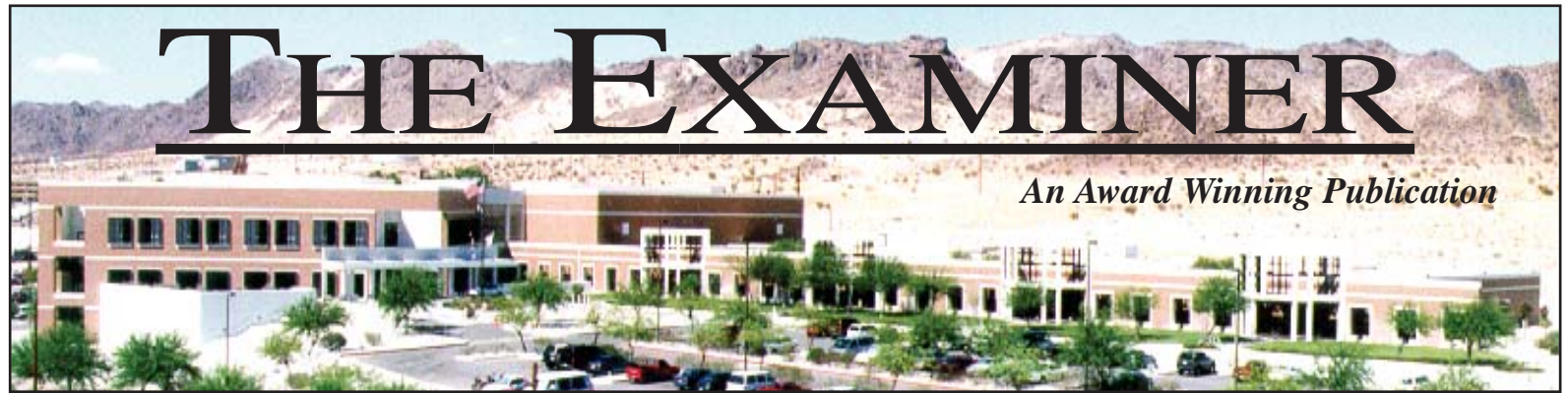




Robert E. Bush
Naval Hospital



THE EXAMINER

An Award Winning Publication

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nhttp/pages/default.aspx>

Did you know?...

You have the right to express your concerns about patient safety and quality of care.

There are several avenues open to you:

- * Through the ICE website.
- * Through the Naval Hospital Customer Comment Cards.

- * The Hospital's Customer Relations Officer at 760-830-2475, or any of the Customer Relations representatives in the hospital's clinics.

Or Directly to the Joint Commission via:

E-mail at complaint@jointcomission.org

Fax:
Office of Quality Monitoring
630-792-5636

Mail:
Office of Quality Monitoring
The Joint Commission
Oak Renaissance Boulevard
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Customer Relations is Job One at Naval Hospital

By Dan Barber, Public Affairs Officer
Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital

Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms strives to ensure patient satisfaction, therefore if a patient feels they aren't receiving appropriate care, the command wants to know about it.

To help patients with concerns about their medical care, and to bring those concerns up the chain of command, the Naval Hospital has a full-time Customer Relations Officer assigned. That officer is Lieutenant Marko Radakovic, NC, USN.

Lieutenant Radakovic, or Lt. "Rad" as he is known in the hospital, brings a lot of experience in patient care to his job as an Emergency Room nurse. Radakovic was commissioned as an Ensign in the Navy Nurse Corps after graduating from Marquette University in 2003, the hospital's leadership needed a strong person to take on the Customer Relations job so Radakovic was selected for the job.

"I believe it is our duty to provide the best support and care for our troops and their families. We are constantly looking at improving our process and through maintaining open lines of communications between staff and patients we obtain a good perspective of the command climate that affords us the ability to make changes for the better," said Radakovic.

One of the major goals of this hospital is to ensure all eligible beneficiaries receive the highest quality healthcare possible. The quality of care received is often measured by the patient's perception of how the care is delivered. To assess this perception, the hospital reviews TRICARE surveys, patient contact interviews, staff interviews (both formal and informal), Quarterly Consumer Health Care Council meetings, and various staff committee meetings. Of course all of the information gathered is kept free of personal information to protect patient privacy. This information is then used to decide how the hospital delivers healthcare.

The primary means of resolving a problem or giving a formal compliment for care received is through a Customer Relations representative. One is assigned to each of the hospital's clinics and inpatient areas.

