

# NAVY AND MARINE CORPS PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER **UPDATE**



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*Summer 2015*

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## Preventive Health Equals War Fighter Readiness

By: Capt. Eric R. Hoffman, MSC, Executive Officer, NMCPHC



When I entered my PhD program in medical entomology, I had absolutely no idea where the journey would eventually take me. Fast-forward 20 years later as executive officer for the Navy's definitive public health resource; I can say without hesitation that public health is more than just finding new ways to control ticks and mosquitoes.

When asked to write about "Preventive Health," I had to take a step back. For those of us in the public health arena the term "Preventive Health" is really a hybrid of multiple public health disciplines. At a minimum, it includes "Population Health," "Preventive Medicine," and "Environmental Health." That represents a pretty good chunk of everything that the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC), and its field activities does to help prevent disease and promote health for service members and their families world-wide. Maintaining a healthy population is at the very core of Force Health Protection. At NMCPHC, we provide health promotion and wellness programs and services to prevent illness and



[WWW.NMCPHC.MED.NAVY.MIL](http://WWW.NMCPHC.MED.NAVY.MIL)

injury, enhance readiness and promote healthy lifestyles and behaviors. I have personally benefited from our health promotion and wellness program to include nutrition and fitness information. And when something goes awry – like a disease outbreak that represents a potential threat to the war-fighter, we have the expertise to analyze the data and hopefully reduce the impact on readiness.

Another key component of preventive health is monitoring the environment where Sailors and Marines work and live. We help ensure troops are breathing clean air, drinking clean water, and avoiding exposure to toxins and pollutants, and any other workplace and environmental exposure hazards.

We help ensure troops are breathing clean air, drinking clean water, and avoiding exposure to toxins and pollutants, and any other workplace and environmental exposure hazards. Categorically, the field of Preventive Medicine is where I fit in the most. As a medical entomologist, I'm mostly interested in controlling the vectors (fancy name for bugs and other vermin) that spread disease. Ultimately the goal of us all in the preventive medicine field to provide Force Health Protection by rapidly assessing, preventing, and controlling health threats in a theater of operations and enhancing organic Preventive Medicine assets. We also provide technical and professional support to Navy medical personnel who are responsible for making Navy Preventive Medicine policies and to Navy medical department personnel who identify, evaluate, monitor, and respond to diseases, injuries, and environmental factors that threaten human health.

The value of Preventive Health to mission success was made very clear to me during deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as part of the Navy's expeditionary Forward Deployable Preventive Medicine Unit (FDPMU). This small team of public health specialists including Entomologists, Environmental Health Officers, Microbiologists, Industrial Hygienists, Biochemists, Preventive Medicine and Laboratory Technicians effectively applied our expertise and experience to reduce the risk of illness and injury in a harsh environment to historically low levels, contributing to a healthy and ready force.

Emphasis on Preventive Health is critical for ensuring war fighter readiness. In math terms, Preventive Health equals Readiness. And readiness continues to be one of our SG's three goals. As mentioned earlier, at NMCPHC and our field activities "It's what we do." I'll conclude by harkening back to an old expression first heard many years ago: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

## CMC Corner



HMCN (SW/EXW) Derek Petrin  
Command Master Chief, NMCPHC

Fitness is the key component to maintaining preservation of the force and family. With 24 years of active duty service, I understand first-hand the importance of health and wellness to overall operational readiness.

The seven years I served with the SEAL Teams was a tremendous test and privilege, both personally and professionally. The opportunity to have world class strength and conditioning coaches, athletic trainers and physical therapists was priceless and provided many invaluable lessons that will stay with me forever. I learned the word fit means more important than skinny or muscular and truly grasped the concept that functional movement [prevents injury](#) and promotes longevity. The obvious benefit of being surrounded by some of the greatest competitor's I have ever seen is still a great motivator to aim for my top performance.

It's also important to remain active despite the challenges we face while serving. When I injured my leg about 8 years ago, I learned how to row from one my Sailors who did crew at Temple University. I did pretty well and started competing at indoor rowing tournaments three months later. I've come to really love rowing on a Concept 2 rower and make it part of my weekly fitness routing with the goal of completing

at least 5,000 kilometers a day, 5 days a week.

