



HELLO AGAIN AND WELCOME to the second edition of “What’s new at the WRIISC?.” The War Related Illness and Injury Study Center (WRIISC) is proud to present this newsletter to you quarterly to update you with current information on our program and topics related to veterans health. We hope that you enjoyed reading the first edition of this newsletter. We were very happy to have you participate in our program and want to extend a heartfelt thank you for your involvement. You have our continuous support. If you would like additional information about anything mentioned in our newsletter, or have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us. If you’d like to make suggestions about topics to cover in this news letter in future editions or you would like to be taken off of our mailing list, please let us know. We are on the 11th floor of the East Orange VA Medical Center and our number is 1-800-248-8005. Our website is www.wri.med.va.gov.



A WORD FROM A VETERAN WHO HAD A WRIISC CLINICAL EVALUATION

Hello! I live in Philadelphia, PA and I am a Vietnam and Persian Gulf War veteran. I returned from my final tour of duty in May of 1991 a sick veteran. I have been to numerous programs for treatment. One program that I have a great deal of respect and admiration for is the War Related Illness and Injury Study Center (WRIISC) in East Orange, NJ. I was there for two days but in my short stay I was treated with respect and team members were completely concerned for my well-being. After a battery of tests, I was given helpful insight into my health issues with instructions for treatment. I was truly pleased with all of the staff and the services provided and would highly recommend any veteran to go there for an evaluation. Thank you.

CARING FOR VETERANS CONFERENCE

Health care professionals from throughout VISN 5 gathered in Linthicum Heights, Maryland, for the second in a series of three conferences hosted by the DC WRIISC, which focused on post-deployment health issues for veterans returning from Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The conference, held on April 27, 2005, was titled “Caring for Veterans” and the NJ WRIISC was able to view the conference via video-telecasting at the VA New Jersey Health Care System, East Orange Campus. This conference covered a wide range of post-deployment health topics, including blast injuries, mental health issues, risk communication, and the DoD’s policy on use of the anti-malarial drug Mefloquine. In addition, a panel of speakers profiled a patient and his treatment history from the moment of his blast injury while in Iraq through care at the DoD and VA. This panel discussed clinical care, mental health concerns, and the benefits available to the patient. This conference series is geared towards educating health professionals to help better serve our veterans.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Recently, staff members at the WRIISC had the opportunity to interview Major General (MG) Marianne Mathewson-Chapman. Because of her incredible accomplishments in both military and civilian life, we have decided to honor her by featuring her in our newsletters. We will be sharing the interview responses with you in the next few editions in our “Making a Difference” feature. Please read below for a brief introduction to MG Mathewson-Chapman.

MG Mathewson-Chapman was the former Deputy Surgeon General to the Army Surgeon General and Special Assistant to the Director, Army National Guard in Washington DC. She provided oversight of the health and wellness of 350,000 Army Reserves National Guard soldiers in 54 states and territories. MG Mathewson-Chapman was the first woman in the Army National Guard promoted to the rank of Major General. Presently she is in the United States Army Reserve control group, Army Reserve Personnel Command in the Standby Ready Reserve. In August 2005, she will retire with over 35 years of military service.

MG Mathewson-Chapman is the Nurse Executive at the Department of Veterans Affairs responsible for ensuring VA Services and Benefits are accessible to the National Guard and Reservists returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF). She was recently appointed as the Coordinator for Guard/Reserve outreach activities, Co-Chair of the National Guard/Veterans Affairs Joint Working Group and is Veterans Affairs/National Guard Bureau Liaison to ensure that integrated services are delivered to OEF/OIF veterans through the development of the State Coalition and Partnership between the National Guard/Reservist and VA.

