or other chemicals, use heat to burn the tick, or attempt to "cut" the tick out, as this may cause harm to the patient and increase the chances of infection and transmission of pathogens. After the tick has been removed, the tick should be placed in a sealed container or, if not available, a Ziploc bag and submit the tick to the Entomology Section, FHP&PM for identification and detection of pathogens. Whenever possible, submit a photo of the area where the tick bite occurred and the most likely location, including photos, where the tick was acquired. This data provides for the development of disease risk assessments, including notification of areas of risk. Ticks are submitted to a U.S. laboratory for testing for diseases of medical importance. For pets, similarly remove ticks to avoid infection and disease transmission and submit specimens with appropriate information, e.g., location, date of collection, and most likely site where the tick was acquired, to the Entomology Section.

**SEVERE FEVER WITH THROMBOCYTOPENIA SYNDROME (SFTS).** SFTS is a viral disease transmitted by several species of ticks. Because the virus is transmitted from the female tick through the eggs to larvae, all stages of ticks can transmit the virus. There are about 250 cases among Koreans annually, with an overall mortality of 10-20%, and a mortality of greater than 50% among persons over 60 years of age. The primary vector is found among uncut grasses and vegetation bordering forested areas, while other vectors are found in forested areas.

**TICK-BORNE ENCEPHALITIS (TBE):** TBE is a viral disease involving the central nervous system that may result in long-lasting permanent neurologic conditions. TBE is transmitted by ticks that are found in mountainous areas at higher elevations. Disease risks are very low since they are infrequently collected and only a few personnel have been reported to be infected. There are several strains or subtypes present in Korea. Symptoms are often bi-phasic with an onset of non-specific symptoms occurring 7-14 days after a tick bite that include fever, malaise, anorexia, muscle aches headache, nausea and vomiting. After a period of about 8-days remission, a second phase occurs in about 20-30% of the

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Wash your Hands



TA-620-FEB21  
03/02/2021

#### For current COVID-19 information:

<https://phc.amedd.army.mil/covid19>  
<https://www.coronavirus.gov/>

The Military Health System Nurse Advice Line is available 24/7: Call 1-800-874-2273 option #1

or visit <https://www.health.mil/I-Am-A/Media/Media-Center/NAL-Day-at-a-glance>

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patients who might experience clinical illness that involves the central nervous system, including headache, stiff neck, encephalitis (drowsiness, confusion, sensory disturbances, and paralysis). There is a long convalescent or recovery period, including permanent neurologic sequelae in about 10-20 percent of patients. There is no U.S. approved vaccine, only supportive medical care.

**BORRELIOSIS (LYME DISEASE) AND RELAPSING FEVER:** Lyme disease and relapsing fever is caused by bacterial infection as a result of a tick bite. There are several types of Lyme disease, and the common one that often results in a “bulls-eye” at the bite site found in the U.S. is not present in Korea.



The result of infection is a reddening of the tissue at the bite site. Typical include fever, headache, fatigue, and a characteristic skin rash that begin at the tick-bite site after the day three mark.

*Ixodes* spp. are the vectors of Lyme disease and are not commonly collected in tick drags, but are commonly collected from Korean Water deer (road kill) at Humphreys. The ticks inhabit uncut grasses and vegetation and are found in forested areas, especially along animal trails.

Relapsing fever is similarly caused by bacterial infections of certain species that causes a recurrent illness, with episodes of headache, muscle aches and vomiting that last for about 3-5 days separated by intervals of apparent recovery. Both Lyme disease and relapsing fever pathogens have been reported throughout Korea, including Humphreys.



**SPOTTED FEVER GROUP (SFG) RICKETTSIA:** SFG Rickettsia are bacteria that are transmitted through the

bites of ticks. Clinical symptoms occur within 15 days of the tick bite are variable and similar to other acute febrile illnesses and range from mild to severe, including death if not treated with antibiotics. An eschar or black scab may appear (similar to scrub typhus) 1-2 days prior to the onset of fever, nausea, vomiting, which is followed by a rash that appears on the extremities (hands) and migrates to the body 1-2 days after the fever. The lack of an eschar may lead to misdiagnosis, inappropriate treatment, and increased morbidity due to meningitis, acute myocarditis, and hearing loss. Diagnosis is achieved by drawing blood, or if an eschar is present, analysis of a portion of the eschar.

**SCRUB TYPHUS:** Scrub typhus is a bacterial disease transmitted by larval chigger mites that are very small and not readily seen with the naked eye.



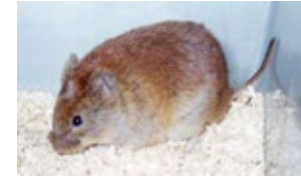
Recently, there have been 8,000 - 10,000 cases of scrub typhus in Korea. The first indication of a chigger mite bites is itching and a reddening of the areas of the bite sites. Symptoms such as high fever, headache, body aches, and muscle pain usually appear within 10 days of the bite and are preceded by a dark scab (eschar) present at the bite site. Approximately 1-2 days after the onset of symptoms, a rash extends from the central body to the extremities. Scrub typhus can rapidly degrade military operations and has a mortality rate of approximately 30% if untreated. Scrub typhus is easily treatable with antibiotics.

**TICK- AND MITE-BITE PROTECTION:** To protect yourself from tick bites, Soldiers should use insecticide-treated uniforms and apply DEET or picaridin to exposed skin areas, as described above. When wearing civilian clothes, military, civilian, and family members should apply sprays on clothing (see NOTE above for DEET usage) and on exposed skin, as described above. After exiting tick-infested areas, check yourself for ticks and shower as soon as possible. Pet owners should walk their dogs in areas of short-cut grasses where ticks are infrequently found. Dogs and cats may acquire ticks when they enter areas of uncut grasses and other vegetation, and bring ticks into the household when they return. Pets should be thoroughly checked for ticks when coming indoors since ticks may fall off pets and then bite household residents.

## RODENT-BORNE DISEASES

Rodents harbor arthropods, e.g., fleas, mites, and ticks, and are reservoirs for associated diseases that they transmit, e.g., Lyme disease, relapsing fever, and scrub typhus (described above). In addition, they are the reservoirs for other diseases such as hantaviruses that are transmitted in rodent feces, urine and saliva.

**HANTAVIRUSES:** There are 4 types of rodent-borne hantaviruses, including Hantaan, Seoul, Soochong, and Muju viruses, each with a specific rodent species reservoir. Hantaan virus is transmitted by the inhalation of aerosolized dust containing rodent excreta. The striped field mouse is the primary reservoir and is found in rural areas associated with grasses and rice paddies. There approximately 500 cases reported annually among Koreans, and 0-5 cases annually among U.S. personnel. There is no U.S. approved vaccine and the mortality rate is about 10% among U.S. personnel with good medical care. The greatest risk of transmission is near the DMZ where infection rates in rodents vary from 15->60%. At Humphreys, infection rates are less than 10%, and even lower as you travel southward. The highest risk factor is convoy operations where large amounts of dusts are produced. The incubation period varies from 3-50 days (usually 2 weeks) and is likely dose related. Symptoms



include a rapid onset of intense headaches, back and abdominal pain, fever, chills, nausea, and blurred vision. This is followed by flushing of the face, inflammation/redness of the eyes or rash. Later symptoms include low blood pressure, acute shock, vascular leakage and kidney failure. Protein in the urine is a common feature, with diagnosis usually made by serology tests. Serology tests may cross-react with malaria. Rapid diagnosis is important, as fluid management is needed for positive outcomes. Virus may be detected by in the blood within 8 days from the onset of symptoms. Full recovery may be several weeks to months, depending on disease severity.

Seoul virus is transmitted by the inhalation of aerosolized dust containing rodent excreta from the Brown (Norway) rat that is common in urban areas. The most common risk

factor is dry sweeping or vacuuming rodent excreta, and inhalation of aerosolized rodent excreta. While the symptoms of Seoul virus are similar to that of Hantaan virus, they are milder with a mortality rate of less than one percent.

Soochong virus is transmitted by the inhalation of aerosolized dust containing rodent excreta from the Korean field mouse that is found at higher elevations above 500 meters. Disease severity is believed to be similar to Hantaan virus. However, due to low populations and higher elevations that this mouse is found at, disease risks are much lower. Muju virus is transmitted by the inhalation of aerosolized dust containing rodent excreta from the Royal vole that is found associated with water sources. Disease symptoms are similar to that of Hantaan virus, but are much less severe.