The Customer Relations program has been set up to:

- * Provide a means for you to express concerns, problems and compliments relating to the treatment and services you have received.
- * Promote a positive professional relationship between you and our staff.
- * Identify staff personnel to act as your advocate.
- * Promote awareness and understanding of your rights and responsibilities as a patient.
- * Provide a means to assist other members of our health care team in implementing system changes that will benefit you and the care you receive.

Continued on page 8



SCPOA Elects New Officers

By LS2(SW) Robert Ellis
SCPOA Public Affairs Officer

The Second Class Petty Officer Association (SCPOA) held elections for new Officers and are looking forward to a fresh start for the SCPOA.

The newly elected Officers are President HM2 Pete Brandi, Vice President HM2 Seth Bryan, Secretary YN2 Gracie Rosas, Treasurer HM2 Ashley Groke, PAO LS2 Robert Ellis, and MAA HM2 Derril George. The SCPOA's Mentor is LSCS Diego.

"We are excited about the SCPOA and with the elections of newly appointed Officers and are looking forward to a fresh start and doing a lot of things with the Association," said Brandi. "We have a lot in store with fundraising ideas, community service opportunities out in town, and different events here at the Naval Hospital as well,"

he added.

The SCPOA kicked off the Community Service projects with a Highway 62 clean up. The SCPOA has a two mile stretch on both sides of Highway 62. The SCPOA meets once a month and picks up trash and debris along the Highway. The SCPOA also volunteered at the Morongo Basin Humane Society in Joshua Tree. Members participated in cleaning up the kennels, walking and playing with the dogs as well as the other animals they have at the Shelter. The SCPOA made a donation of Cat and Dog food to the shelter as well.

The SCPOA is open to all Second Class Petty Officers on MCAGCC, which includes the Marine Units as well as the Naval Hospital Second Classes. For more information about the SCPOA or if you are interested in joining contact pete.brandi@med.navy.mil or Robert.ellis@med.navy.mil

Family History and Your Health: National Family History Day

By *Martha Hunt, MA CAMF*
Health Promotions Coordinator
Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital

Each year since 2004, the US Surgeon General has declared Thanksgiving to be National Family History Day.

Over the holiday or whenever families gather together, the Surgeon General encourages Americans to talk about and write down the health problems that seem to run in their family. Learning about your family's health history may help ensure a longer, healthier future for you and your loved ones.

Gathering what you need to create your own family health portrait: Knowing your family's health history can save your life and the lives of those you love.

By tracing the illnesses suffered by your parents, grandparents and other relatives you can help your doctor predict some health problems that may face you or your family. To help you organize your family's health information, the U.S. Surgeon General has developed an online tool called "My Family Health Portrait," which is available at <https://familyhistory.hhs.gov/>. This tool can be used online or can be printed and used as a paper record of your family's health. If you chose to use the online tool to record your family medical history, the information you place there is guaranteed private in accordance with HIPAA. Before you start using this tool, you will need to talk with your family members to gather more details about their health histories. Here are some suggestions on how to plan and conduct those important conversations.

Make a list of relatives. Write down the names of the blood relatives that you need to include in your family health history. The most important relatives to talk to are your parents, brothers and sisters, and your children. Next should be your grandparents, uncles and aunts,

nieces and nephews, and any half-brothers or half-sisters. It is also helpful to talk to great uncles and great aunts, as well as cousins if they are available.

Prepare your questions. Write out your questions ahead of time because it will help you to focus your discussion. Among the questions to ask are: Do you have any chronic illnesses, such as heart disease, high blood pressure or diabetes? Have you had any other serious illnesses, such as cancer or stroke? How old were you when you developed these illnesses? Have you or your partner had any difficulties with pregnancies, such as miscarriages? What medications are you currently taking?

Also ask questions about other relatives, both living and deceased, such as: What is our family's ancestry? What country did we come from? Has anyone in the family had learning or developmental disabilities? What illnesses did our late grandparents have? How old were they when they died? What caused their deaths?

Find a good time to talk. Consider talking with your relatives when your family is together in a relaxed setting. A good time may be at reunions, cookouts or holidays such as Thanksgiving. If it's not possible to talk to your relatives in person, you can also talk with them over the telephone or send them questions by mail or e-mail.

Explain to your relatives what you are doing. Begin your conversation by explaining that learning more about your family health history can help save lives in your family. Let your relatives know that the information they share about their individual health histories will help you create a Family Health Portrait that will benefit the entire family.

