



# IACH Informer

Issue 3

June 2005

## Customer Service, Medicine and Me — by Christopher H. Lowery



Soldier. Heck, I even took JROTC in high school and then joined the NAVY. I was probably one of the first men from Dunlap, Tennessee to ever join the *other* service, but I wanted to see the world.

(bribery). Finally, I did get a ship and did get to see the world; which brings the story to paradise.

I started as a Patient Representative at Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii. My wife had gotten stationed at Pearl Harbor and I had been able to get into the “system” on the Army side. Great place and great people. Most importantly it was a great job. It was one of the first jobs where I could help people for a living (kinda like superman). Let me tell you, nothing feels better than the satisfaction one gets from making a patient’s day by just being there for them. I was hooked.

From Fire to Ice. The day I started as the Patient Representative Officer at Fort Drum, New York it was -20 degrees. Not -20 degrees wind chill, but “for real” -20 degrees. That pushed the wind chill to like -1,000 or something. I didn’t own a real coat that was dressy enough to wear to work, so I put on my ski bibs and parka over my suit and off I went. They still giggle at me when they think about that.

So here I am in Kansas as *your* Customer Service Division Chief. First you need to know that I believe in you. Silly, since you know that you exist, but I have found that sometimes hospitals seem to forget the patient. I believe that you, *my patients*, are the reason I come to work everyday and not the other way around. In fact, I believe that without you there would be no hospital at all.

I don’t believe that the customer is always right. If that were so why would you need us. But I do believe that the customer is always the customer and should always be treated like they are the center of our concerns.

(Continued on page 3)

I love writing biographies. No really, I do. I have written bios on myself in all flavors. I have been born the illegitimate son of the King of England. For a long while I was an alien transplant, given to my mother for safe keeping (kinda like superman). I have been stolen by pirates in the South Seas and, of course, I have been raised by wolves. My sweet mother always endures my fun with very little fanfare. She learned a long time ago to just smile and recant her own story of me.

I was actually born in Fort Gordon, Georgia during the height of the Vietnam War. This was before there was an Eisenhower Army Medical Center; just a small hospital for a small baby (only five pounds). So you could say (without any exaggeration) that I was born into Army Medicine. *Your Medicine*. My father had just returned from his deployment and my mother counted herself lucky that he was there for my birth. My Dad was a draftee and as soon as he could get out of the Army he did. So, I never grew up in an Army town, just a little town in southeast Tennessee. I used to love telling all my friends that I was born a

\*\*\*A special note on Navy Recruiters. They will never tell you when you sign up as a Navy Corpsman, that the USMC doesn’t have their own medics.\*\*\*

Seeing the world equaled a two year stint at US Marine Corps Depot Parris Island, followed by another two years at 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division in Camp LeJeune, North Carolina. All I can say is that I got REAL good at push ups and I did convince my wife, also a Navy Corpsman, to marry me

### School/Sports Physicals

The Primary Care Clinic (Team #3) will be conducting school/preschool and sports physicals for children ages 3-17 every Thursday throughout the summer. This visit is for well children only. Parents are asked to obtain the physical forms and complete their portion before the appointment. Immunizations will also be provided as needed. If your child needs a physical for participation in school/preschool or sports just call 239-DOCS (3627) to schedule an appointment.

## IACH Updates

**Social Work Service** has enlarged its staff with the addition of two social workers for the Deployment Cycle Care Manager Program. The program's mission is to decrease difficulties experienced by Soldiers and their family members at anytime during the deployment cycle. Individual, couple and family appointments are available by calling 239-7291.

**Behavioral Health** social workers are available at the Consolidated Troop Medical Clinic (CTMC) during normal hours of operation 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Social workers are on hand to assist Soldiers with a wide range of behavioral health issues. Walk-in service is available, so there is no need to schedule an appointment.

**The Nurse Advice Line** is available on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., and from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekends and holidays. The Nurse Advice Line can be reached by dialing 239-DOCS (3627) or 1-888- DOCS (3627). Follow the automated instructions to connect to an Advice Nurse. Be sure to listen to the entire menu before choosing an option. Between 4:30 – 11:00 p.m. Monday – Friday, weekends and Federal Holidays a recording states the appointment line is closed. Please continue to remain on the line for the Nurse Advice Line prompt information. Callers who request same day appointments through the appointment line may be referred to the Advice Nurse. Appointment clerks cannot assess your symptoms or determine the urgency of your symptoms.

**Optometry appointments** are now available for family members and retiree's at IACH. To schedule an appointment please call 239-DOCS (3627) or 1-888-239-DOCS (3627).

**Patient Referral:** Patients are to be advised that once a referral is submitted by their provider it takes approximately 3-5 days for an authorization to be processed. The patient will be contacted by a Referral Management Specialist to assist in scheduling an appointment. If the patient does not receive a call or would like further information on the authorization for the appointment, they can contact the Referral Management Center at 239-DOCS and select option 4.

---

## “Not” What the Doctor Ordered

By Anita Frye, Patient Safety Officer

I spend my days at Irwin Army Community Hospital under the guidance of COL Marilyn Brooks, educating staff and patients about patient safety, promoting patient safety, researching for the latest patient safety tips and investigating welcome comments from staff and patients regarding patient safety. We strive by having standards based medical care to ensure the best quality and safest care possible.