**LEPTOSPIROSIS:** Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that is maintained in wild animals, including rodents, wild pigs, and domestic animals. The bacteria is excreted in the urine of infected animals in water or wet soil and enter through abrasions in the skin or mucous membranes. Symptoms usually appear 5-14 days after infection and range from asymptomatic to mild flu-like symptoms, e.g., intense headache, chills, and muscle aches. An estimated 10% of the patients will develop “Weil’s syndrome” or severe pulmonary hemorrhage syndrome with mortality rates of >10%, even with treatment with antibiotics. Patient history is very important, e.g., conducting outdoor water sports or wading in water. Diagnosis is by serology. Patients must be monitored as symptoms may worsen for 24 hours after treatment with antibiotics.

## FLEA-BORNE DISEASES

**MURINE TYPHUS:** Murine typhus is a bacterial disease transmitted in the feces of fleas. Infection occurs when the bacteria enters through the skin, e.g., when scratching bites. The onset of disease usually occurs 1-2 weeks after infection, with a gradual onset of fever, headache, muscle aches, and cough and is often confused with a viral infection. A rash occurs on the trunk in about 55% of the cases. The disease is underreported, as it is usually mild and resolves even if untreated.



**PLAGUE:** Bubonic plague is a bacteria that maintains a cycle involving rodents and fleas, with man as an incidental host. It is most often transmitted by the bite of infected fleas, especially after a die-off of rodents where the fleas are searching for a host to feed on. While plague is not present in Korea, it is reported in China and Mongolia.





## BDAACH Continues Patient Air Evacuations Amid Global Pandemic

Story and photos by In Kyeong Yun  
Brian D. Allgood Army Hospital Unit Public Affairs Representative



tiny but resilient passenger got on a KC-135 on September 17, 2020 at Osan Air Base.

An aeromedical evacuation was executed for Nehemiah Miller, a one month old premature infant, in need of neonatal intensive care. Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital (BDAACH) followed the care of baby Nehemiah before and after birth. Once he was stable BDAACH staff coordinated his transfer to ensure continued care at Tripler Army Medical Center, Honolulu, Hawaii. Multidisciplinary efforts were made to successfully complete the mission of sending off the newborn baby across the Pacific Ocean. This marks BDAACH's second neonatal air evacuation since the outbreak of the global pandemic, COVID-19.

Nehemiah was born at 25 weeks on August 17, 2020 in one of the BDAACH's Network Hospitals.

Because of the nature of premature birth, he was moved to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in this hospital. Spending a month in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), the infant received care for his medical conditions while awaiting permanent relocation to a place where he can receive the required long term neonatal intensive care and follow-on care.

On the day of his flight, Nehemiah was picked up by BDAACH's Neonatologist and Deputy Commander for Clinical Services, Col. Joseph Hudak. Nehemiah was transferred to Osan Air Base by ambulance in a specially designed neonatal transport system (NTS). He was then transferred to an aircraft-approved NTS brought

to Korea by a Neonatal Critical Care Transport Team out of Okinawa and loaded onto the KC-135. Throughout the movement, the neonate's vital signs were carefully monitored. Nehemiah remained stable as if he wanted to show his appreciation for his care team by doing his part, being resilient and healthy.

"Having to go through many medical conditions and also a surgery with his tiny body weighing not even 1kg (2.2lbs), Nehemiah was small and fragile but unbelievably resilient. As he has a long journey ahead of him as he is an extremely low birth weight infant, we are hoping that he overcomes those obstacles with abundant love from his parents and care of the new NICU team" said Dr. Yum Suk-Kyung, Nehemiah's doctor from the Host Nation Hospital as she

thanked the Air Evacuation team and all parties involved who worked tirelessly to make this happen. She wished for the day to come for Nehemiah to be able to grow big enough to go back to the arms of his parents soon.

Spc. Davion Miller and Mrs. Rajeyah Miller, Nehemiah's parents, were next to him throughout the evacuation, holding little fingers of the baby and comforting him whenever possible. The Miller family came to Korea from Fort Hood on their first duty assignment in the Army. As part of the evacuation process the Active Duty father will be reassigned to a unit in Fort Shafter, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Three Air Force NICU specialists, Air Force Maj. Joshua Anchan, Air Force Nurse Capt. Viviana Pearson, and Staff Sgt. Bianca Felan, Respiratory Technician, joined from Okinawa, Japan, to provide care during the flight from Osan to Hawaii. Dr. Anchan shared that the days like this is the most rewarding part of his job as he gets to make a lasting impact on someone's life. Army Nurse Capt. Shannon Glanton, Intensive Care



Nurse, assigned to 135th Forward Resuscitative & Surgical Team of the 549th Hospital Center, also shared how rewarding it was for her to be part of the operation making a difference in an infant's life.

The challenge of aeromedical evacuations during the global pandemic has increased but has not stopped BDAACH's mission of providing healthcare to the fighting force and their beneficiaries. The hospital manages all cases where patients receive care from more than 30 Host Nation hospitals under a Memorandum of Understand-

ing (MOU) to monitor the care they receive and ensure appropriate follow-on care is coordinated.

"Today's mission was very successful. It was actually not just Nehemiah but a complicated move of five patients from two different countries, covering all three services that is culminating here today with the final leg of the pick up to move over to Hawaii" said Hudak. "Amid COVID-19 we had to be more creative to remain ready to protect the force by enabling all medical care possible for our warfighters and the beneficiaries."



## 8th U.S. Army Senior Leaders Visit Brigade

Photos by In Kyeong Yun  
Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital Unit Public Affairs Representative



**Lt.** Gen. Willard “Bill” M. Burleson III, the Commanding General of Eighth United States Army and Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Cobb, the Eighth U.S. Army senior enlisted advisor, visited the 65th Medical Brigade, toured the Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital and the 549th Hospital Center’s COVID-19 operation facilities on Oct. 14, 2020. During the visit, the Eighth Army leaders met with the ‘Pacific Medics’ leadership and talked with those working on the frontlines protecting the force from the coronavirus. Col. Huy Luu, 549th HC and BDAACH Commander, provided a tour of the hospital, the COVID-19 Isolation Facility and the U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys Reception Center (the initial COVID testing center for incoming personnel on peninsula). Prior to their tour, the ‘Pacific Victors’ senior leaders were given an overview of the dynamic structure of the 65th Medical Brigade by Col. Dave Zimmerman, 65th Medical Brigade Commander and Commander of Medical Department Activity Command-Korea giving them an overview of the medical capabilities on the peninsula.



## Pacific Medics Welcome 8th Army Leaders

Photos by William Wight  
65th Medical Brigade Public Affairs Office



**B**rig. Gen. Tae Keon Heo, the Deputy Commanding General- ROK Eighth United States Army and Brig. Gen. Michael D. Roache, the now former Deputy Commanding General – Sustainment Eighth U.S. Army, visited the 65th Medical Brigade, toured the Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital and the 549th Hospital Center’s COVID-19 operation facilities on Oct. 20, 2020. During the visit, the Eighth Army leaders met with the ‘Pacific Medics’ leadership and talked with those working on the frontlines protecting the force from the coronavirus. Col. Huy Luu, 549th HC and BDAACH Commander, provided a tour of the hospital, the COVID-19 Isolation Facility and the U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys Reception Center (the initial COVID testing center for incoming personnel on peninsula). Prior to their tour, the ‘Pacific Victors’ senior leaders were given an overview of the dynamic structure of the 65th Medical Brigade by Col. Dave Zimmerman, 65th Medical Brigade Commander and Commander of Medical Department Activity Command-Korea giving them an overview of the medical capabilities on the peninsula. The Brigade staff briefed on the interoperability of the Brigade and the alliance with the Republic of Korea medical partnerships.







## BDAACH Lab Team: True COVID Heroes

Story and photos by William Wight  
65th Medical Brigade Public Affairs Office

*Within* the Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital is a special group of individuals whose sole mission is dedicated to the coronavirus. These four “COVID HEROES” work within the laboratory testing the thousands of swabs for the virus.

With an already understaffed pathology department, Maj. Ken Nguyen, chief of the department

of pathology, gave some insight to just how the BDAACH mission has evolved since the outbreak of the pandemic in Korea.

“We saw our first test back on March 8 of this year,” said Nguyen. “As the permanent change of station season came our staff decreased but our workload increased. With the need for testing for COVID-19, the Medical Command sent us two civilians from the

U.S. and two Soldiers from Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii, whose sole purpose is to conduct the COVID testing mission.”

Although COVID Operations roughly only about ten percent of the department’s workload, it is extremely vital.