Keep a record. Remember to bring along a pencil and paper or a tape recorder to keep track of what your relatives tell you. That way you will have their

health information handy when you sit down to create My Family Health Portrait online or to fill out the paper version.

Ask one question at a time. It will be easier for your relatives to provide you with useful information if you keep your questions short and to the point. If you need more details, ask follow-up questions such as "why...how or when." Try to get as much specific information as possible.

Respect your relatives' feelings. Some family members may not want to share all or certain parts of their health information. This can be a difficult situation. Be sensitive to their feelings, and let them know that whatever information they can provide will be helpful. And

remember that your family member has the right to privacy and may choose not to participate.

Take one step at a time. If during your talks, you find out about a serious health problem that you didn't know existed in your family, don't panic. Move ahead with creating your Family Health Portrait. Then take your Family Health Portrait to your health care provider who can help you assess and understand what the information means for the health of you and your family.

Filling in the gaps. For relatives who are deceased or for whom you have incomplete health information, try asking other relatives or health care providers for information about

their health histories. Whenever possible, get copies of medical records, birth and death certificates to document the type of health condition diagnosed in yourself or your relatives. Different states have different regulations as to who has access to birth and death records. Check with that state to be sure you actually may have access to those records.

Keep your family's health history up-to-date. As children are born and family members develop illnesses, remember to add that information to your Family Health Portrait. It may take a little time and effort, but you will be creating a lasting legacy that will improve the health of your family for generations to come.

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The Examiner welcomes your comments and suggestions concerning the publication. Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each month for the following month's edition. Any format is welcome, however, the preferred method of submission is by e-mail or by computer disk.

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Happy Birthday U.S. Marine Corps
est. November 13, 1775

Arm Yourself: Get a Flu Shot

By Shari Lopatin and Diane Mayer
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

With the focus on fighting H1N1 flu this year, it's now more important than ever to get a flu shot. But where can TRICARE patients go, and when?

Only months ago, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the H1N1 flu a worldwide outbreak. This year, beneficiaries will need to get their seasonal flu shot, as well as another vaccination for the H1N1 flu.

The seasonal flu vaccine is a TRICARE-covered benefit and has up to a 90 percent success rate in a healthy population, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). On top of that, it's available as a shot or nasal spray. Patients may benefit the most by getting vaccinated in October or November. However, getting it as late as December can still help bolster the immune system.

To get either the seasonal flu shot or H1N1 vaccine, TRICARE Prime patients enrolled at a military installation clinic should call the facility to find out when the vaccines are available. As long as TRICARE Prime patients receive the seasonal flu shot from a TRICARE network provider, the vaccine is free.

The shot is also free for those enrolled in TRICARE Standard, Extra, or TRICARE Prime Remote, as long as they use any TRICARE-authorized provider.

