



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TASK FORCE ON THE CARE, MANAGEMENT, AND TRANSITION OF RECOVERING WOUNDED, ILL, AND INJURED MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES

January Business Meeting Minutes Doubletree Hotel Washington, D.C.-Crystal City

Monday, 14 January 2013

The meeting began at 8:08am with Mrs. Suzanne Crockett-Jones recognizing the three newly appointed members of the Task Force: Navy Vice Admiral Matthew Nathan, Army Major General Richard Mustion, and Air Force Technical Sergeant Alex Eudy. Mrs. Crockett-Jones also recognized Mr. Justin Constantine for his recent promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in the Marine Corps Reserves. These recognitions were followed by a brief introduction statement by Vice Admiral Nathan as the new Department of Defense (DoD) Co-Chair. VADM Nathan provided a brief background on his experience, expounding upon his time as the Commander of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and provided his view of the state of wounded warrior care. This statement was followed by introductions by all Task Force members in attendance. Command Sergeant Major Steven DeJong and Dr. Russell Turner were scheduled to be absent for the duration of the business meeting. Ms. Karen Malebranche, Mr. Ronald Drach, Major General Richard Stone, and MG Mustion were unable to be present for the start of the business meeting.

At 8:38am, following the members' introductions, Ms. Denise Dailey led the Task Force members through an overview of the DoD initial evaluation to the FY2012 recommendations. The discussion covered the responses to all 32 recommendations and why the DoD provided a concur, non-concur, or partially concur response to each one. Task Force members expressed their desire to discuss the DoD implementation plan at the next business meeting to follow up the initial response. CAPT Evans left for the rest of the morning at 9:08am. MG Mustion arrived for the business meeting at 9:09am and MG Stone arrived at 9:13am. The Task Force took a short break at 9:40am to prepare for the next presentation.

The meeting resumed at 9:48am and Ms. Malebranche arrived at 9:55am. Lt Col Mark Packer, MD from the Hearing Center of Excellence (HCE) provided a presentation with updated information on the HCE's status since their last briefing to the Task Force in December 2011. He discussed the HCE's mission and their goal of reaching full operating capability by December 2013, which includes the implementation of the Joint Hearing Loss and Auditory System Injury Registry (JHASIR). Lt Col Packer also discussed the challenges the HCE faces with direct research funding and their current research limitations as a result. The Task Force members were very interested in discussing the funding challenges as well as how HCE information becomes standardized across the Services. The Task Force took a break at 10:54am.



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The Task Force resumed the meeting at 11:04am with Colonel Donald Gagliano, MD and Dr. Mary Lawrence from the Vision Center of Excellence (VCE). COL Gagliano and Dr. Lawrence provided a presentation with updated information on the VCE's status since their last briefing to the Task Force in February 2012. The presentation began with a 7-minute video which provided an overview of the mission of the VCE. Dr. Lawrence discussed the VCE's many initiatives with ocular and brain trauma, including the Fox Shields and the BrainPort, as well as the implementation timeline for their Vision Registry. COL Gagliano commented on the importance of communication and collaboration efforts between the Centers of Excellence as they all share similar funding and authority challenges. The Task Force members focused inquiries on VCE's funding constraints and discussions on their ability to communicate best practices. At 12:06pm, the Task Force took a break for lunch.

At 1:02pm, the meeting resumed. CAPT Evans and Mr. Drach arrived around 1:00pm and Ms. Malebranch left the meeting at 1:06pm. Introductions that were missed in the morning session by Ms. Malebranche, Mr. Drach, MG Stone, and MG Mustion were provided prior to the first afternoon presentation.

Dr. Billie Randolph, the Deputy Director of the Extremity Trauma and Amputation Center of Excellence (EACE), began her presentation at 1:06pm. Dr. Randolph also had Mr. John Shero, the EACE Director, linked in to the presentation by phone from San Antonio, TX. After providing an overview of the EACE's mission, Dr. Randolph discussed the EACE's research endeavors, staffing challenges, and the future of the Joint Traumatic Extremity Injury and Amputation Center Register. She also provided information on the way ahead for the EACE which includes increased collaboration, hand and face transplant research, and improving overall DoD and VA sharing opportunities. Task Force members inquired about lifecycle costs to maintain Service member prosthesis and the care plan for Service members living far from a VA center with adequate prosthesis care. The members also discussed the ambiguity in the length of care for amputee treatment and reintegration to their communities. The Task Force took a break at 1:57pm and MG Stone left for the day at 2:00pm.