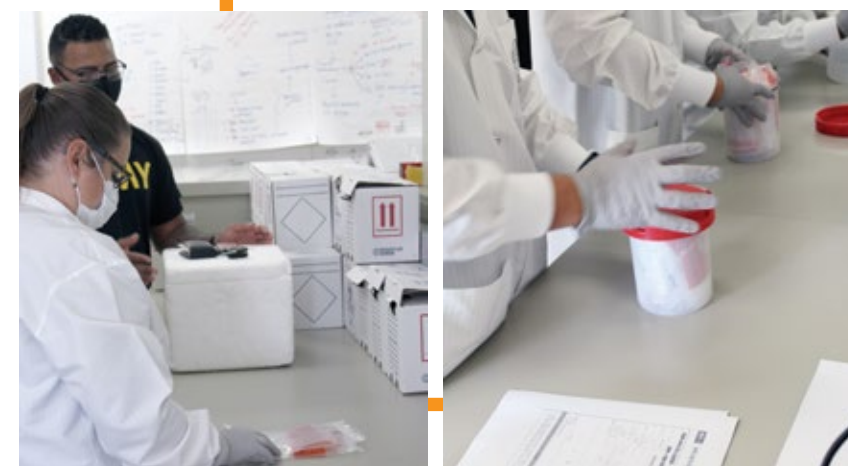
Working seven days a week, the team has become the command decision focal point. “All leadership decisions are based on our re-



sults and they must be flawless in order for the command to make decisions affect our populace,” said Nguyen.

With only one year in the U.S. Army, Spc. Andrei Ragracias, a Kingman Arizona native, was one of the two Soldiers selected from TAMC to be assigned on temporary duty status within the BDAACH. “This is a great facility (BDDACH) and although I am new to the military, I understand as a lab technician, the importance of this mission.”

Joining Ragracias is Sgt. Jessy Garcia, also from TAMC. Having served almost 8 years in the Army, the Houston, Texas native see’s the bigger picture of the processes within the BDAACH. “This is my second time to Korea. I love the culture, food and people. They are so amazing. Although the workload is demanding with thousands of tests a week, I have become more







knowledgeable of the aspects of hospital pathology.”

Working alongside the two servicemen are two Department of the Army Civilians on a three month rotation from the Defense Forensics Science Center in Atlanta, Georgia.

Carmella Strong was excited about being a part of the mission. “Although a previous team paved the way for us and set up a system for us to walk into, I am excited about being a part of something different compared to my usual forensics work.”

Strong expounded on her enjoyment of being on the front lines. “With this new experience, I realize how much what we do impacts everyone and our results impact the movement of troops.”

Joining Strong is the fourth member of the team, Monique Carr, who is also a forensic DNA supervisor with the DFSC in Atlanta. “This assignment has given me an appreciation as to what a hospital lab can do and it is such an important role we fill knowing that our efforts allow the installation to function.”



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# Brigade Hosts 70th Annual Healthcare Training Symposium

Story and Photos by William Wight  
65th Medical Brigade Public Affairs Office

Ensuring a trained healthcare professional force is medically ready can be challenging in the Republic of Korea. From October 30 to November 3, 2020, the 65th Medical Brigade hosted the 70th Annual 38th Parallel Healthcare Training Symposium at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys Morning Calm Center which was designed to discuss medical issues and advancements unique to the peninsula and Pacific Region.

This year's theme was "Evolv-

ing Military Medicine in the New Normal." Day 1 was filled with some great discussion between the leaders of Army Medicine, Eighth Army-Korea and medical professionals throughout the Korean Peninsula and was designed to ensure that trained and ready healthcare professionals sustain a medically ready force that is prepared to "fight tonight" while learning how to adapt and collaborate to provide constant world class health care.

Opening the weeklong event was the 65th Medical Brigade Commander, Col. Dave Zimmerman

who spoke to the Armed Forces Network prior to the event.

"The first session of the 38th Parallel Healthcare Training Symposium was held in 1951, during the Korea War, for medical professionals to discuss common healthcare difficulties and setbacks. Today, the goal of this training is to develop military leaders who maintain the readiness and health of our forces by ensuring medical personnel receive state-of-the-art education on the Korean Peninsula," said Zimmerman.

This year's unique conference

like symposium had its challenges particularly during a time of a global pandemic. The Brigade moved forward this year with a hybrid block of plenary instruction as guest speakers and subject matter experts in their fields presented either virtually via Microsoft Teams or in person at the Morning Calm.

"The symposium is an opportunity for healthcare providers on the peninsula to receive the continuing education credits that they need for licensure. The Surgeon General of the Army and the Deputy Surgeon General presented virtually, while the Eighth United States Army Commanding General and the Deputy Commanding General for Eighth Army Republic of Korea presented in person," said Zimmerman.

The remainder of the weeklong training was divided into tracks taught virtually covering a variety of topics in the areas of administration, medical, nursing, dental, veterinary care, and behavioral







“  
It is through combined efforts and opportunities to train and collaborate in venues such as this symposium, that we all have gained a deep shared understanding critical to the combined joint operations resolving our interoperability gaps and gained quality educational experiences.”  
— Col. Dave Zimmerman

health with participants gaining 140 continuing education credits. “Our ability to provide this quantity of CME &CNE credits speaks volumes about the quality of each presentation in our program and the level of education attained by each of our speakers,” said Col. Maria Angeles, the 65th Medical Brigade Chief of Clinical Operations. “It takes approximately eight months to put this symposium together with the assistance from over 20 different subject matter

experts from within our medical brigade. This symposium would not be possible without the continual support from our Republic of Korea partners, Department of Defense civilians, and direct reporting units.” Continuing Medical Education (CME) is defined as educational activities which serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships that a physician uses to provide services

for patients, the public, or the profession. Continuing Medical Education is the method by which practicing physicians maintain currency with emerging information in a dynamic, ever-changing base of medical knowledge. The U.S. Army Medical Department's (AMEDD) support of CME reflects a collective commitment to the need for lifetime professional learning. The Surgeon General requires Army physicians to earn CME credits in order to meet licensure and

credentialing requirements. The US Army Medical Command (MED-COM), Army Medical Department, is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to sponsor AMEDD CME activities for physicians. As an accredited sponsor, it ensures educational programs

meet the requirements outlined in the "Essentials and Guidelines for Accreditation of Sponsors of Continuing Medical Education", which is published by the ACCME. The 38th Parallel Medical Society started 1951 in the midst of the Korean War by a group of medical officers from the 3rd Infantry Division

to discuss best practices, medical trends and share information to gain a common understanding of what was going on in the battle space to ensure medical care on the peninsula was maintained at the highest possible level and it served as an opportunity for medical personnel to become acquainted.







Today COVID may have altered the way that the Brigade conducts its daily delivery of operational medicine, according to Zimmerman, but the need for collaboration and learning to adapt remains the cornerstone of medical readiness.

“It is through combined efforts and opportunities to train and collaborate in venues such as this symposium, that we all have gained a deep shared understanding critical to the combined joint operations resolving our interoperability gaps and gained quality educational experiences while simultaneously improving our medical readiness posture on the peninsula at a time that is critical,” concluded Zimmerman.



**MEDDAC-K COVID-19**  
Year in Review

# USAMMC-K Increases Supply, Reduces Order Turnaround Time for PPE, COVID-19 Tests

Story and photos by C.J. Lovelace  
U.S. Army Medical Logistics Command



Pfc. Raul Cordova performs duties as a storage materiel handler at the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center-Korea warehouse. His duties include picking of Class VIII medical supplies and transferring them over to the shipping section for shipment to customers.

Persistence in the fight against COVID-19 is paying off for the medical logisticians at the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center-Korea.

The team at USAMMC-K, a direct reporting unit to Army Medical Logistics Command, is helping to protect the workforce across the Korean Peninsula by streamlining its ordering practices and making it quicker for customers to receive much-needed personal protective equipment and COVID-19 testing supplies.

USAMMC-K serves as the theater lead agent for medical materiel, providing direct support to U.S. Forces Korea, or USFK, medical forces and ensuring tactical units are integrated into the end-to-end medical supply chain. It also assists combatant commands in health

logistics support planning.

According to center officials, turnaround times on PPE orders, including masks, gowns and gloves, have been reduced eight-fold since August -- from an average of 24 days to just three days.

“Previously, some of their orders could take anywhere from four to 10 weeks,” said Capt. Andres Gil, chief of materiel management at USAMMC-K. “Specifically, there was a backlog on [COVID-19] test kits with some customers waiting eight weeks for that critical supply.”

With influenza activity expected to increase during the winter, it has become even more critical that PPE products and testing supplies are available to help slow the potential spread of the respiratory virus, which has similar symptoms to COVID-19.

Sufficient COVID-19 tests in support of USFK are “now on our

shelves and ready to be provided as the demand increases for these winter months,” Gil said.

The improvements have enabled the center to support the needs of its military, Department of Defense Education Activity and U.S. Embassy customers on the Korean Peninsula.