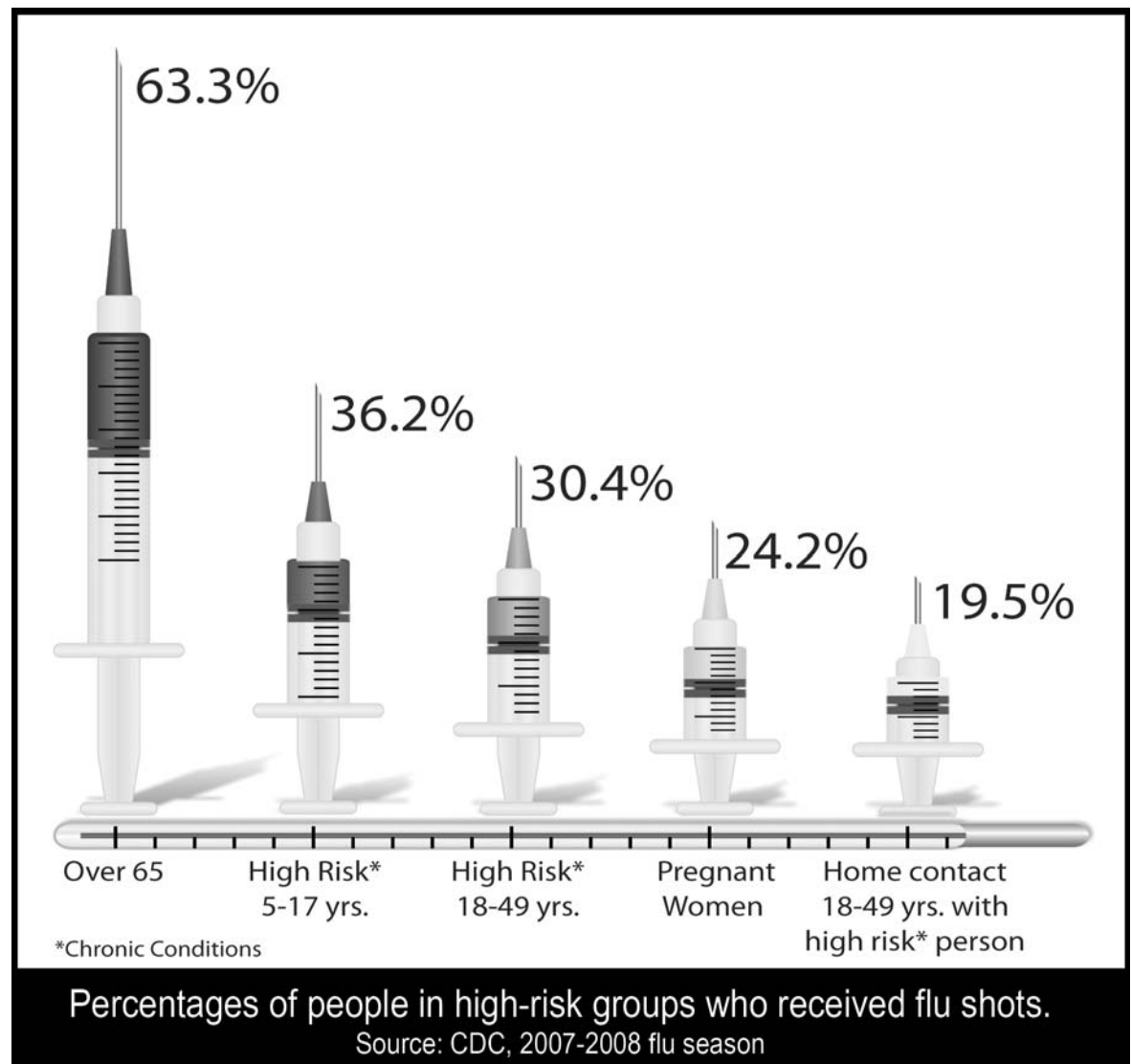
Keep in mind that while going to a local grocery store or pharmacy for the flu shot may be convenient, these public clinics do not use TRICARE providers

and therefore TRICARE will not reimburse beneficiaries for the cost.

If beneficiaries have any concerns about getting a seasonal flu shot or H1N1 vaccine, they should talk to their doctor. Typically, anyone 6 months and older can be vaccinated. The CDC recommends the seasonal flu vaccine for those at high risk, including:

- * People 50 years and older
- * Children 6 months to 18 years old
- * People living in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- * People with chronic health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease
- * People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu
- * Pregnant women

For more information about the seasonal flu vaccination, West Region TRICARE beneficiaries can talk to their doctor or visit the TriWest Healthy Living Portal at www.triwest.com/healthyliving.



...Only months ago, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the H1N1 flu a worldwide outbreak. This year, beneficiaries will need to get their seasonal flu shot, as well as another vaccination for the H1N1 flu...

H1N1 FluMist Available at Naval Hospital

The Immunizations at the Naval Hospital is now offering the H1N1 flu vaccine to all persons in direct patient care and children ages 2-18 years who can have FluMist.

All members of households that have a newborn to 6-months old are also urged to come in and receive their H1N1 vaccine for the protection of your baby.

To receive the H1N1 FluMist visit the Immunization Clinic on the main floor of the hospital between the hours of 8 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The hospital still does not have the Injectable form available. Once that becomes available the Preventive Medicine Department will add in additional groups.

FluMist is for those persons with no lung related problems (asthma) and no other disqualifiers such as Guillaine Barre Syndrome, egg allergies, pregnancy, etc.

If you were able to receive the Seasonal FluMist you should be able to receive the H1N1 FluMist.

For more information call 1-760-830-2002.

Super Stars...



HM3 Kyle Bisbee, Pediatrics Clinic, receives his first Good Conduct Award.



Lieutenant Robert Ward, Physician's Assistant at the Adult Medical Care Clinic take the oath at his recent promotion ceremony held at the hospital's Quarterdeck.