During a welcome weekend off I was at an event with my daughter and took along recreational reading materials so that I wouldn't "bother her". Imagine my amazement as I read the June 2005 issue of Good Housekeeping to find an article, "Not What the Doctor Ordered", by Bob Trebilcock. I read this article with great interest to find that its message was the same as my medical publications and internet reports. I would like to point out a few points from the article.

Every year, millions of prescriptions are filled incorrectly – wrong dose, wrong instructions, even the wrong medicine. I have actually had this happen to me twice in my adult life. Why are so many mistakes happening? One big problem is the volume of prescriptions. From 1994 to 2001, the number of prescriptions filled annually has increased by 50 percent, and it continues to go up an average of 3-5% each year. Another reason is the shortage of pharmacists in the United States.

**MAJOR** Mishaps and how you can prevent them from happening to you include:

- Wrong medicine – There are numerous factors that may contribute to you receiving the wrong medications, to include the pharmacy handing you someone else's prescription.
- Wrong Dose
- Inaccurate label instructions
- Too few pills or too many

Make sure you understand the prescription before you leave the doctor's office. Know the name of the drug, why you are being told to take it, and how you should take it. **SPEAK UP** – do not be afraid to question your provider, nurse or pharmacist. They are as concerned about you and your health and ensuring that you receive the right medications as you are.

Have your prescriptions filled at the same pharmacy if you possibly can. This allows the pharmacy to have a medication history in the system which also helps eliminate risk drug interactions.

Talk to the pharmacist at the window. Ask about any side effects and interactions with other drugs and confirm that you have the right medicine.

Check everything before you leave the pharmacy. Make sure it has your name on the bottle, take the bottle out and check the label and look at the pills to see if they look the same as last time (for refills). Make sure you understand how and when to take the medications. **SPEAK UP! ASK US!** We are here to ensure that you receive the safest medical care possible and we want you to be on our team helping to ensure that we make it happen!

## Pharmacy Updates

**Effective 17 July 2005** patients will be required to pay \$22.00 for a 30-day or 90-day supply through TRICARE Retail Network or TRICARE Mail Order respectively for non-formulary Nexium, Teveten and Teveten HCT.

Patients referred to the network for care frequently receive civilian prescriptions that are non-formulary at IACH. The IACH Pharmacy policy is to not honor non-formulary prescriptions and the patient is referred back to the referral physician for consultation.

Patients have choices other than our MTF for prescriptions services. Costs associated with choosing TRICARE prescription services are:

- Active Duty—No-Co-pay
- Generic—\$3.00 Co-pay
- Brand—\$9.00 Co-pay
- DoD Non-formulary—\$22.00 starts July 2005 (Nexium, Teveten, Teveten HCT)

## Gold Card Update

We want to thank you, our patients, for your continued support of the Gold Card Program. With your cooperation we have identified over 300 new health insurance accounts. When you come to the hospital, please be sure to bring the Gold Card that was mailed to you so another DD Form 2569 does not need to be filled out, unless there is a change.

Starting in September 2005 we will, once again, be asking you to fill out a new DD Form 2569, Third Party Collection Program—Record of Other Health Insurance Form. The Department of Defense mandate requires that a new form be completed annually. The new “Gold Cards” will be orange and will be in effect until December 2006.

If you have any questions our staff is located on the second floor of the hospital, around the corner from the hospital chapel. We can be reached by phone at 239-7732, 7725, 7031 or 7636.

**Formulary removals.** In order to remain operational for the remainder of the fiscal year, IACH’s Pharmacy has removed the following medications from it’s formulary:

- Cetirizine (Zyrtec®), a common allergy medication. Remaining at IACH for general use is Loratadine (Claritin®). (The change does include both the tablet and syrup formulations).
- Prevacid® (Lansoprazole), a medication used to treat or prevent ulcers. Two medications, while not exactly the same, will remain on IACH’s formulary. They are generic Prilosec® and Rabeprazole (Aciphex®). To change from these medications your provider’s permission will be required.
- Lexapro® (Escitalopram), an antidepressant. IACH will have on-hand the generic Celexa® (Citalopram), however, the two drugs are not generically equivalent and your provider’s permission will be required to change your Lexapro® to Citalopram (Celexa®).

These deletions and changes in IACH’s formulary are due to budgetary constraints and price increases by the manufacturers. We appreciate your understanding for this inconvenience. Should you have any questions, please contact the Pharmacy at 785-239-7411.

## Give TRICAREonline.com a Try

If you’ve never tried it, you should. TRICAREonline—once you’ve logged on and gotten your password you can find out all the services IACH has to offer. You can check out your provider, change your address and phone number and schedule appointments. It’s easy—give it a try!

*“A mother was helping her son with his spelling assignment and came to the words conscious and conscience. When she asked him if he knew the difference between the two words, he responded, “Why sure, Mom, conscious is when you are aware of something and conscience is when you wish you were not.”* - Anonymous

## Customer Service

(Cont from page 1)

I like to call it *The Patient Centered* model. Everything we do in a hospital can affect our patients and we should always keep that in mind.