Having supplies available and ready to go, he said, helps the workforce stay healthy and boosts mission readiness.

“The team achieved this through ordering all PPE supplies through the Army Strategic Management System,” said Gil, who also serves as USAMMC-K’s accountability officer. “It is based on streamlining the process of ordering through the depots where stock is available.”

To recognize the achievement, leaders acknowledged members of the distribution center for their hard work as part of the center’s Employee of the Month program for October.

Gil said the effort reflects the USAMMC-K team’s tenacity and attention to detail to ensure its customers are well taken care of during the COVID-19 response.

USAMMC-K Commander Lt. Col. Marcus D. Perkins has led the way on the initiative, providing the vision and direction to make sure the team is “ready for any new waves of COVID” on the Korean Peninsula, Gil said.

“Our ability to meet the PPE demand has surely increased and ... we will continue to focus on meeting the demand,” Gil said. “All this has been possible through great leadership direction and the staff’s ability to execute.”





Army Staff Sgt. Donnell Niles draws the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine from a vial into a syringe at Bradley Air National Guard Base in East Granby, Conn., Jan. 2, 2021. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker)

## Army Distributes COVID-19 Vaccine to Troops in Korea

Story and photos by C.J. Lovelace  
U.S. Army Medical Logistics Command

**T**eams at the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center-Korea, working in collaboration with the Defense Logistics Agency, began receiving, storing and distributing the COVID-19 vaccine on Dec. 25.

USAMMC-K, the theater lead agent for medical materiel, exercised its role under direction of U.S. Forces Korea leadership to track thousands of doses of the

vaccine and ancillary support kits through customs and into the region.

USFK started inoculating military and civilian health care workers, first responders and command team members on Dec. 29, including USFK Commander Gen. Robert B. Abrams.

Teams distributed remaining vaccines and kits to joint forces at Camp Humphreys, Osan Air Base and Kunsan Air Base.

"From start to finish, the

reception, storage, distribution and recovery of equipment was executed flawlessly," USAMMC-K Commander Lt. Col. Marcus D. Perkins said. "The plan and timeline briefed to USFK and 8th Army was followed and executed without any required deviation."

Perkins credited the efforts of Capt. Benjamin Lee, theater pharmacy consultant for the Korean Peninsula, and Maj. William J. Wiltbank, USAMMC-K's deputy commander, for anticipating



Soldiers at the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center-Korea track incoming shipments of COVID-19 vaccine in support of U.S. Forces Korea vaccination efforts. (Photo by Lt. Col. Marcus Perkins) ◀

Sgt. Grider Gossett, right, with the 95th Medical Detachment-Blood Support, teaches members of the 563rd Medical Logistics Company at the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center-Korea how to operate specialized mobile freezers needed to safely transport doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for distribution to U.S. Forces Korea. (Photo by Capt. Benjamin Lee) ▼

the mission requirements and ensuring the team was ready to go when the U.S. Food and Drug Administration gave emergency use authorization and vaccine shipments arrived.

The vaccine requires strict cold-chain management to keep transit and storage temperatures between minus-15 and minus-25 degrees Celsius at all times.

To prepare for the mission, USAMMC-K Soldiers took part in training on Dec. 15 to ensure proper operation of "freeze-cold" mobile cooling systems for storage and transportation.

"It is important to store and transport the vaccine between minus-25 and minus-15 degrees Celsius to prevent losing the vaccine's effectiveness and potency," Lee said.

The mobile freezers can maintain a temperature of minus-22 degrees Celsius, or minus-7.6 degrees Fahrenheit, for more



than eight hours when batteries are fully charged.

"This was a whole-of-government approach in the distribution of this vaccine," Perkins said. "I am just glad that our team got to play a part."

Perkins said USAMMC-K

Soldiers understood the mission's importance, with one of them calling it, "a Christmas they would never forget."

"I could see a sense of pride ... across all of their faces," Perkins added. "One of them said, 'we are a part of history.'"



## The First Shipment of the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine

Top Photos by Spc. Erin Conway, 20th Public Affairs Detachment  
Bottom photo by Capt. Cortland Henderson, 19th ESC PAO



The first shipment of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine was distributed to three military treatment facilities across USFK on Dec. 28, 2020. Korea was identified as one of four overseas locations to participate in the initial Department of Defense phased distribution plan.

Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital staff received the Coronavirus-19 vaccine at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys as one of three U.S. Department of Defense medical treatment facilities in South Korea inoculating medical staff and other key personnel during the initial worldwide distribution of the vaccine.



## First Vaccinated Koreans Are on U.S. Army base

Story by Kim Youn-Ho, Esther Chung  
Korea JoongAng Daily  
Reprinted with permission

One of the first Koreans to be vaccinated against Covid-19, a Korean employee of a U.S. Army base in North Gyeongsang, spoke to the JoongAng Ilbo about having chills and muscle pains after a shot of Moderna's vaccine — side effects familiar from flu shots.

"I had muscle pains in my left arm, where I got the shot, for about two days," a man in his 50s who works on the U.S. Army base in Chilgok County, North Gyeong-sang, told the JoongAng Ilbo.

"Some of my coworkers reported having mild fevers," he continued, "but most of our side effects did not last more than two days."

The first shipment of Moderna's Covid-19 vaccines for the U.S. Forces Korea arrived in the country in late December. The South Korean government said that Korean soldiers and civilians working on the U.S. Army bases can take the shots if they wish to.

At least seven other Korean employees on the base in Chilgok received inoculations on the same day, Jan. 4, the man said.

They received around 0.5 cubic centimeters of the vaccine in their first shots, injected into the upper arm. The Moderna vaccine course consists of two shots. The next dose will be given 28 days after the first.

"My coworkers who received the vaccine shots were in their 30s, 40s and even 60s," he said. "As far as I know, none of them have experienced any serious side effects."

The man said that he and other Korean civilian workers on the base had initial reservations about getting the vaccines but that around 80 percent of Koreans on the base appeared to have received their first shots.

"Only those who voluntarily expressed their wish to be vaccinated were given the shots," the man said.

Local experts said the side effects from the Modern vaccines seemed reasonable.

"The muscle pains near where the shot was given and the mild fevers are part of the normal responses from our immune system to vaccination," Kim Shin-woo, a professor of infectious diseases at Kyungpook National



University's School of Medicine, told the JoongAng Ilbo. "It would be problematic if there were no responses at all to the shots."

Min Bok-ki, head of the Covid-19 response team at the Daegu Medical Association, said the government ought to be rolling out a detailed vaccination plan to prevent fear of vaccinations among the public.

"The Korean government should be studying how the vaccination programs are being implemented in other parts of the world and come up with a detailed plan," Min said. "At this point it is imperative to ensure that the people are not too anxious about the effects of vaccination."

Korea's President Moon Jae-in promised free Covid-19 vaccinations for the entire country in a New Year's address, saying that the first doses will be distributed this month.

Korea went through a temporary scare over vaccine programs when reports of deaths following flu shots made headlines last October. By the end of the month, at least 28 people had died after receiving flu shots, many of them in their 70s and 80s.

The government held press briefings to explain that they did not find a correlation between the deaths and the vaccination program, adding that in 2019, around 1,500 people over the age of 65 in Korea had died after receiving flu shots of causes unrelated to the shots.





U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Gerald Allen, 51st Civil Engineer Squadron assistant chief of fire protection, receives the first dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine at Osan Air Base, Dec. 29, 2020.

# USFK Healthcare Workers and First Responders Receive COVID-19 Vaccine

U.S. Forces Korea Public Affairs

**U**nited States Forces Korea started inoculating military and civilian healthcare workers, first responders and the USFK command team with the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine today across three USFK medical treatment facilities.

The three locations administering the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine are the Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital at United States Army Garrison - Humphreys, 51st Medical Group at Osan Air Base and 8th Medical Group at Kunsan Air Base.

USFK was previously identified as one of four overseas locations to receive the Moderna COVID-19 vac-



Gen. Robert B. "Abe" Abrams, Commanding General for United States Forces Korea, receives the COVID-19 vaccine at Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital, U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys, Dec. 29, 2020.

cine through the Department of Defense's deliberate and phased distribution plan.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorized the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine under an emergency use authorization on Dec. 18 following Moderna's careful and rigorous three-phased clinical trial that demonstrated the vaccine to be safe and effective for use.

Under an emergency use authorization, the vaccine is 100% voluntary and not mandatory.

"I strongly encourage all eligible individuals to receive the vaccine," said Gen. Robert B. "Abe" Abrams, USFK Commander. "While the Moderna vaccine is completely voluntary under an EUA, I want you to make an informed decision for you and your family regarding the vaccine."