The Task Force resumed at 2:16pm with a presentation from Dr. Barclay Butler, the Director of the Interagency Program Office (IPO). Dr. Butler discussed the IPO's mission, notable accomplishments during FY 2012, and key program challenges and concerns. He spoke in depth on the James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center as well as other pilots and processes that are assisting the IPO in completing the Individual Electronic Health Record (iEHR) implementation by 2017. The Task Force discussed challenges if faced with funding constraints and the challenges of capturing data from legacy systems to a new system. At 3:20pm, VADM Nathan left for the day and the Task force took a break prior to the next briefing.



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At 3:33pm, the Task Force resumed the meeting with a briefing from the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE). The panel consisted of Dr. James Kelly, NICoE Director, CAPT Sara Kass, Deputy Commander, Dr. Thomas DeGraba, NICoE Deputy Director and Chief of Medical Operations, and CAPT Robert Koffman, Deputy Director of Clinical Operations. The panel discussed effective evaluation strategies that NICoE has instituted, resulting in a high overall patient satisfaction score from September 2011 through October 2012. They also mentioned past and present challenges with funding, extending the program timeline, staffing challenges, and how to train health care providers on their best practices. The Task Force members inquired about the process of being referred to NICoE and following up with patients after they have received treatment. The end of this presentation at 5:00pm ended the day's session.

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The second day of the meeting opened at 8:08am with Dr. Turner and CSM DeJong scheduled to be absent. Ms. Malebranche, CAPT Evans, and Mr. Constantine were not present for the start of the day. Mrs. Crockett-Jones opened the public forum with an introduction of Mr. Michael Parker, a public forum participant. Mr. Parker provided a statement to the Task Force focused on a Service member's recent issue with the Informal Physical Evaluation Board (IPEB). He describes evaluation standard discrepancies between the Disability Evaluation System (DES) and the IPEB which resulted in the Service member being separated without DoD disability benefits. The public forum was concluded at 8:15am.

The Task Force continued the meeting and began discussing the past site visits conducted since the December Business Meeting. The discussed site visits were Navy Safe Harbor in Arlington, VA from December 6-7, 2012 and Fort Carson in Colorado Springs, CO from January 9-10, 2013. The attendees for the Navy Safe Harbor visit included Ms. Crockett-Jones, Mr. Drach, CAPT Evans, Dr. Phillips, Mr. Rehbein, and Dr. Turner. The Task Force members discussed the benefits of the Navy Safe Harbor utilizing Master Chiefs as the case managers as their rank allows them to serve as influential advocates. They also discussed how Service members during the focus groups wanted better communication going through the IDES process. Some Service members specified the need for more training opportunities for those discharging and those continuing service. The Task Force also discussed in detail a reoccurring issue that was also noticed at Navy Safe Harbor where Recovering Warriors do not receive information about options to continue service but only receive information regarding separation. Regarding the Fort Carson trip, the attendees included Mrs. Crockett-Jones, TSgt Eudy, and LtCol Keane. The members stated that Service members felt the Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officers



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(PEBLOs) were good and communicated frequently. There were high marks as well with access to behavioral health. Some issues that the Task Force members noted included Service members not knowing when to get legal support during their process and transitioning Service members not knowing the timeline of receipt for their DD-214s. CAPT Evans arrived for the meeting at 8:42am and MG Stone left the meeting for the day at 9:07am.

Immediately following the site visit debrief, Ms. Dailey began discussions regarding future site visits. She briefed the date change of the Joint Forces Headquarters North Carolina visit from January 29-30, 2013 to February 28-March 1, 2013. Another point of discussion was the date and location of the March Business Meeting. The Task Force members agreed to move the March Business Meeting to April 2-3, 2013 and have it held in the Washington, D.C. area. The Task Force took a break at 9:24am and Ms. Malebranche arrived at 9:30am.

At 9:45am, the briefers for the next scheduled presentation were running late due to traffic. The decision was made to allow the Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service briefing, scheduled to begin at 10:30am to proceed early. Ms. Margarita Devlin, the Deputy Director of the Veterans Affairs VR&E Services, provided the presentation for Ms. Ruth Fanning. Ms. Devlin spoke about the program opportunities for Veterans and active duty Service members. She also discussed the duties of the VR&E counselors, VR&E outreach opportunities, and the implementation of their survey program. The Task Force members inquired about Service member and family member eligibility, education and training funding, and the tracking of personnel after completing their program. Mr. Constantine arrived for the meeting at 10:30am. The Task Force took a short break at 10:50am.