HA Anthony Clark, Radiology Department, receives a Certificate of Appreciation for his participation in the Car and Bike Show.



HM2 Peter Brandi, Military Readiness Clinic, receives his Fifth Good Conduct Award.



HN Felix Valencia, Adult Medical Care Clinic, receives his first Good Conduct Award.



HM3 Elston Stewart, Pediatric Clinic, receives his first Good Conduct Award.



HM2 Eduardo Pamatz, Radiology, receives a Certificate of Appreciation for his participation in the Car and Bike Show.



HM3 Arnel Mangosing, Laboratory Department, receives a Certificate of Appreciation for his participation in the Fourth of July celebration.



HN Kayla Clark, Family Medicine Clinic, receives a Certificate of Appreciation for her participation in the Car and Bike Show.



HM3 Matthew Snyder, General Surgery/Orthopedic Clinic, receives his first Good Conduct Award.



HM2 Ray Martinez, Public Health, receives a Certificate of Appreciation for his participation in the Car and Bike Show.



Hospitalman Derrick Robert, Mental Health Department, receives a Certificate of Appreciation for his participation in the Car and Bike Show.



HM2 Mary Wagner, Radiology Department, receives a Certificate of Appreciation for her participation in the Car and Bike Show.

After Your Breast Cancer Diagnosis: What Next?

By Tyler Patterson
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

"You have breast cancer."

A diagnosis of breast cancer can be one of the most terrifying experiences of a person's life.

Even if you're expecting it, you're braced for it and you're simply waiting for the confirmation, not much else in the world can change your life as completely as those four words.

In such a trying time, it's good to have the support of your family and your friends...and your TRICARE benefit.

TRICARE Prime, Standard and Extra beneficiaries are entitled to a preventive breast cancer examination every year beginning at age 40.

Beneficiaries identified as being at high risk for breast cancer (due to family history, etc.) are covered for annual exams beginning at age 35.

These exams offer your best chance at detecting breast cancer early, when it is most easily and effectively treated. In fact, when detected early, the five-year survival rate for breast can-

cer is 98 percent.

Following your diagnosis, your doctor will likely present you with several choices for treatment. TRICARE covers most options, including mastectomy (the surgical removal of the breast), radiation therapy and chemotherapy. Each of

these procedures has its own unique risks and benefits; be sure to discuss your options in detail with your doctor.

TRICARE is also there to help with your post-procedure recovery. If your treatment option results in hair loss, TRICARE will cover the cost of a wig. If

...TRICARE Prime, Standard and Extra beneficiaries are entitled to a preventive breast cancer examination every year beginning at age 40...

you elect to have a mastectomy, TRICARE covers reconstructive breast surgery, as well as two initial mastectomy bras and two replacement bras per calendar year.

Visit www.tricare.mil for more information on your TRICARE benefit. To learn more about breast cancer, visit www.cancer.org.

5-year survival rate following early detection of breast cancer



HM3 Rigoberto Vargas, Laboratory Department, receives a Certificate of Appreciation for his participation in the Fourth of July Celebration.

Automate Today

- Pay TRICARE Prime Fees Online
- No late payment or disenrollment
- View full payment history

Parents at the Front Line Against Kids' Obesity

By Shari Lopatin
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

According to the Journal of American Medicine, nearly 32 percent of American children between 2 and 19 need to lose weight to avoid chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease.

Military families aren't exempt; a 2005 survey reported that nearly 20 percent of Department of Defense teenagers are obese. Obesity means an individual is more than 20 percent above his or her

ideal weight.

Keep in mind the causes of obesity in children: diets high in fatty foods and calories, inactivity, easy access to salty and sweet snacks at home, and even a child's emotional well-being. So how can parents combat poor eating habits early, especially when obese children are likely to carry their weight into adulthood?

Be a role model

It's true, kids watch their parents in action. If Mom and Dad eat right and exercise enough, most likely, junior will too. Here are a few helpful starting points:

- * Pack their school lunches.

While most schools have hired a registered dietitian for school meals, not all options are the healthiest. Parents who pack their kids' lunches and snacks take away the choice of pizza over a tuna sandwich with whole grain bread. Just give them the sandwich. Visit www.mypyramid.gov for some interactive nutrition guidance for both kids and parents.

- * Know your calories. Which has more calories: a 3 oz. rib eye steak, broiled, with 0 inches trim, or a donut with chocolate icing? The answer is the donut, with 258 calories, versus 210 calories packed with healthy protein and iron from the steak.

