



New medical facility improves care for U.S. forces in Kuwait

By Capt. Amy Mahowald
Deputy Area Engineer, Kuwait Area Office

The Camp Arifjan Expeditionary Medical Facility Kuwait transitioned from a temporary tent facility to the new Level III Hospital facility in March. Equipment, supplies and patients moved into the new hospital in a sequence that allowed medical operations to continue seamlessly.

The Hospital significantly raised the level of patient care for service members stationed in Kuwait, and Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

The EMFK is comprised of the Level III Hospital and six clinics, staffed by over 330 individual augmentees from over 80 Naval Commands worldwide. The Navy supplies the nurses, doctors, surgeons, laboratory technicians, medical equipment technicians and a number of other military occupational specialties to ensure the hospital is self sufficient.

The new facility provides the best work environment available. Tremendous work goes on every day to ensure that service members throughout the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility are given the best care possible.

Before the construction of the Level III Hospital, the EMFK was located in a tent facility, and often subject to the rigors of the desert environment. It was difficult to regulate the internal temperature and major efforts were needed to ensure sterility.

The new Level III Hospital is divided into four departments: operating rooms and surgical department, nursing ward, trauma unit and consultation rooms. The hospital is outfitted with new equipment, to include containerized CT scan and X-ray machines, and allows the vast majority of patient care to take place at Camp Arifjan reducing outsourcing to Kuwaiti hospitals to rare occurrences.

Delivery of care now occurs in an environment similar to what service members are accustomed to at home station. This provides a level of comfort and familiarity to both the providers and the patients, which is unique to the theater and one of the strengths of the new facility.

This forward-deployed medical team is now housed in a facility that enhances their ability to provide routine and emergency care to the war fighter. Their expertise and resources allow them to treat disease and non-battle injuries in theater, and thereby reduce the amount of time a service member is away from his or her unit.

The Warrior Return Unit successfully returns 80 percent of patients back to their units. A major advantage to the EMFK and WRU presence in Kuwait is that they are able to treat and rehabilitate injuries that would otherwise need to be evacuated to Germany or the United States. The end result is that service members are returned to duty sooner and units do not have to endure unnecessary manning shortfalls.

The Camp Arifjan Level III Hospital has drastically improved the level of care given to the men and women stationed at Camp Arifjan and deployed in support of OIF and OEF. The new beds, climate-controlled environment, and dedicated medical professionals offer these men and women the world class care they need and the comforts of home. A welcome addition to the Camp Arifjan installation and one more tool to ensure our fighting force receives the best care possible.