The initial distribution to USFK was limited in quantity but within DoD's phased delivery approach to ensure frontline healthcare workers and first responders, who are at risk of being exposed daily, were prioritized to receive the vaccine first.

The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine arrived in South Korea on Dec. 25 at Incheon Airport, and after clearing customs, was ground delivered to the United States Army Medical Material Center Korea at Camp Carroll the same day. It remained in cold-storage there until Dec. 28 when it was ground delivered to the three medical treatment facilities at Humphreys, Osan and Kunsan.

Following this initial phase of inoculations, additional vaccine shipments will arrive on-peninsula as Moderna, and potentially other FDA-authorized vaccines, are produced and shipped to USFK. These vaccines will be made available for those eligible and who choose to receive it.

"While we await additional shipments of the vaccine, I ask that our community remains patient and flexible," said Abrams. "The COVID-19 vaccine is another tool that will help USFK maintain a robust combined defensive posture and our 'Fight Tonight' readiness approach."



Command Sgt. Maj. Walter A. Tagalicud, Senior Enlisted Advisor for United States Forces Korea, receives the COVID-19 vaccine at Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital.



Dr. Brian Cohee, a pulmonary and critical care physician with the Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital, was the first person who received the COVID-19 vaccine on the Korean Peninsula.



Members of Team Osan prepare to receive the first round of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine at Osan Air Base, Dec. 29, 2020.



## KDCA Members' Visit

Photos by In Kyeong Yun  
Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital Unit Public Affairs Representative



The 549th Hospital Center and Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital hosted a tour of U.S. Forces Korea's COVID-19 disease response key facilities to the International Affairs team of the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency on Jan. 29, 2021. The team visited the Reception Center, the Isolation Facility, Laboratory, a negative pressure treatment room in the hospital, and the COVID vaccination center. Throughout the visit, Col. Huy Q. Luu, the Commander of 549th HC/BDAACH, briefed the KDCA members on the hospital's contribution to USFK's efforts to limit and contain COVID-19. This included COVID-19 testing capabilities, management and treatment of positive COVID-19 cases, and the on-going vaccination effort. The discussions allowed the two groups to enhance their shared understanding, strengthen the alliance, and to continue to collaborate in the fight against COVID-19 on the Korean Peninsula.

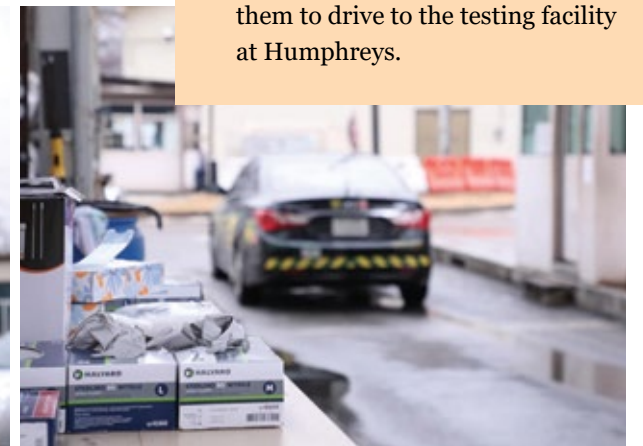


## COVID Response Teams Conduct Drive-Thru Testing

Photos by In Kyeong Yun  
Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital Unit Public Affairs Representative



In efforts to assist those in home quarantine assigned to U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan, medical personnel from the 549th Hospital Center and the 168th Multifunctional Medical Battalion travelled as part of a COVID-19 response team to conduct the first ever drive-thru coronavirus testing at USAG Yongsan, January 26, 2021. The testing was conducted for U.S. Forces Korea personnel who were home quarantined and needed the day-12 tests eliminating the need for them to drive to the testing facility at Humphreys.





# MEDICS USE TIGER TEAM CONCEPT TO BATTLE COVID-19 MISSION IN OUTLYING AREAS

Story and photos by William Wight  
65th Medical Brigade Public Affairs Office



**A** tiger team is commonly defined as a group of professionals who either engage in attempts to physical penetrate a secured location or to work on developmental strategies within an organization. Within the U.S. Army, a concept known as "Train the Trainer," is a model used to describe much as the name would imply, training potential instructors or less experienced instructors, on the best ways to deliver training materials to others.

During this global pandemic of coronavirus and the development of various vaccines, the Department of Defense selected the Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital as the military treatment facility designated in the Republic of Korea for administering the COVID-19 vaccine to U.S. Forces Korea personnel.

With this designation, came many challenges, the "Pacific Medics" team had to overcome. One of which was how to store, transport and administer the vaccine to the outlying clinics and installations

across the peninsula.

Col. Huy Luu, commander of the 549th Hospital Center and the Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital coined the term "Tiger Team" as a team of experts with the idea to conduct the mission and use the train the trainer concept. "To meet the vaccination requirements from the Defense Health Agency, Regional Health

Command Pacific, and U.S. Forces Korea, (the organization) was limited to where the vaccines could be dispensed, so we pitched an idea to the commands that with a good command and control element, we could dispense the vaccine to the outlying clinics."

After gaining approval for his "Tiger Team" concept, Luu tasked one of his subordinate units, the 135th Forward Surgical Team with establishing the processes. This real world mission helped train the team on MDMP, command and control, and mission command critical for their fight tonight readiness on the peninsula.

The Tiger Teams have been phenomenal said Luu, the abilities to leverage the mission and train one team to another within the local areas will definitely help in the vaccination efforts to come.

"By the middle of the month, our teams will hand off responsibilities to the outlying clinics and medical personnel at other installations thus easing the burden on our







personnel,” continued Luu. There have been a lot of lessons learned with the tiger teams, said Luu but by being flexible and altering plans, the mission has continued in both administratively and logistically. “In the beginning the teams observed how the vaccine was being administered here at the BDAACH and they went forth taught others how to complete this mission,” said Luu. “This conceptual like concept has worked out well for us and accomplished to standards both in distribution and administration. Having professionals such as the 135th has helped tremendously.” For Sgt. Vaughn Bayer, a flight medic with the 135th and on his second year in Korea, the five-year army noncommissioned officer from Forsyth County Georgia em-

braces the mission as a member of one of the tiger teams. “It is a step in the right direction, in my opinion, if we are to get back to doing things that we enjoy. I feel like the skill ceiling in the medical community is awesome in that I am always learning new things and there is never a time where something can not be learned.” Echoing her counterpart’s sentiment on the importance of the missions, Spc. Kaitlynn Curry, a medic from the 560th Military Company Area Support stationed at Camp Casey, has learned quite a lot from the team members and the operation. Having only been in Korea for two months, the Logan County, West Virginia native said that tackling the pandemic head on is a step in the return to normalcy. “I have learned a lot from my teammates

and am looking forward to the new times ahead.” Gathering together a small team of experts in their fields and moving out in a moments notice has been challenging to say the least for Capt. Lauren Snodgrass, the 125th Medical Detachment Commander and officer in charge of one of the tiger teams. “Going out to the outlying clinics and garrisons to teach and assist with the COVAX mission, balancing personnel and working within the footprint of the clinic, coupled with language and translation services, we have learned to make adjustments and build a model within non-network buildings that garrisons can support, because teamwork makes the dream work,” said Snodgrass. “This is a unique opportunity for

the medical community. We are not a platoon that is storming a hill, but in our version of a war, we practice troop leading procedures and execute like any army mission getting beneficiaries vaccinated against COVID-19, refining our processes as we advance forward to every location.”

Working long hours and being ready to go on a moment notice, is not what Pvt. 1st Class William Bush, a nurse with the 121st Field Hospital, thought he would be doing at his first duty station.

“Being a part of several missions has been worth it and the ability to go to different locations and train others to do this mission has definitely opened my eyes to other aspects with the Army,” said the Tyler Texas native.

For Headquarters, Headquarters Company 121st Field Hospital medic, Spc. Myla Deford, her two years with the unit in Korea has been rewarding.

“I have learned so much being a part of these teams, working with new people, teaching other medics about how to get the vaccine, time



period of administering and symptoms, etc. that they would not normally learn so they can accomplish this mission in the future,” said the St. Augustine, Florida native.

Master Sgt. Matthew Roth, senior clinical noncommissioned officer for the deputy commander of nursing and NCOIC of the BDAACH Covid-19 clinic, highlighted the capabilities of the tiger team.

“We were able to put together a strong team of personnel from all

medical backgrounds and ranks and dispatch them north and south on the peninsula in support of the COVID-19 vaccination mission, training those in these areas on how to handle the vaccine and ultimately be able to administer it themselves at their locations.”

The tiger team concept according to Luu will be scaled back this month to an advisory role to supervise those that have been trained these past few months in the outlying areas.