Read up on different food choices to help you make the best nutritional decisions for yourself and your child.

- * Choose the healthier food when eating out. Next time, ask for dressing and sauces on the side and choose broiled or baked foods over fried. Find more great ideas on www.triwest.com/eathealthy.

- * Play ball and have fun. Parents can take away couch time and make it a family fun day, encouraging physical activity. Run through the sprinklers; toss a Frisbee in the park or do an art project. Do whatever it takes to get the kids moving.

- * Eat your greens. Try to set

an example by eating plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables every day. Parents can also practice portion control as a family, including the children in this behavior by using smaller plates.

Doctors can provide information about the healthy weight ranges for kids and offer advice on proper diet and exercise plans. It's a good idea to discuss this with your child's doctor before starting a new routine.

Remember, one healthy choice a week adds up, whether it's adding more vegetables or turning off the TV for an extra hour. Start today by visiting www.triwest.com/eathealthy.

Exercising in the Cold...

Rules for Exercising in the Cold

Source --
American Council on Exercise

Check the temperature and wind conditions before you go out, and do not exercise if conditions are dangerous.

Keep your head, hands and feet warm. Dress in layers that can provide a trapped layer of dry air near the skin (avoid cotton sweats and other similar materials). Warm the air you are breathing if temperatures are below your comfort level (usually around 0 degrees F).

The Biggest Concern for
Exercising in the cold is the

risk of hypothermia, or too much heat loss. When you exercise in a cold environment, you must consider one primary factor: How much heat will your body lose during exercise?

Heat loss is controlled in two ways:

1. Insulation, consisting of body fat plus clothing; and
2. Environmental factors, including temperature, wind and whether you're exercising in the air or in the water. Each of these factors plays a role in the body's ability to maintain a comfortable temperature during exercise.

Insulation

Although many people aspire to have a lean figure, people

with a little more body fat are better insulated and will lose less heat. Clothing adds to the insulation barrier and is clearly the most important element in performance and comfort while exercising in the cold. One study showed that heat loss from the head alone reached about 50 percent at the freezing mark and that by simply wearing a helmet, subjects were able to stay outside indefinitely.

Clothing is generally a good insulator because it has the ability to trap air, a poor conductor of heat. If the air trapped by the clothing cannot conduct heat away from the body, temperature will be maintained. Unlike air, however, water is a rapid conductor of heat, and even in the coldest of temperatures, people will sweat and risk significant heat loss. With this in mind, you want to choose clothing that can trap air but still allow sweat to pass through, away from the body.

By wearing clothing in layers, you have the ability to change the amount of insulation as needed. While many new products can provide such a layered barrier, it is important to avoid heavy cotton sweats or tightly woven material that will absorb and retain water. Because these materials cannot provide a layer of dry air near the skin, they can

TRICARE Docs Now in Your Neighborhood

TRICARE Management Activity is committed to delivering the best possible care to our beneficiaries.

Quality care requires access to the care you need when you need it; continuity of care by your primary care manager (PCM); and urgent or emergency care within a reasonable distance from your home.

To accomplish this, TRICARE established access to care standards for Prime beneficiaries. To provide the best possible care, your PCM should be located within a 30-minute drive from your residence.

Letters were sent out by the regional contractors for the North, South and West Regions notifying beneficiaries of the required actions in July. Drive Time Waivers and PCM changes are being enforced per TRICARE Management Activity Change Order 75.

If you would like to retain your current military PCM, you must sign a waiver of the TRICARE Prime access standard and acknowledge that you may have to drive more than 30 minutes to your military primary care manager (PCM) for routine care. This can be accomplished in several ways:

* Online: Access the Beneficiary Web Enrollment (BWE) (<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/bwe/>) site using a Common Access Card (CAC), a DFAS Pin

Number or a DoD Self-Service Logon. If you do not have a Pin Number, please follow the instructions on the BWE site. Use BWE to manage your and your family's TRICARE Prime enrollment options and contact information.

* By Mail: Submit a TRICARE Prime Enrollment Application and PCM Change Form (DD Form 2876) and sign Sections V and VI. You can find the form at the TRICARE Web site at <http://tricare.mil/mybenefit/Forms.do>. Print, fill out, sign and mail this form to your regional contractor.

* TRICARE Service Center (TSC): Visit a TSC located at any military treatment facility (MTF) and speak to the customer service staff.

