



## “89 MDG Receives Excellent Rating” On Recent Joint Inspection

During the week of 10-14 February 2003, the 89th Medical Group was looked at in depth by two agencies that evaluate health care facilities worldwide; the first, a nationally recognized inspection organization for both military and civilian healthcare facilities, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and the second, a Health Services Inspection team (HSI) from the Air Force Inspection Agency.

The Joint Commission is a civilian organization dedicated to improving the quality of the nation’s health care through voluntary accreditation. Once again, the 89 MDG achieved accreditation from the Joint Commission for a full, three-year period. A key highlight of the inspection was the award of “Special Recognition” (score of 95-100%), in six areas, from the HSI. In addition, five programs were designated as potential benchmarks for the Air Force, underscoring an overall top rating.

During the inspection surveyors continually noted the professionalism and experience level of the medical

center staff. Comments by the team included: “your graduate medical education program is eye watering” and “it’s unusual to have so many special recognition programs from one facility.”

Results of both surveys is proof of an organization-wide commitment to providing the highest quality health care to our military beneficiaries. These ratings recognize the great work our entire staff does each and every day. For our patients, nothing short of the “best” in health services will do!

*Brigadier General Barbara C. Brannon  
Commander, 89th Medical Group*

## Hospital & Community Crosstalk

**7 May, 1300 hours**

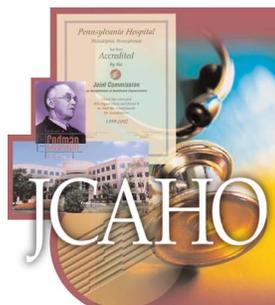
Mark your calendar and be sure not to miss the next Hospital and Community Crosstalk meeting scheduled for 7 May, at 1300 hours, in



the hospital conference center (located by Family Practice in building 1075). Hosted by the Malcolm Grow Medical Center commander, this is a quarterly forum open to the entire military community – active duty, retirees and family members. It’s our opportunity to tell you about the many clinical services and changes occurring at Malcolm Grow while, at the same time, providing an opportunity for you to voice any concerns or positive feedback. Your participation is the vital link to help us make continuous improvements to better serve your health care needs. Refreshments will be served.

<http://www.jcaho.org>

The Joint Commission has been accrediting hospitals for more than 50 years. Its accreditation is a nationwide seal of approval that indicates a hospital meets high performance standards. Our accreditation helps hospitals improve their performance, raise the level of patient care, and demonstrate accountability in the rapidly changing health care marketplace.



## New TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy (TMOP)

On March 1, 2003 the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy (TMOP) switched to a new contractor, Express Scripts, to manage the mail order prescription service. As one of the nation's leading prescription benefit managers, Express Scripts processes more than 400 million prescriptions annually. The new contract saves taxpayers' dollars because it calls for purchasing drug products at federal prices. Best federal prices are at least 24 percent below average commercial wholesale prices.



It's easy to use Express Scripts. Just complete a Mail Order Registration Form, which can be obtained at any TRICARE Service Center or via internet at [www.express-scripts.com](http://www.express-scripts.com). The registration form only needs to be completed once, unless health conditions change. Insert the form, your written prescription and co-payment in the pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope and mail it in. Your doctor may also fax a new prescription directly to Express Scripts, toll-free, at 877-895-1900. Refills may be ordered online or by phone.

The mail-order program provides for up to a 90-day supply of long-term type medications, such as those to control blood pressure. It does not include antibiotics or narcotics. The co-payment for a 90-day supply of most medications is \$9/brand or \$3/generic. Active duty members are not required to pay.

The usual delivery time for medication is five to seven days. The easiest way for patients to ensure they don't run out of their medication is to have the provider write for a 90-day supply with up to three refills. Try to reorder at least two weeks before you need refills and allow a few extra days for APO/FPO delivery.

Using Express Scripts does not restrict access to military pharmacies or retail pharmacies. If you are covered by other health insurance with a pharmacy benefit, however, you may not use TMOP unless the

other plan does not cover the medication needed or coverage from your other plan has been exhausted. TRICARE beneficiaries living and working overseas can use the mail order pharmacy if they have an APO, FPO or a U.S. embassy address but the prescription must be written by a provider licensed to practice in the United States.



**Web Site** – [www.express-scripts.com](http://www.express-scripts.com)

**Quick Reference Phone Numbers:**

**Order a Refill** – 866-363-8667 or website

**Check Status of Order** – 866-363-8667 or website

**Speak to a Pharmacist** – 866-363-8667

## Facility Enhancements

Construction projects are a familiar site around Malcolm Grow Medical Center as we continually strive to make improvements, both inside and out, to enhance operational efficiency, provide an extra



measure of safety and convenience and ensure a more aesthetically pleasing environment for our patients. Over the past year alone we have completed more than \$7M in construction projects with over \$1.5M still in progress. We appreciate your patience as we work to make Malcolm Grow the most efficient and user-friendly facility possible. A few Project highlights include the following:

- Construction of a two-story, 33K square foot, state of the art Primary Care Clinic to house all the PCM teams, excluding Family Practice (completion May 04)
- Family Practice: Additional waiting areas and exam rooms (completed)
- Women's Health clinic: New floors and brightly painted rooms, enhanced work space for clinical teams, remodeled treatment room, new education room (completed)

## Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

- Radiology: Upgrading services area to prepare for Digital X-ray and enhance patient waiting areas (in progress)
- Internal Medicine: Bright, spacious renovated waiting area (completed)
- Laboratory: Renovation in progress (completion Dec 03)
- Ward 2A: Renovation in progress (completion Nov 03)

## Celebrate Volunteerism – *The Spirit of America*

Our volunteers are an inspiring group of friends and neighbors who provide a significant contribution in support of our medical mission. In any given month you might find as many as 165 volunteers working throughout the hospital. Together they contribute over 2,800 hours per month. You have probably seen them manning the information desk in the hospital lobby but they also provide many other services such as providing administrative assistance at the Health and Wellness Center, on wards, outpatient clinics, library, pharmacy and chapel along with offering greetings and refreshments to incoming patients at the Medevac canteen and helping at the Fisher House.

For as little as a few hours a week you could be a Red Cross or Bravo Volunteer. Malcolm Grow needs your help.

Please consider sharing your skills and experience performing important tasks in many departments throughout the hospital.

To sign up as a volunteer or to get more information call Ms. Cornelia Krebs-Plummer, Station Manager for Andrews AFB American Red Cross 240-857-6008 or Colonel William Moore, Ret., Bravo Director, 301-449-6716. You won't regret the call.



### QUESTION: I received something in the mail from TRICARE called a Notice of Privacy Practices. What is this, and will it change my healthcare benefits?

This notice was sent to you to fulfill a legal requirement called the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Among other things, this law established standards that all healthcare organizations must follow to protect the privacy of your health information. It also establishes some basic patient rights regarding your protected health information.

This notice explains in plain English how our health plan, TRICARE, and our system of military hospitals and clinics will use patient medical information. It also outlines the rights patients enjoy under this new law. Most of the safeguards and rights are not new.

At your next appointment you will be asked to acknowledge that you received this notice. Your acknowledgment only signifies that you have received the notice—not that you have read it or agreed to it. If you did not receive the notice in the mail, you will be given one and asked to confirm receipt.

Malcolm Grow Medical Center takes the privacy of patient medical information very seriously. This notice is simply another assurance to patients of how their protected health information is used and their rights regarding that information.

For questions about HIPAA regulations please call Mr. James Gwyn, Malcolm Grow Privacy Officer, at 240-857-4606 or Mr. Lenny Schmidt, HIPAA Consultant at Malcolm Grow, 240-857-6222.



---

---

## Online Enrollment

Sierra Military Health Services (SMHS) is happy to announce that Region 1 beneficiaries may now enroll Online. Please take a moment to visit the Sierra website at [www.sierramilitary.com](http://www.sierramilitary.com) to see this exciting new feature. A message will soon be added to the 888 toll free number to inform beneficiaries of this new option. Online Enrollment will give beneficiaries the ability to complete the enrollment process and pay by credit card right from the comfort of their home or office. This is just another step in our continuing efforts to enhance the enrollment process.

Please note that this new feature is for NEW enrollments only. The beneficiary will not be able to use this site for Portability, Dis-enrollments, PCM Changes or Enrolling Reservists.

## Reserve and Guard Health Care Website

Sierra Military Health Services has just come out with a “new and improved” web site that is tailored for Region 1 Reserve and National Guard units (activated and deactivated). It is especially designed to meet the needs of reserve and guard family members who are left behind. The website is: [www.sierramilitary.com](http://www.sierramilitary.com)



## Herbal Alternative Medicine Classes at Malcolm Grow

Did you know Echinacea should not be used for more than two weeks and it may actually *increase* your susceptibility to “catching a cold”? Or that garlic, ginseng, and ginko biloba may increase risks of complication during surgery? If not, you are not alone. Misinformation and confusion is very common when the topic is herbal supplements. Amazingly, 50-75% patients fail to tell their

physicians what herbals or dietary supplements they are using. One-fourth of these patients take herbals in conjunction with prescription medications.

Malcolm Grow offers an Herbal Alternative Medicine Class the second Tuesday of every month from 1000-1100 hours in the Nutrition Clinic, Suite BB2, near the hospital dining facility. The program is offered by a registered dietitian from the Nutritional Medicine Flight and a clinical pharmacist from the Pharmacy Flight. All Malcolm Grow physicians are encouraged to refer patients to the class, however, referrals are not required. Patients are encouraged to just “walk-in”. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) estimates that for every adverse event related to herbal supplements reported, 100 more events go unreported. The focus of the program is to identify prescription drug/herbal interactions and enable consumers to make informed decisions. For more information, contact the Nutrition Clinic at (240) 857-5202.

## April is Diet/Nutrition Month

### Breakfast Helps You Live Longer.



In the hustle and bustle of getting out of the house in the morning eating breakfast is often forgotten. You may be cutting more than calories if you miss

this important meal. People who skip breakfast are generally fatter than those who eat it. Sound hard to believe? At night your body slows down to conserve calories. If you don't eat breakfast, your body metabolism continues at it's slow pace. Your fasting actually signals your body to store calories, not burn them. Don't skip out on breakfast. At least toast, cereal, or a bagel with juice. Don't cut calories in the morning or you'll cut years later on.