## Command Team Visits Humphreys Vaccination Center

Photos by William Wight  
65th Medical Brigade Public Affairs



**Lt.** Gen. Bill Burleson, the Eighth Army Commanding General and Command Sergeant Major, Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Robert Cobb, visited the 65th Medical Brigade and the 549th Hospital Center/ Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital and 2nd Infantry Division troops working at the COVID-19 Vaccination Center on U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys last month to express their gratitude and appreciation for the team's dedication and professionalism in caring for Soldiers, Civilians, and Families. The duo also gained greater insight into the units' efforts against COVID-19 by touring the new treatment facility.



## Dental Rodeo

Photos by Sgt. Michelle Stephens  
618th Dental Company Area Support Unit Public Affairs Representative



**In** Jan. 2021, the 618th Dental Company Area Support team at Humphreys Carius Dental Clinic conducted a dental rodeo. More than 135 annual dental readiness class 4 exams were performed along with several dental readiness class 3 procedures. Extra precautionary measures were taken to protect personal health information amidst the COVID mitigations in place.





# USFK to Receive and Administer the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine

U.S. Forces Korea Public Affairs Office



When United States Forces Korea began planning for the receipt of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine in Dec. 2020, USFK followed the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations and the Department of Defense's guidance which established

a prioritized, phased distribution plan for inoculations of its affiliated community.

The first four groups to receive the vaccine include frontline health care workers, first responders, "Fight Tonight" mission critical and essential units, key leaders and command nodes, and TRICARE eligible beneficiaries aged 75 years

and older.

Following the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's authorization on Feb. 27 of the one-dose Janssen vaccine, commonly referred to as Johnson & Johnson or J&J, USFK will begin to receive and administer the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine to its affiliated community as another vaccine to further pro-

tect its bubble in the fight against the COVID-19 virus.

Similar to Moderna, the Janssen vaccine is safe and effective for adults aged 18 years and older, and has a high efficacy in preventing severe disease, hospitalization and death following 28 days after receiving the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine.

The addition of the Janssen vaccine will enable USFK to begin its transition to the remaining three priority groups sooner than expected. The chain of command, supervisors and medical treatment facilities, among others, will advise the following individuals when they are scheduled to receive the vaccine.

The fifth group to receive the vaccine include DODEA, Child and Youth Services, AAFES and Commissary staff, public transit workers (bus drivers), and individuals working in high traffic areas and facilities including DFACs, Post Offices, Maude Hall, etc.

The sixth group of eligible individuals include TRICARE eligible beneficiaries aged 65 - 74 years and high risk individuals with pre-existing health conditions aged 18 - 64 years.

The final group will be all other



eligible individuals not previously identified or who have not already been vaccinated.

Despite transitioning to subsequent groups, USFK will continue to offer the vaccine to all eligible individuals who belong to groups previously offered the vaccine, but are no longer in the current focused group. This policy will continue throughout the duration of USFK's COVID-19 vaccine campaign.

While USFK has determined which individuals belong to specific groups, it is too early to predict when each group will begin to receive the vaccine. USFK's COVID-19 vaccine program, like every other global U.S. military location,

relies on an allocation of vaccines as determined by DOD. As production and availability of the vaccine increases, USFK expects to receive additional allocations of the vaccine beyond its normal rate to inoculate its affiliated community.

While the Janssen vaccine is completely voluntary under the FDA's emergency use authorization, USFK needs its affiliated community to strongly consider taking it. Along with USFK's core tenets, mask wear, strict personal hygiene and maintaining physical distancing, taking the vaccine will enable USFK to continue its aggressive approach to killing the virus.

While news of USFK receiving the Janssen vaccine is exceptional, everyone must remain vigilant, and adhere to USFK core tenets and HPCON measures, as well as ROK government and local directives, that have proven an effective mitigation measure against the spread of the virus.

USFK will continue to inform its community when it transitions to subsequent groups, and asks everyone remains patient and flexible until then.

We must protect the force to protect the mission.





# ROK-US Medical Alliance Strengthens During COVID-19 Vaccine Operations in Korea

Story by In Kyeong Yun  
Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital



From the beginning of the global pandemic known as COVID-19, U.S. Forces Korea has been working with multiple local national agencies and organizations in the Republic of Korea to form a united front and fight against the disease. As one of the largest medical assets in USFK, the Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital has been the pivotal figure of ROK-US COVID-19 response.

Since USFK received and started inoculating the COVID-19 vaccine throughout its military installations first in Republic of Korea, the BDAACH has been sharing practical knowledge and experience with the

Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency and the Republic of Korea Army to provide support for a successful roll out of COVID-19 vaccine (COVAX) within the Republic of Korea.

The BDAACH hosted a tour of USFK's COVID-19 disease response key facilities to the International Affairs team of the KDCA back in January. The team was able to see operations of the reception center, the isolation facility, the laboratory and a negative pressure room in the hospital, as well as the COVID vaccination center. BDAACH shared information on current COVID-19 testing capabilities, management and treatment of positive COVID-19

cases, and the on-going vaccination efforts.

The exchange of knowledge and experience was extended to not only the Korean government agency but also to the military sector of the Republic of Korea. The BDAACH leadership attended a virtual conference with the ROK Army Surgeon General and Armed Forces Medical Center staff on the COVAX mission last month.

During the conference, Col. Huy Q. Luu, the BDAACH Commander, shared the organization's COVAX processes, challenges, insights while ROKA Medical Command shared their plan for future COVAX mission in support of KDCA's

inoculation plan. Key planning factors and lessons learned were also exchanged to ensure the COVAX mission success for ROKA future vaccination operations.

Following this conference, Luu hosted ROK Brig. Gen. Beom Man Ha, ROK Army Surgeon General and the ROK Armed Forces Medical Command team for a tour of the hospital's COVID-19 vaccine operations, and visit to the COVID-19 Vaccination Center. The ROK medical team were able to see USFK's vaccination efforts first hand. This was a great opportunity to share the techniques, procedures and lessons learned from the U.S. perspective that will help enable success for the ROK's future vaccine operation.

Luu emphasized the unique opportunity that ROK Army medical officers, as part of the Integrated Service of Republic of Korea Military Health Care Personnel Program, are developing expertise that they will bring back to the ROKA. For 66 years, Korean Army medical officers have rotated every six months within various sections of the 65th Medical Brigade to share in medical training. The ISRMHCPP was established in 1955 to facilitate wartime coordination between the U.S. and ROK military health

care support system in the event of hostilities. This year, those ROK officers are actively involved in the BDAACH's COVID-19 mitigation efforts including testing and vaccinations.

"COVID-19 has been bringing constant challenges but it also opened up an opportunity for us to collaborate and connect with our host nation, on many ways that we haven't before," said Luu. "We will continue to exchange our knowledge and experience on the fight against the COVID-19 mitigation including the vaccine operations."

The BDAACH was selected by DOD as one of the initial vaccina-

tion sites to validate distribution, administration, and reporting processes for the new vaccine. The COVID-19 Vaccine team (Task Force COVAX) initiated inoculations back in December and has been rolling out the vaccine on a phased approach following USFK priority group schema. The Task Force has been sending out Tiger Teams to outlying locations at Casey, Yongsan, Daegu, and Chin-hae Naval Base to provide vaccinations to eligible USFK personnel. Recently the main vaccination team expanded its services and opened up the COVID-19 Vaccination Center at Humphreys.

## 10 TIPS FOR A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

- 1 Stick to a sleep schedule.
- 2 Exercise 30 minutes per day, but not later than 2-3 hours before bedtime.
- 3 Avoid caffeine, alcohol and nicotine before bed.
- 4 Avoid large meals late at night.
- 5 Avoid medicines that delay or disrupt your sleep.
- 6 Don't take naps after 3 p.m.
- 7 Relax before bed.
- 8 Take a hot bath before bed.
- 9 Create a good sleeping environment.
- 10 Have the right sunlight exposure during the day.