The Task Force resumed at 10:55am with Dr. Kenneth Curley from the United States Army Medical Research and Materiel Command (MRMC) who was scheduled to present at 9:30am but was running late due to traffic. Dr. Curley serves as the Neurotrauma Research Portfolio Manager for the Combat Casualty Care Research Program. He presented information regarding their extensive research of Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI) and the results they are seeing from the research. He also discussed his project collaborations with the centers of excellence, VA, and DoD. Task Force members questioned Dr. Curley about neuroplasticity and information regarding TBI registries. The Task Force took a break at 11:47am for lunch.

At 12:50pm, the Task Force resumed the business meeting with a presentation from the Veteran Affairs Federal Recovery Coordination Program (FRCP). Ms. Carol Weese, the Acting Executive Director of the FRCP, briefed the Task Force on the various roles the Federal Recovery Coordinator (FRC) fills during the transition of a Recovering Warrior. She also discussed the challenges of being a referral-based program but not having visibility of who needs a FRC. As a DoD/VA collaborative program, Ms. Weese discussed how both departments were



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working to increase the FRCP's visibility and information sharing capabilities. The Task Force inquired about how the FRCP should operate if funding was not a constraint and the future of the FRCP. At 1:30pm, MG Mustion left the meeting for the day and the members prepared for the next briefing.

The Task Force began the next presentation at 1:36pm with Ms. Ginnean Quisenberry, the director of the Population Health, Medical Management and Patient Centered medical Home Division with TRICARE Management Activity (TMA). Ms. Quisenberry discussed the process of the new Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) on clinical case management and what will be included in the end product. She briefed that the new DoDI will not add any additional case management requirements or certifications but will provide better organization within case management. The Task Force members asked Ms. Quisenberry about issues with case load standards for case managers, contracted case management, and about care management for personnel in remote locations. Ms Malebranche left for the day at 2:03pm. The Task Force took a break at 2:17pm.

At 2:35pm, the last briefing was presented by CAPT Paul Hammer, the Director of the Defense Centers of Excellence (DCoE), and Dr. Allison Cernich, the Acting Deputy Director. CAPT Hammer and Dr. Cernich discussed the current mission and way ahead for DCoE, including the integration of the center of excellence under the United States Army MRMC. They further discussed products resulting from DCoE's collaboration with VA and DoD as well as various Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and mTBI best practice training and treatments. CAPT Hammer also discussed challenges without having a DoDI to establish expectations and roles and with having registries that all Services to input to. The Task Force members inquired about the challenges with DCoE integrating under MRMC, the early screening process for PTSD, and the status of removing the stigma of PTSD in Service members.

The business meeting concluded at 4:16pm.



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Verified by:

Department of Defense Co-Chair:

Vice Admiral Matthew L. Nathan, M.D.



Date: 26 FEB 13

Verified by:

Non-Department of Defense Co-Chair:

Mrs. Suzanne Crockett-Jones



Date: 26 FEB 13



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Appendix A:

Monday, 14 January 2013

Members Present:

- Mr. Justin Constantine
- Mr. Ronald Drach
- CAPT Constance Evans
- TSgt Alex Eudy
- Mrs. Suzanne Crockett-Jones (Non-DoD Co-Chair)
- LtCol Sean P. K. Keane
- Ms. Karen Malebranche
- MG Richard Mustion
- VADM Matthew Nathan (DoD Co-Chair)
- Dr. Steven Phillips
- Mr. David Rehbein
- MG Richard Stone

Members Not Present:

- CSM Steven D. DeJong
- Dr. Russell Turner

Members Arrived Late:

- Mr. Ronald Drach (1:00pm)
- Ms. Karen Malebranche (9:55am)
- MG Richard Mustion (9:09am)
- MG Richard Stone (9:13am)

Members Left Early:

- MG Richard Stone (2:00pm)
- VADM Matthew Nathan (3:20pm)



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- Ms. Karen Malebranche
- MG Richard Mustion
- VADM Matthew Nathan (DoD Co-Chair)
- Dr. Steven Phillips
- Mr. David Rehbein
- MG Richard Stone

Members Not Present:

- CSM Steven D. DeJong
- Dr. Russell Turner

Members Arrived Late:

- Mr. Justin Constantine (10:30am)
- CAPT Constance Evans (8:42am)
- Ms. Karen Malebranche (9:30am)

Members Left Early:

- Ms. Karen Malebranche (2:03pm)
- MG Richard Mustion (1:30pm)
- MG Richard Stone (9:07am)



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Appendix B:

Sign-in Sheet:



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TASK FORCE FOR THE CARE, MANAGEMENT, AND
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RWTF Business Meeting Monday, January 14, 2013

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