Equally important to fitness is sleep hygiene; the true silent killer of today's society. Please remember that "Rest=Reps and Sleep=Equals Strength!" especially for service members who start to hit 35-40 years old. Just because you spend hours in the rack does not mean they are productive or healthy. Learning to take the steps to create the best sleep experience will only translate to better performance in the gym, on the track or on your favorite machine. NMCPHC provides great evidence-based resources and tips that can help you get [better sleep](#).

There are so many triggers that test our Sailors and Marines these days. If we take the fitness component out of our daily routine, we often see a huge increase in unhealthy and dangerous social behaviors. The increase in tobacco and alcohol use bring their own baggage that can be linked to reducing optimum physical, emotional and psychological performance. For every Sailor and Marine, it is our important duty to remain at the top of our game. For tips and facts about fitness and overall health, check out the [health promotion and wellness resources](#) on the NMCPHC website!

## Preventive Medicine Unit Hosts Risk Communication Course

By: NEPMU-7, Public Affairs



Students work out how they might brief the community on a variety of public health crisis situations prior to role playing in a mock town hall forum during Public Health Emergency Risk Communication course held aboard Naval Station Rota, Spain, 13 - 15 July. (U.S. Navy photo by Hospital Corpsmen Third Class Jay Cherluck)

technical, conflicting or incomplete, or where emotions are running high, are some of the factors that key personnel and communicators must deal with. "This is transformational training," said Capt. Juliann Althoff, NEPMU-7 Officer in Charge. "It teaches skills which allow our team of public health specialists to better communicate through the challenges that may be encountered during a health emergency. These skills matter, regardless if you are talking to one patient or a population of people, understanding perception of risk and knowing how to get your message across effectively really makes a difference."

The three-day interactive course includes a two-day risk communication workshop and an optional day of media training in which students may role-play in a mock media interviews. The course, sponsored by NMCPHC is presented by Fulton Communications, a communications issues management firm that provides communications consulting and training. The training team included Keith Fulton and Sandy Martinez president and CEO respectively of Fulton Communications, and Dr. Paul Gillooly, NMCPHC Health Risk Communications, all of whom have had decades of experience communicating risk to the public during crises.

While Dr. Gillooly provided Navy specific risk communication training, the Fulton team used both instruction and

The Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit (NEPMU) 7 hosted the Public Health Emergency Risk Communication Course aboard Naval Station Rota, Spain, July 13-15. Approximately 20 participants from various commands within the European area of responsibility (AOR) attended the training.

The course is designed to strengthen the communication skills of medical, emergency response, public affairs, and other key personnel who may be called upon to both deliver and exchange information with stakeholders during an emergency. These skills are especially important during a crisis situation when multiple factors are present that impede effective communication.

Crisis events where the information is either highly

role-play to teach students how to handle various communication issues including handling strong emotions and conveying perception of risk to stakeholders. "Our goal is to assist Navy and Marine Corps personnel to clearly and effectively communicate on a daily basis with any stakeholder on any issue that could potentially affect our operations and our mission," said Dr. Gillooly. "We strive to teach proven risk communication tools and techniques. This will provide a consistent framework for explaining environmental, health or safety risks to our many stakeholders."

"The risk communications course is essential to anyone who may need to interact with the public," said 1st Lt. Danielle Dixon, Public Affairs Officer with Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa (SPMAGTF-CR-AF). "We learned how to communicate clear and precise information to the public and our fellow service members, in order to better inform our audiences and ensure we can deescalate or resolve a variety of situations, including crises."

Visit the NMCPHC [Risk Communication webpage](#) for more information on risk communication products and services.


## Respirator Classes Ranked by Decreasing Physiological Effects

By: NMCPHC, Public Affairs

Medical evaluations are required for personnel who wear respirators to ensure that they are physically able to wear their assigned respirator while performing their work. Types of respirator medical evaluations include medical questionnaires, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) medical evaluation, medical examination, or a combination of these two methods, such as conducted by the Navy.