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## Humphreys and Osan Veterinarians Host World Spay Day Clinics

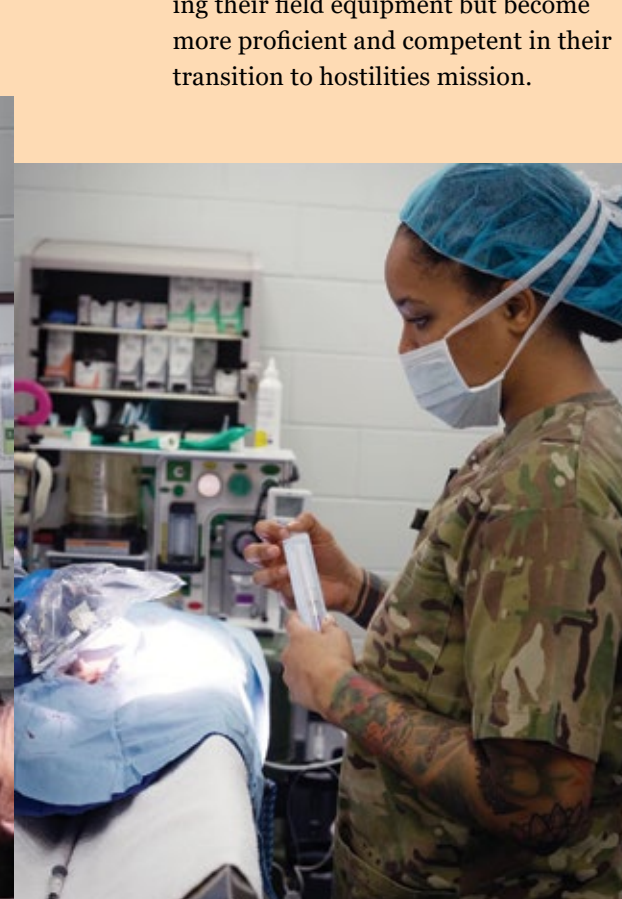
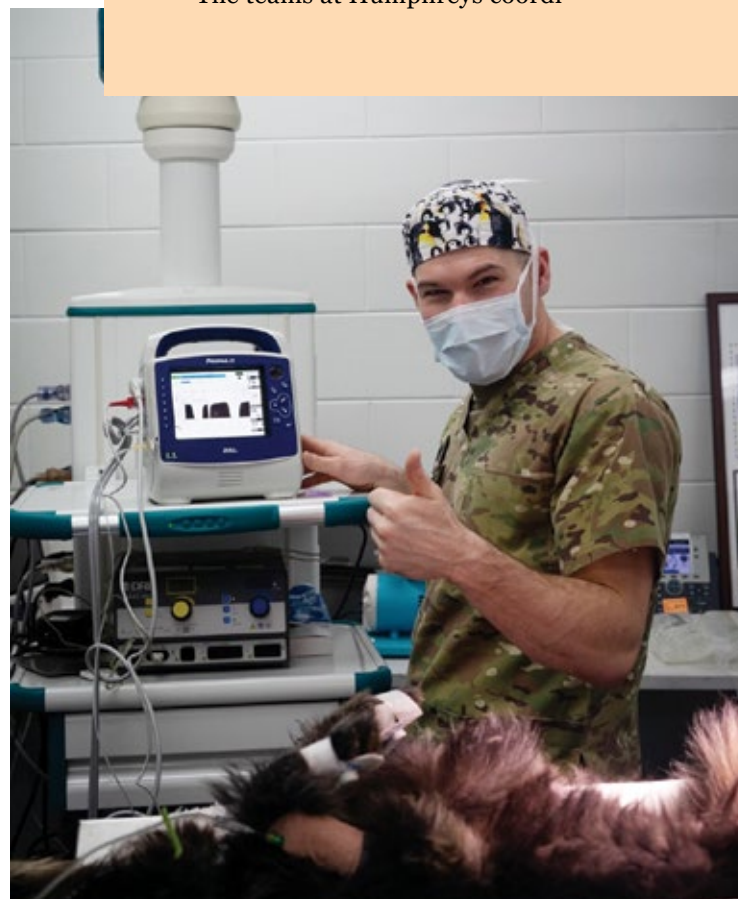
Photos courtesy of 106th Veterinary Detachment (Veterinary Service Support)

Veterinary Medical Surgical Teams and Veterinary Service Support Teams of the 106th Veterinary Detachment (Veterinary Service Support) from Humphreys and Osan Air Base participated in unit level spay and neuter clinics in honor of “World Spay Day” on February 24.

The Osan teams collaborated with Homeward Bound Animal Shelter at Osan in order to spay two animals ready for adoption. The teams at Humphreys coordi-

nated with Asan Cheonsawon Shelter to spay and neuter nine dogs for adoption.

The dual event helped support community outreach efforts and strengthen the enduring partnership with the Republic of Korea. Teams were able to not only practice their surgical skills while utilizing their field equipment but become more proficient and competent in their transition to hostilities mission.





# 95th Medical Detachment Provides Critical Blood Support on Korean Peninsula

Story and photos by C.J. Lovelace  
U.S. Army Medical Logistics Command



Spcs. Ariel Arroyo and Douglas Napier, with the 95th Medical Detachment-Blood Support, perform quality control on deglycerolized blood products at Humphreys.

When the military needs life-saving blood for U.S. and allied forces on the Korean Peninsula, the 95th Medical Detachment-Blood Support answers the call.

To keep up this precious supply, the 95th MDBS maintains the largest forward blood bank in the Department of Defense.

“Here in Korea, the military does not have a donor center, which means we are not able to produce our own supply of red-blood cells on a regular basis,” said Maj. Chewanda Jones, commander of the 95th MDBS. “We must maintain frozen red-blood cells on hand in order to support our local military medical treatment facilities at all times.”

Ensuring all beneficiaries remain able to receive blood products at a moment’s notice is their top priority, according to Jones.

In order to freeze blood, glycerol must be added as a preservative within six days of collection. Once frozen,

the blood product is good for 10 years.

To return it to a transfusable product that can be used for a patient, the process must be reversed to remove the glycerol through the use of specialized instruments that “wash” the red-blood cells and readies them for use within 14 days.

“If this capability is not available, the military medical treatment facility would not be able to operate its surgical unit at full capacity,” Jones said. “Not having enough blood products on hand for those who need it can lead to longer hospital stays or postponement of much needed surgeries.”

Jones commended her team members for their speed and precision.

“My team is highly trained and extraordinarily proficient at what we do to support the Korean Peninsula with blood products,” she said, “and we are very proud to do just that.”

The 95th MDBS operates under the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center-Korea, which is a direct reporting unit to the U.S. Army Medical Logistics Command.



Spc. Raymond Torrissi, with the 95th Medical Detachment-Blood Support, reviews quality assurance documents required for the blood deglycerolization process.



## BASIC INFORMATION

### • International Healthcare Center

Working hours: **M ~ F** 08:00~17:00, **S** 08:00~12:00

### • 24/7 English speaking service: available

### • Contact Point

- Phone: 02-3410-0232, 0200

- Fax: 02-3410-0231

- Email: [ihc.smc@samsung.com](mailto:ihc.smc@samsung.com)

- Address: 81 Irwon-ro Gangnam-gu Seoul NA06351

### • Website: [www.samsunghospital.com/english](http://www.samsunghospital.com/english)

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(Please go to Samsung Medical Center)

### Subway

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or Suseo Station Bundang line (yellow) exit 5

→ Free shuttle bus available,  
5 minutes distance

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### To International Healthcare Center

Annex building 2<sup>nd</sup> floor From gate 4 or gate 1(main),

go to ophthalmology clinic(annex bldg. 1<sup>st</sup> floor)

→ take an elevator in front of the clinic

→ get off at the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor





The spirit of Wangsan and Pilbongsan Mountain create the Donguibogam Village health experience tourism site whose theme is oriental medicine, making it Korea's number one wellness destination.

# SANCHEONG:

## *Korea's Number One Wellness Destination*

Story and Photos by William Wight  
65th Medical Brigade Public Affairs Office

**Do** you fancy a relaxing get away? Do you desire to drive on winding open roads? Or perhaps you need to get away from the increased pollution and modern day stressors. If so, then the place to go is Sancheong, the birthplace of traditional oriental medicine. Located about four hours south of Seoul at the foot of Jirisan Mountain, Sancheong is the home of the Oriental Medicinal Healing Town of Donguibonga.

In this tranquil scenic mountain respite, you can learn about alternative medicine and receive both eastern and western health tests, enjoy a spa or stay in a hanok, a Korean traditional house.

Designated as one of the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism's 7 cultural tourism areas, Dongui-

bonga offers a space to heal the mind and body.

Take a walk through the woods and breathe clean mountain air as you take in the sights of the Oriental Medicinal Herb Experience Theme Park, Meditation Qi Experience Center, Nature Learning Center and Oriental Medicine Healing Forest a true relaxing and healing space.

Located within Donguibogam Village is the Sancheong Oriental Medicine Theme Park a place for all ages. Designed on the five elements of creation (wood, fire, earth, metal and water), the park is Korea's first hanbang themed park.

The Traditional Herbal Medicine Tourist Park is located at the foot of Wangsan Mountain, where the two prominent doctors of the mid-Joseon Dynasty (1394-





Sancheong is also well-known for Namsayedam Village, a hanok village preserving the traditional beauty and sentiment of Korea in a traditional agricultural themed village.