Please note that your request to remain enrolled to your military PCM is subject to provider availability and the MTF's enrollment guidelines for the TRICARE Prime Service Area. If your request is approved, you will be notified by mail of your continued enrollment to the MTF.

TRICARE is proud to serve our nation's military heroes and their families and is committed to providing them the best possible health care. If you have questions, please call 1-888-874-9378 or visit your local TRICARE Service Center. The TRICARE Service Center for Naval Hospital Twentynine is located in the core facility, Bldg 1145 on Sturgis Road, Twentynine Palms, California.

Hospital Accepts Navy SG's Tobacco Free Challenge

January 1, 2010, Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms will become a tobacco free campus.

Signs will be placed at the entrance to all parking areas advising drivers to cease tobacco use. The signs will state "Tobacco use beyond this point is not allowed. Thank you for keeping this a tobacco free campus." This initiative will extend to all facilities under the command of the Naval Hospital to include the Adult Medical Care Clinic there at the Combat Center, Branch Health Clinic China Lake located at the Naval Air Weapons Station near Ridgecrest, California and the Branch Health Clinic Bridgeport at the Mountain Warfare Training Base at Bridgeport, California.

Navy Medical personnel are now encouraged not to use tobacco products anywhere while in uniform, on duty, or while traveling and representing Navy Medicine. This policy set by the Surgeon General of the Navy does not impact forward deployed combat personnel. Here at the Naval Hospital that tobacco use by uniformed per-

sonnel will be addressed starting in January 2010.

Captain Don C. B. Albia, Commanding Officer, Naval Hospital, Twentynine Palms will be signing the Naval Hospital Instruction in a special ceremony on November 19, during the traditional Great American Smokeout.

"The surgeon general of the Navy, Vice Admiral Robinson, has challenged Navy Medicine to lead the way to becoming tobacco free -- both for staff and for the beneficiaries of Navy Medicine health care," said Martha Hunt, Health Promotions Coordinator at the Naval Hospital.

Currently, approximately 37 percent of active duty Naval Hospital staff members use tobacco products regularly. Compared to the general population this number is relatively high, Hunt stated. "According to the 2008 Department of Defense survey of health related behaviors, it is estimated that approximately 32.4 percent Navy Personnel smoke; the Marine Corps smoking rate is 36.8 percent and in the U.S. civilian population 21 percent of

people smoke. Smokeless tobacco usage among Navy personnel is at 11.1 percent; Marine Corps use is at 22.3 percent and U.S. civilian usage is at 3 to 5 percent. It is unknown how many Federal employees use smokeless tobacco." said Hunt.

Eligible beneficiaries and civilian employees at the Naval Hospital are being encouraged to take advantage of counseling and medications to assist them in giving up the tobacco addiction.

...Captain Don C. B. Albia, will be signing the Naval Hospital Instruction in a special ceremony, on November 19, during the traditional Great American Smokeout...

Photocopying Military ID OK for TRICARE

By Shari Lopatin
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

When the doctor's office asks for a military ID card and makes a copy, it's OK...and usually necessary.

To receive medical care, service members and their families need to show their eligibility for TRICARE. Although those who enroll in TRICARE Prime will receive a TRICARE Prime ID card, the key to showing eligibility is the valid military ID card.

Service members and their families will need their military ID card for medical care, pharmacy benefits and dental care. Many times, the doctor may copy the military ID card for the patient's records and to confirm TRICARE eligibility when submitting a claim.

Federal law prohibits photographing or making prints of military ID cards unless it is to receive medical treatment; a valid military ID card is proof of TRICARE eligibility and can be photocopied. Like everything else in a patient's record, it is protected by law.

If a patient is visiting a specialist, such as a heart doctor, they may have additional forms to fill out, just as at any first-time doctor's visit. The patient should tell the receptionist they have TRICARE; the receptionist may ask for their military ID card, which is acceptable just as a doctor's office might photocopy a private insurance card. Usually, a beneficiary's primary care doctor won't need to see a military ID card.

Service members should be aware, however, that copies of their military ID cards cannot be made for substitute cards, or for any other purpose than to show their TRICARE eligibility to receive medical treatment.

Patients on Prime and Prime Remote can request a TRICARE card via TRICARE's Beneficiary Web Enrollment site at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/bwe/index.jsp> or at www.triwest.com/bwe. The card will be sent to the patient's mailing address listed in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS).

To replace a military ID card, service members should visit their nearest military ID card office, which can be found at www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl.