Medical evaluation to determine whether an employee is able to use a given respirator is an important element of an effective respiratory protection program and is necessary to prevent injuries, illnesses, and even, in rare cases, death from the physiological burden imposed by respirator use.

The purpose of a medical evaluation program is to ensure that any employee required to use a respirator can tolerate the physiological burden associated with such use, including the burden imposed by the respirator itself (e.g., its weight and breathing resistance during both normal operation and under conditions of filter, canister, or cartridge




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**Respirator Classes Ranked by Decreasing Physiological Effects<sup>1</sup>**




**Military Gas Mask**  
Greatest inhalation & exhalation pressure. Worn with Mission Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP) gear, which increases heat stress. Combat may require use for extended periods.




**Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)**  
Heaviest respirator (35 lbs.). Wearer carries the air source (e.g., air cylinder). Often worn with impermeable hazmat ensembles in atmospheres immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH). Chemical reactions in "closed-circuit" (air recirculating) models produce warm air (up to 135° F).




**Full Face Non-Powered Air-Purifying Respirators**  
Adds ~815 cc of dead air space to the respiratory system. Personnel needing vision correction must have prescription spectacle kits.




**Half Mask Non-Powered Air-Purifying Respirators**  
Adds ~ 260 cc of dead air space to the respiratory system.



**Supplied-Air (Airline) Respirators**  
Delivers breathing air to the wearer from a compressed air source (e.g., air compressor) though an air hose up to 300 feet in length. Air hoses may become tangled on workplace equipment, or severed, leaving the wearer without a source of breathing air. That is why they must not be worn in IDLH atmospheres without an auxiliary SCBA air cylinder for escape.




**Powered Air Purifying Respirators (PAPRs)**  
Even though PAPRs are heavier and bulkier than negative pressure air-purifying respirators, workers for the most part consider them more comfortable because of the PAPRs' cooling effect and PAPRs require less breathing effort due to the continuous flow of clean air to the PAPR wearer.



**Filtering Facepiece Respirator**  
Lightest (¼ - 1 oz.) and most comfortable respirators. Breathing is easier because air is drawn through the entire surface area of the facepiece (i.e., the filter is the respirator facepiece). Only adds 260 cc of dead air space to the respiratory system.

Decreasing Physiological Effects

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed description of the physiological effects associated with wearing each class of respirator please read the NMCPHC Respiratory Protection Toolbox article entitled "Respirator Medical Evaluation."

 **Technical Guidance** from Occupational and Environmental Medicine (OEM)

Respirator Classes Ranked by Decreasing Physiological Effects Fact Sheet

overload); musculoskeletal stress (e.g., when the respirator to be worn is an SCBA),<sup>1</sup> limitations on auditory, visual, and odor sensations; and isolation from the workplace environment.

For a detailed description of the physiological effects associated with wearing each class of respirator please read the NMCPHC Respiratory Protection Toolbox article entitled "[Respirator Medical Evaluation.](#)"

## **Camp Blanding Wins Prestigious Environmental Award with Help from NAS Jacksonville's Navy Entomology Center of Excellence (NECE)**

By: NECE, Public Affairs Team

An ongoing close partnership between NECE and the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center (CBJTC), Florida Army National Guard, has produced an unexpected benefit for the Department of Defense (DoD). CBJTC was awarded the 2015 Secretary of Defense Environmental Award for Natural Resources Conservation, Large Installation. The award recognizes large installations (over 10,000 acres) promoting the conservation of natural resources, including the identification, protection, and restoration of biological resources and habitats; the sound long-term management and use of the land and its resources; and the promotion of a conservation ethic.

CBJTC was one of nine winners selected from a total of 35 nominees. A diverse panel of judges representing federal and state agencies, academia and the private sector selected the winners.

"One of the major indicators that helped us win the award was our 12 ongoing research initiatives including research project collaborations with NECE," said Jerry Kerce, CBJTC Integrated Pest Management Coordinator. "Additionally, last year CBJTC was invited to become a World Health Organization (WHO)/NECE collaborative center for excellence partner."

