

Commander's Call Topics



May 22, 2014

"Ceremonies are important.
But our gratitude has to be more than visits to the troops,
and once-a-year Memorial Day ceremonies.
We honor the dead best by treating the living well."

Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm
Canadian-born American politician
(b. 1959)

There's more to
[Motorcycle Safety](#)
than simply
wearing your helmet.

Behavioral health now available through primary care

Airmen, dependents and veterans now have access to behavioral health services through their primary care manager, or PCM, at any military treatment facility, Air Force Medical Operations Agency officials report.

The Behavioral Health Optimization Program, or BHOP, was developed to employ internal behavioral health consultants, or IBHCs, psychologists and social workers, into primary care clinics, said Maj. Matthew Nielsen, the chief of BHOP.

"The program helps to fight the mental health stigma," he said. "A lot of patients aren't willing to go to the mental health clinic, but a lot of people are willing to discuss their concerns during primary care visits.

"Research has demonstrated that this is a very effective model and that we are seeing a lot of patients this way," he said. "Patients are getting better and they report being highly satisfied with these services."

Nielsen said the change was not created to eliminate the need for mental health clinics. The program operates on a separate model, providing what he refers to as a "stepped-care approach."

"We don't consider BHOP to be mental health treatment or psychotherapy," he said. "...We don't go into the amount of detail and depth (of treatment) that mental health clinics do. It is a different standard of care. We mainly focus on behaviors, habits and things you can do right here and now to improve whatever symptom or condition you are experiencing."

Some of the major conditions that the BHOP program provides services for are: depression, anxiety, panic disorder, tobacco use, alcohol misuse, diabetes, obesity, insomnia and chronic pain.

"BHOP is more of a brief intervention model," Nielsen said. "We see patients three to four times, and our appointments are typically 20 to 30 minutes long. If you need help beyond that, the IBHCs will place a referral for the patient to go to a mental health clinic, either on base or in the community.

"This summer, BHOP is also launching a one-year pilot project in four military treatment facilities that will require active-duty members to go through their PCM and BHOP before getting referred to a mental health clinic. If the pilot project is successful, it would be rolled out Air Force-wide."

Nielsen says the program now incorporates nurses, known as behavioral health care facilitators (BHCFs), to help facilitate care for patients who are treated with medications for specific mental health conditions like depression, anxiety or PTSD.

"If a PCM prescribes medication for depression, anxiety or PTSD, then the BHOP nurse will contact the patient via the phone, once a month, just to check on them. It's important to see how they are doing, if they are experiencing any side effects, and to assist them in scheduling PCM follow up appointments as necessary," Nielsen said.

"Airmen and commanders should know that this is another resource for them to access behavioral health care. The program provides behavioral support for all kinds of conditions," he said. "Airmen and their families just need to drop in and ask their PCM about it."

Staff Sgt. Devon Suits
Air Force News Service

► TRENDING...

"The heroic service provided by our members during World War II helped save lives and preserve our nation's freedom. I am very grateful they are finally receiving the recognition they so deserve," said Civil Air Patrol National Commander, Maj. Gen. Chuck Carr, commenting on the U. S. House's approval of the [Congressional Gold Medal for the founding members of the Civil Air Patrol](#).

► RESOURCES

Website access to the following resources can be gained by clicking on the name.

[AF.mil](#)

[Airman magazine](#)

[Military OneSource/HomeFront](#)

[Air Force Personnel Center](#)

[Air Reserve Personnel Center](#)

[Department of Defense News](#)

[Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

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[Air Force Association](#)

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[Air Force Safety Center](#)

[Civil Service Employment](#)

[Opportunities](#)

[NAF Employment Opportunities](#)

[Air Force Bands/Outreach](#)

► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

May 22, 1941 - The Curtiss Hawk 87A Warhawk first flew.

May 23 1988 - The Bell-Boeing V-22 Osprey, the first production tilt rotor aircraft, was unveiled at the Bell Helicopter Textron plant at Arlington, Texas.

May 24, 1994 - The C-17 Globemaster flew across the Atlantic for the first time.

May 25, 1910 - Orville and Wilbur Wright flew together for the first time at Dayton.

May 26, 1983 - General Dynamics delivered the 500th F-16A aircraft to Hill AFB.

May 27, 1951 – KOREAN WAR. Unit 4/SAM C-47s flew leaflet drop/voice broadcast sorties encouraging the enemy to surrender to elements of the U.S. Army's IX Corps. Some 4,000 enemy soldiers surrendered, with many carrying leaflets. The captives reported morale problems among the enemy because of UN aerial attacks.

May 28, 1964 - A Saturn VI carried the first Apollo command and service module mockups into orbit from Cape Kennedy.

► CURRENT ISSUES

[SecAF, VCSAF outline top priority in memo to Airmen](#)

[Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James](#) and [Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Larry Spencer](#) challenged Airmen to take responsibility for creating cost saving initiatives within their areas of expertise and to submit their ideas to the [Airman Powered by Innovation](#) idea program.

[CSAF provides 'initial feedback' to all commanders](#)

[Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III](#) led by example, introducing the new [Air Force Instruction 1-2 "Commander's Responsibilities."](#) All supervisors are required to provide subordinates with an initial feedback, outlining expectations, standards and goals they can both work together to achieve.

► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[May 16—Pulse on AF Force management](#)

The latest, most accurate information about force management programs provides updates for Guard, Reserve, active duty and civilians.

[Eligible officers may apply for advanced degree, experience programs](#)

Applications are being accepted for career-enhancing programs that focus on the right education, training and experience opportunities.

► ENVIRONMENT, SPACE, TECHNOLOGY

[DOD shows science, technology success despite hard year for workforce](#)

[Dr. David Walker](#), deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for science, technology and engineering, testified before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense that the focused and balanced investments of the Air Force Fiscal 2015 science and technology program are hedges against the unpredictable future and provide pathways to a flexible, precise and lethal force at a relatively low cost in relation to the return on investment.

For more information on Air Force heritage, visit <http://www.airforcehistory.af.mil>

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