To receive good Qi, place your hands or body on the 127-ton boulder behind Donggwiyeon Hall to renew your spiritual energy.

1910), Ryu Ui-tae and his apprentice Heo Jun practiced Korean Oriental medicine. As Korea's first herbal medicine-themed tourist park, it offers visitors a variety of health-related experiences.

As a growing tourist attraction, a wide variety of recreational facilities are offered to include the Museum of Herbal Medicine, a medicinal herb garden, a medicinal herb forest park, accommodations, herbal medicine facilities, shops, and more.

The Museum of Herbal Medicine is the first herbal medicine specializing museum in Korea. The museum building has two floors above ground and one below spanning 2,440 square meters. The Traditional Medicine Center on the first floor features the history of Korea's traditional medicine and herbal medicine treat-

ments. The Medicinal Herbs Exhibition Hall on the second floor introduces various medicinal herb species and their benefits and offers various hands-on experience programs such as discovering traditional medicine and a checkup on one's physical constitution.

Since the park is eco-friendly and built in harmony with the forest and valleys of Jirisan National Park, you can enjoy both sightseeing and a walk through nature along a variety of trails while learning about herbalism and oriental medicine.

Herbalism is the study and practice of using plant material for the purpose of food, medicine, or health. They may be flowers, plants, shrubs, trees, moss, lichen, fern, algae, seaweed or fungus. The plant may be used in its entirety or with only specific parts. In each culture or

medical system there are different types of herbal practitioners: professional and lay herbalists, plant gatherers, and medicine makers..

Herbal medicines may be presented in many forms including fresh, dried, whole, or chopped. Herbs may be prepared as infusions when an herb is soaked in a liquid or decocted — simmered in water over low heat for a certain period. Some examples of infusion are chamomile or peppermint, using flowers, leaves and powdered herbs. Decocting examples may be rose hips, cinnamon bark, and licorice root consisting of fruits, seeds, barks, and roots. Fresh and dried herbs can be tinctured where herbs are kept in alcohol or contained in a vinegar extract. They can be preserved as syrups such as glycerites in vegetable glycerin or put in honey

known as miels. Powdered and freeze dried herbs can be found in bulk, tablets, troches similar to a lozenge, paste or capsule.

Non-oral herbal uses consist of creams, baths, oils, ointments, gels, distilled waters, washes, poultices, compresses, snuffs, steams, inhaled smoke and aromatics volatile oils.

Many herbalists consider the patient's direct involvement to be critical. These methods are delivered differently depending on the herbal traditions of each area. Nature is not necessarily safe; special attention should be used when grading quality, deciding a dosage, realizing possible effects, and any interactions with herbal medications. An example of herbal medicine is the use of medicinal mushrooms as a food or as a tea.

Operated by the Pusan National University School of Ko-





rean Medicine, the museum not only specializes in oriental medicine but provides visitors a look into Korea's medical heritage and herbal treatments and the benefits of Korea's oriental medicine. Visitors can learn not only the history of medical traditions but of various techniques they can apply to themselves in everyday life.

For the adventurous the opportunity to explore and learn acupuncture is also available. Acupuncture is used to withdraw blood or stimulate certain points on humans by inserting needles on specific pressure points of the body. Traditional acupuncture involves the belief that a "life force" (qi) circulates within the body in lines called meridians. Pressure points can be stimulated through a mixture of methods ranging from the insertion and withdrawal of very small needles to the use of heat, known as moxibustion.

Moxibustion is a technique in which heat is applied to the body with a stick or a cone of burning mugwort. The tool is placed over the affected area without burning the skin. The cone or stick can also be placed over a pressure point to stimulate and strengthen the blood.

The mind can affect "bodily functions and symptoms" and there is an interconnection between the mind, body, and spirit which is brought together within Sancheong.

Every October, Sancheong hosts the Oriental Medicinal Herbs Festival. So if you enjoy the quiet retreat from the hectic day to day lifestyle then take a drive or a bus to Sancheong the home of the Oriental Medicinal Healing Town of Donguibonga.



## Dr. Gina Sohn - U.S. Dentist Licensed to practice in Massachusetts, Connecticut & New Jersey. Tufts Graduate..., the Smile Artist!

- Graduate of Tufts University, School of Dental Medicine – Boston, Mass.
- Studied at University Paris 5 (Rene Descartes).
- Orthodontics - trained at USDI.
- NYU Trained for Implant Dentistry.
- Fluent in English, Korean, Japanese & French.



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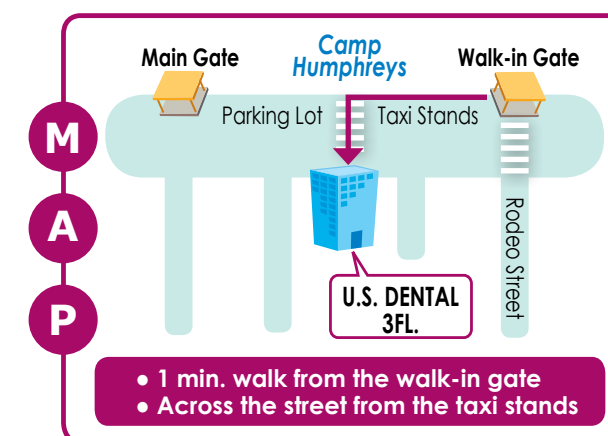
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# Exercise Affirms Army's Ability to Maintain Operational Readiness of Medical Assets on Korean Peninsula

Story by C.J. Lovelace  
U.S. Army Medical Logistics Command

During a transition to hostilities on the Korean Peninsula, the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center-Korea would take charge of the Army's forward-positioned medical stocks in support of Eighth Army units.

Soldiers from the 563rd Medical Logistics Company, a direct reporting unit to USAMMC-K, simulated the absorption process during an exercise in March.

Maj. William Wiltbank, deputy commanding officer for USAMMC-K, said the first-time exercise went well and allowed the Soldiers to drill what would be "the single most important task" for USAMMC-K as the theater lead agent for medical materiel, or TLAMM, during a transition to hostilities.

"This exercise simulated the feasibility of transitioning the stocks, both virtually and physically, from one activity to another," Wiltbank said. "It also provided an understanding of the personnel requirements needed to execute and manage the mission."

As part of a larger, twice-yearly Combined Command Post Training, or CCPT, the multi-day drill called for USAMMC-K Soldiers to train alongside staff from the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Agency, which manages medical stocks at the Army Prepositioned Stocks site, known as APS-4, during armistice.

Wiltbank said an eight-Soldier team from USAMMC-K relocated to the APS-4 site and integrated into operations to assume control over medical materiel stocks within 48 hours. In a real-life scenario, the USAMMC-K team is responsible for organizing all contingency stocks into preconfigured sets that can be readied for issue throughout the theater.

"Since the TLAMM's armistice stocks are consumption based rather than operationally driven, the APS-4 sustainment stocks are vital in bridging the gap during a large-scale combat operation," Wiltbank said.

The USAMMC-K team exercised the requisition flow from reception to distribution, processing over 40 tons of materiel and establishing assemblages to support Eighth Army units. During the drill, combatant commanders communicated requirements based on simu-



A Soldier with the 563rd Medical Logistics Company loads a tactical combat medical care resupply set in support of U.S. Forces Korea during an exercise March 19 at the Army's prepositioned stock site in South Korea. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Anthony Peterson)

lated casualty rates.

Matthew Shaw, forward site manager for APS-4 Korea, said the coordination between USAMMC-K Soldiers and USAMMA staff was positive throughout the exercise, which ran March 15-19.

"This training gave the USAMMC-K Soldiers an opportunity to see how the site maintains Class VIII stock and how the APS site would deploy sets utilizing the materiel release orders generated in the event of conditions changing," Shaw said.

Wiltbank said the exercise helped Soldiers get a better understanding of the "true requirements" in a transition to hostilities situation. He said the drill is expected to be a twice-annual event in conjunction with future CCPTs.

"USAMMC-K is now confident that we would be able to execute the sustainment stock absorption when called to do so," Wiltbank said.

USAMMC-K Commander Lt. Col. Marcus D. Perkins said the exercise was a prime example how USAMMA and USAMMC-K, both direct reporting units to Army Medical Logistics Command, work together to drive effects to the warfighter.

"A part of USAMMC-K's ability to maintain readiness is to continuously train the 563rd MEDLOG Company, which enables an extension of the operational reach for commanders across the peninsula," Perkins said. "We place resources and training behind our efforts to ensure we are able to operationalize across the full range of military operations to accomplish our objectives."

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A look back during the pandemic. See pages 26 to 111 for a special "MEDDAC-K COVID-19 Year in Review."

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