

# Commentary

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## Troop Talk



I received several questions about medical care from Soldiers and this week's column will address their concerns and provide answers given by the William Beaumont Army Medical Center commander.

**I am a Soldier with allergies and I have been trying for two years to get a referral to an allergy specialist. If there are not any allergy specialists available at WBAMC, why can't I get a referral to a doctor off post or at another installation?**

Soldiers with allergies who are referred by their Primary Care Manager to the allergy clinic will receive a routine appointment date within 30 days of their PCM visit. If the Soldier does not receive an appointment, they should call the PCM to verify the referral was made. If the patient is still having allergy symptoms they should make an appointment with their PCM for treatment and a referral to an allergist. In some cases an allergist is not available; patients are referred to the network for treatment. We encourage all Soldiers and patients to follow up with their PCM when referred for specialty care if they have any questions.

**I have two EFMP family members and I would like to be able to schedule their medical appointments with the same doctor so that the doctor will become familiar with their specific needs and their medical history. Thus far, my EFMP children have**

**seen a different doctor almost every time they have gone to WBAMC. Is it possible to have a single doctor manage their care?**

In the Pediatric/Adolescent clinic, we strive for all children to be seen by the same physician/provider during a clinic visit. However, with more than 7,000 children empanelled to the clinic with an average of five to seven physicians/providers this is a challenging task. The number of children empanelled to the clinic will continue to increase as the active duty population increases. We are preparing for this increase in the patient population through proposed staff level increases as a component of modularity and Base Realignment and Closure. It would be impossible for patients to see the same physician on every visit due to personal leaves, training, temporary duty and deployments that may cause a physician not to be available. Every physician/provider has access to your child's history because of annotations made in the patient's record or in CHCS.

The clinic operates on a team concept. This team concept allows for the patient to be seen by any physician/provider in the clinic and for them to take leave, attend training, and other related activities. The Pediatric/Adolescent Clinic uses the Comprehensive Health Care System II. CHCS II is an electronic record and provides an opportunity for continuity of care. If medical records are not located in the hospital, the CHCS II system can be utilized to view any previous visits to the clinic, thus enabling the treating physician to be able to deliver care along the same lines as the PCM if

the physician is not available. If the patient cannot be treated in the clinic, the patient will be referred to other clinics in the hospital or to the TRICARE network.

Patients may be able to have the same physician upon request; however, we will not be able to guarantee this action in every situation. We assure you that each child is given the best treatment available and if the treatment is not available here the patient may be referred to another facility.

**A lot of Soldiers that I know have no choice but to take their children to the ER for what usually ends up being routine care (fever, cold, flu, etc.) because it is the only facility open when they get off work. Has anyone ever considered opening a portion of the clinic to pediatric care with extended hours, such as from 6 to 8 p.m.?**

The Pediatric Services does have an on-call pediatrician who covers the ninth floor, Labor and Delivery and the Emergency Room. If there are questions or concerns about the pediatric clinic, call Sgt. 1st Class Edgardo Rodriguez, NCOIC, Pediatric Clinic, or Catherine Davis, head nurse, Pediatric Clinic at 569-2507 during duty hours.

The WBAMC command and staff continually explore ways to meet the needs of all of our patients and beneficiaries.

Brig. Gen. Robert P. Lennox  
Fort Bliss Commanding General

### November holiday safety message

Two federal holidays in November are almost upon us. The Veterans and Thanksgiving Day holidays are each followed with a training holiday occurring Nov. 14 and Nov. 25. Both holidays are celebrated with four-day weekends and are great opportunities for gathering with family and friends.

Veterans Day is a solemn time to remember our brave men and women who served this great nation with honor, dedication, and in many instances paying the ultimate sacrifice with their lives. Remember these great warriors Nov. 11 with your prayers.

Thanksgiving Day is a joyful time when our grateful country remembers and celebrates its heritage. While it is a time of joy and renewed contact with family and friends, it is also a time when just a moment of inattention, especially when driving, can turn the festive occurrence into one of tragedy and loss.

Privately owned vehicle accidents remain the major killer of Soldiers with 141 Army fatalities for FY 05. This is 47 percent of the total accidental deaths of 302 Soldiers and every year since 2000 this total

has increased. Unfortunately, four Team Bliss Soldiers contributed to this total. We must stop this needless loss of lives and apply preventive measures.

Prior to personnel departing on leave or pass, discuss trip planning and driving hazards such as vehicle deficiencies, road conditions, adverse weather, and fatigue. Implement effective controls to reduce risks and use the USA Combat Readiness Center Web site at <https://crc.army.mil> under the risk management/POV section to assist in this effort.

To avoid tragic holiday accidents, we must apply the same composite risk management standard to our holiday preparations and festivities as we do to our on-duty missions. Through personal involvement, we can reduce accident risks in all areas and be a positive influence on others. I expect leaders to set the standard for this holiday period. Ensure all personnel celebrate responsibly, don't allow friends to drink and drive, buckle up – no exceptions, no excuses.

Brig. Gen. Robert P. Lennox  
Fort Bliss Commanding General

### Presidential Proclamation

Americans owe a great debt of gratitude to those who have sacrificed for our liberty and for the security of our Nation. We express deep appreciation to our veterans – the men and women who stepped forward when America needed them, triumphed over brutal enemies, liberated continents, and answered the prayers of millions around the globe.

From the beaches of Normandy and the snows of Korea to the mountains of Afghanistan and the deserts of Iraq, our courageous veterans have sacrificed so that Americans and others could live in freedom. As we mark the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II this year, we remember the millions of veterans who crossed oceans and defeated two of the most ruthless military forces the world has ever known. The freedom that the children and grandchildren of these veterans now enjoy is a monument to their fallen comrades and the generations of patriots who have served our country.

Through their commitment to freedom, America's veterans have lifted millions of lives and made our country and the world more secure. They have demonstrated to us that freedom is the mightiest force on Earth. We resolve that their sacrifices will always be

remembered by a grateful Nation.

With respect for and in recognition of the contributions our service men and women have made to the cause of peace and freedom around the world, the Congress has provided that Nov. 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor veterans.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Nov. 11, 2005, as Veterans Day and urge all Americans to observe Nov. 6 through 12, as National Veterans Awareness Week. I urge all Americans to recognize the valor and sacrifice of our veterans through ceremonies and prayers. I call upon federal, state, and local officials to display the flag of the United States and to encourage and participate in patriotic activities in their communities. I invite civic and fraternal organizations, places of worship, schools, businesses, unions, and the media to support this national observance with commemorative expressions and programs.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand five.

George W. Bush  
United States President

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