How is the Appointment Phone Lines Working for You... We want to Know

The new appointment line phone system has been in operation here at the hospital now since August... it was designed to decrease your phone wait time and swiftly direct your healthcare concern to the right qualified staff member.

Your options are:

Option 1. If your or a family member is sick and need an appointment;

Option 2. Need to schedule or change an appointment in Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, or Nutritional Services;

Option 3. Need to leave a mes-

sage with your provider;

Option 4. Family Medicine Nurse Run Clinics for patients 18 years or older with yeast infections, urinary tract infections, walk in pregnancy test results, Class B or emergency contraception;

Option 5. Appointment Verification;

Option 6. Appointment Cancellation;

Option 7. Prescription refills, lab results, or all other non-booking appointment concerns;

Option 8. The "all other clinics" option will immediately direct you to that clinic or

Department like TRICARE, or Pharmacy. For example, an appointment needed in OB/GYN can only be booked by that clinic not the Call Center. The Call Center menu offers you phone access to the clinics or hospital departments in the event you don't have a direct telephone number.

Ongoing Support

As always, you may utilize the Walk-In Appointment Desk on the 1st Floor near the TRICARE Service Center which is now available from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Your walk-in requests will be handled at the appropriate Primary Care clinics from 7:30 to 10 a.m. and from 3 to 3:45 p.m.

TRICARE on Line www.tri-

careonline.com is another appointment option. Mr. Bob Knight, Template Manager, can be reached at 830-2590 for registration difficulties. You also have the option of contacting the Clinic Business Manager, Commander Sharon Kingsberry at 830-2942 if you have not received a return call.

As pointed out in a story on our front page this month, we want to know how we are doing... if the phone system is working for you, let us know... if not... also let us know.

The Customer Relations Officer is available during normal working hours at 830-2475. The Customer Relations Officer, whose office is located opposite the Quarterdeck on the 1st Floor, is available to listen and

address your concerns regarding any issue you may have.

***The Hospital's
Customer
Relations Officer,
is available to
help you resolve
any issue you may
have... call
1-760- 830-2475.***

Customer Relations...

Continued from page 1

All complaints, suggestions and compliments will be reviewed by Lt. Rad and forwarded to the Executive Officer and the Commanding Officer of the hospital for review. Complaints will be resolved at the lowest level. Each staff member is empowered to resolve any complaint within his or her ability. However, they will still be forwarded up the chain of command for review.

Each quarter the Commanding General of the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center hosts a Consumer Health Care Council meeting. All eligible beneficiaries of the hospital are invited to attend. Attendees may express their concerns or discuss general health care issues with the leadership of the hospital at this meeting.

Over the years, all clinics in this facility have been recognized for excellence in the delivery of health care and customer service, placing them in the top ten percent of all Department of Defense Healthcare Treatment Facilities. The job the hospital is graded on is based on information from the TRICARE satisfaction surveys, which are mailed to patients following appointments.

The hospital is anxious to hear from you regarding your care. Complimentary letters are also a good morale boost as well. Your feedback is a valuable asset for continuous improvement.

Look for future articles pertaining to our Customer Relations program in the Examiner and Observation Post.

If you face any problems in your care at this facility, you should contact the Departmental Patient Contact Representative in the clinic you are having issues with. If you continue to have concerns, you can contact the hospital's Customer Relations Officer, Lt. Marko Radakovic at 830-2475.

Exercising in the Cold...

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when exercising in the cold.

Lower temperatures cause blood to be shunted away from the hands and feet to the center of the body to keep the internal organs warm and protected. Superficial warming of the hands will return blood flow to prevent tissue damage. Blood flow will not return to the feet, however, unless the temperature of the torso is normal or slightly higher (.5 to 1.0 degree Fahrenheit above normal). So, to keep your feet warm, you must also keep the rest of your body warm at all times.

Check with the Weatherman

Always check the air temperature and wind chill factor before exercising in the cold. Data from the National Safety Council suggests little danger to individuals with properly clothed skin exposed at 20 degrees F, even with a 30 mph wind. A danger does exist for individuals with exposed skin when the wind chill factor (combined effect of temperature and wind) falls below minus 20 degrees F. That can be achieved by any combination of temperatures below 20 degrees F with a wind of 40 mph and temperatures below minus 20 degrees F with no wind. If you are exercising near the danger zone for skin exposure, it also is advisable to wear a scarf or mask over your nose and mouth to warm the air being inhaled.