I believe in your voice. If you were a businessman, you would call this the Voice of the Customer or VOC. We call it feedback and I love it. As my dad would say “If I don’t know its broke, I cant fix it”.

You see, unlike a civilian hospital we can’t measure satisfaction by profits. So, what do we do? We send you letters, we ask you questions on surveys, heck I may even come up to you in the middle of the hospital and chat a bit. Why? Because I want to know what you think about *your hospital*.

So how can you get me your thoughts? There are several ways. First, please, please, please, take the time to answer those surveys that ask you about your care at Irwin Army Community Hospital or the Consolidated Troop Medical Clinic. They are a sure and fast way to be heard and are reported all the way up to the Surgeon General of the Army (wow).

For more pressing issues you may always contact your Patient Representative Office at 239-7739 or by email at [IACHPtRep@amedd.army.mil](mailto:IACHPtRep@amedd.army.mil). If you chose to be anonymous you may use any of our comment card boxes located throughout the hospital or you can use the Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) Site. **How did it go? I want to know.** Remember that we love to hear when we are doing good as well.

So that’s that I guess. No pirates or wolves this time just our motto for the Customer Service Division here at IACH.

Service builds Loyalty. Loyalty builds Satisfaction.

I look forward to meeting all of you. It may take some time, but after all, I was sent by aliens to help (kinda like Superman).

For appointments call (785) 239-DOCS (3627) or 1-888-239-DOCS (3627)

Visit [TRICAREonline.com](http://TRICAREonline.com) for patient information/Ft Riley website/Services/Medical, Health for IACH Intranet Information



## Fort Riley Soldier Recognized by International Quilters Organization

The 9th Annual Machine Quilters Showcase was held in Overland Park, Kansas, May 11 to 14. This year's event brought quilters from across the country. Their goal: To complete 2,000 quilts to be distributed to our country's wounded Soldiers. Invited to the Opening Ceremony was Sgt. Sheila M. Burden, of the 596th Signal Battalion. Burden, injured while serving in Iraq, was accompanied by IACH's Chaplain Timothy Stiers. Command Sgt. Major Gilbert Canuela, 24ID and Fort Riley Command Sgt. Major supplied his color guard while Burden received a quilt from the association. Center photo shows a sampling of the many quilts donated to Irwin Army Community Hospital for our wounded Soldiers. Receiving a quilt while an inpatient at IACH is Sgt. Jeffrey Anthony Beltran. The support of this group is appreciated; our Soldiers not forgotten.

*"There are two great days in a person's life—the day we are born and the day we discover why."*

- William Barclay

### Community Efforts . . .

- Happy/Adventure Meals/etc.: We need your help! We are collecting the cute little toys that come with the fast food chains' kid meals. They are being passed on to the local Crisis Center. We have found that often times children are forced to abandon their homes and are unable to take along any of their own toys. These little kid meal toys are perfect—small enough for a child to put in his/her pocket, and giving that child something again of their own. This small contribution costs us nothing and could mean so much. Won't you join us in this campaign? (Call Jan Clark, Public Affairs Officer, 239-7250).

- Pull for the House Pop Tab Recycling Program. Here again is an opportunity to extend a helping hand to others less fortunate. Just save those pop tabs and turn them in to Jan Clark, PAO, 2nd floor, corridor 6.

- Any other ideas for community support, just call 239-7250. Thanks in advance for your support!

## NCO Fellowship Gives Back

The IACH NCO Fellowship was formed in August 2004 to foster a closer working relationship amongst the NCOs and to provide opportunities for the NCO Corps of IACH to give back to the local communities that support us on a daily basis.

On May 14, twenty NCOs and family members did just that by gathering at the Junction City Skate Park for their semi-annual community service project. The purpose of this project was to beautify the park and to improve the appearance of the city.

NCOs and family members spent the afternoon painting, and when complete, the results were quite impressive. The children in the local area were grateful for the commitment of IACH's finest.

The day ended with a barbeque and fellowship amongst the members.

*"The person who loses his head is usually the last to miss it."*

- Bits & Pieces

*"A true friend never gets in your way unless you happen to be going down."*

- Arnold H. Glasow

*"A mother and her five-year-old son were talking about what he learned in kindergarten that day. The mother let her mind wander while her son was speaking. He began tapping on her knee and said, 'Mommy, listen to me!' 'But I am listening,' replied his mother. 'No, you're not, said her son, 'You're not in your eyes.'"*

- Anonymous

The Secretary of the Army has determined that publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by law of the Department. Use of funds for printing this publication has been approved by the MEDDAC Commander. The views and opinions expressed in the periodical are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or of the publishing agency or command.

"IACH Informer" is published by Irwin Army Community Hospital, Public Affairs Office, 600 Caisson Hill Road, Fort Riley, KS 66442, DSN 856-7250, Comm (785) 239-7250, by permission of Colonel Marilyn Brooks, Commanding. Editor is Jan Clark. This is a bi-monthly publication distributed to IACH's beneficiaries on a handout basis & via the Intranet.