

Deployment Resiliency Counselors Go to Sea

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By Ed Wright, Commander Navy Installations Command Public Affairs

The Navy's shipboard Sexual Assault and Prevention team has gotten stronger over the past year with the addition of Deployment Resiliency Counselors (DRC).

The DRC is a civilian counselor who provides the same services aboard ship that clinical counselors provide at local Fleet and Family Support Centers at shore installations around the world.

"We are there to provide short-term counseling and to support the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Team by training uniformed SAPR victim advocates and being available to counsel sexual assault victims," said Elizabeth Moss, DRC for Navy Region Southwest. "We also provide Family Advocacy Program services including conducting assessments and counseling offenders and victims of family violence."

According to Moss, who has had first-hand experience with shipboard living, the DRC is part of ship's company and is integrated into the ship's schedule. When the ship deploys, the DRC deploys too. The DRC also participates with the Sailors in certain shipboard drills and exercises, such as general quarters, man overboard and abandon ship drills. These exercises provide common ground for the DRC and the Sailors to interact.

"These interesting events provided a unique opportunity to interact with the crew and helped me better understand the lives of my clients," said Moss.

Moss added that being part of the ship's company not only allowed her the opportunity to connect with Sailors who may be in need of additional support during the course of a deployment, but to also interact with others who are thrive in the Navy.

Moss previously deployed with former USS Peleliu (LHA-5), which was decommissioned last month, and said she enjoyed many fun events during the deployment, such as swim calls and port visits.

DRC's are trained clinical psychologists with at least a master's degree in psychology or social work. They must be licensed within their state and are required to have two years, post-license clinical experience. Using their skills to support Sailors and their families provides a unique venue in which to hone their talents.

Those who are assigned aboard ship work in close collaboration with the ship's psychologists and chaplains as part of the support network for Sailors in need. They know what to look for and understand the early warning signs which helps prevent issues from becoming a much larger problem all around.

"If a Sailor is seen early or soon after an incident that causes some difficulty and feels the need to talk to someone, the non-medical counseling provided by a DRC could potentially prevent symptoms from getting worse," said Eileen Pawloski, CNIC clinical counseling program analyst. "The DRCs contribute to an increase in overall resiliency, which will have a positive effect on all aspects of a Sailor's life."

Navy Installations Command manages and executes Navy quality of life programs, and developed the DRC program in July 2013, with a goal of hiring 22 professionals to serve in this capacity. Currently 18 are in the mix with ship's company aboard both large and small-deck ships. Pawloski added that over time as more attention is given to the role of the DRC, the greater effect they will have on our Sailors' quality of life. "The feedback is positive," Pawloski said. "Commands are learning about the DRC role and seeing first-hand the added value of the services they provide."

For more information about becoming a DRC, visit <https://www.usajobs.gov/> and search for Deployed Resiliency Counselors Generalist Counselor.

For more information about the Navy's shore enterprise, visit www.cnic.navy.mil.

For more news from Commander, Navy Installations Command, visit www.navy.mil/local/cni/.