"NECE serves as the field testing hub of a very successful federal consortium between Services, CDC, USDA, academe and industry all with overlapping motives to deliver new products to better protect deployed war fighters from blood feeding insects that transmit diseases," said Dr. Gary Breeden, Program Manager NMCPHC. "CBJTC offers 76 thousand acres of military-only, protected areas to test new products in a safe, real-world, field trial away from civilian populations and potential interference and possible contamination to/from civilian populations."

NECE's work at CBJTC has included testing new products for the U. S. President's Malaria Initiative, a \$1.3 billion dollar effort in 17 sub-Saharan African countries to reduce malaria by 50 percent. Additionally, NECE completed numerous projects at CBJTC that have resulted in the assignment of National Stock Numbers for equipment and pesticides that will directly aid in the protection of the deployed warfighter. "All these opportunities for collaboration bring extremely valuable "fresh ideas" and potential solutions to better protect deployed warfighters as well," said Breeden.

According to Capt. Eric Hoffman, NMCPHC Executive Officer, NECE and Camp Blanding have worked closely together for years. "NECE and Camp Blanding worked together well before multi-agency collaborations and jointness were common, to address significant insect-borne disease challenges that impact readiness," said Hoffman. "The award Camp Blanding received acknowledges and validates the effectiveness of this relationship in producing products that protect our most valuable asset, our people."

<sup>1</sup> OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (OSHA): 29 CFR PARTS 1910 AND 1926 RESPIRATORY PROTECTION: FINAL RULE. FEDERAL REGISTER 63(5): 1152 1300. WASHINGTON, D.C.: U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE, OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL REGISTER, JANUARY 8, 1998. [HTTP://WWW.GPO.GOV/FDSYS/PKG/FR-1998-01-08/PDF/97-33843.PDF](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-1998-01-08/pdf/97-33843.pdf)

“Overall, the goal of our collaboration is to leverage joint assets in order to increase the value of the products and services we offer to our customers,” said Cmdr. Darryl Arfsten, Officer in Charge NECE. “Future plans for NECE and Camp Blanding collaborations will only intensify as the collaboration continues its importance in testing products to benefit deployed warfighters.”

NECE is the Navy and Marine Corps center of expertise for operational entomology. Visit the [NECE website](#) for more information.

## Indian Delegation Visits NEPMU-6

By: NEPMU-6, Public Affairs



NEPMU-6 and India's Armed Forces Medical Service delegation. (U.S. Navy photo by Lt. McGuire)

NEPMU-6 hosted Rear Adm. Colin Chinn of the U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM), and Lt. Gen. BK Chopra, Director General of India's Armed Forces Medical Service (DGAFMS) and his delegation on a tour of their facility July 28. The tour was part of a larger bilateral engagement held in Washington, D.C. and Hawaii, and included meetings with senior leaders of USPACOM and the DoD Military Health System, as well as several tours of U.S. military facilities.

The delegation included Brig. Gen. Madhuri Kanitkar, Deputy DGAFMS, and Col. Rajul Gupta, Director of Health for the AFMS. While in Hawaii, the DGAFMS and his team visited with many key personnel to discuss current and future endeavors. The NEPMU-6 tour concentrated on the Unit's mission and capabilities, highlighting their ability to respond quickly to public health events in the AOR.

According to Capt. Mark Swearngin, NEPMU-6 Officer-in-Charge, hosting a delegation of military health care professionals from another country was extremely rewarding. “We are very fortunate to host representatives of India's Armed Forces Medical Services. Our multidisciplinary team detailed our field capability and our Preventive Medicine Officers were able to convey lessons learned from recent missions while discussing ways to cooperate in the future. This engagement benefited everyone,” said Swearngin.

Capt. Swearngin, Capt. Annette Von Thun, NEPMU-6 Director for Future Operations, and Lt. Patrick McGuire, NEPMU-6 Expeditionary Preventive Medicine, led Lt. Gen. BK Chopra and his delegation through a discussion of the various components that make up NEPMU-6's advanced preventive medicine capabilities. Highlights of the visit included microbiology, industrial hygiene, entomology, environmental health, and epidemiology components. This specific set up showcased a fully advanced preventive medicine capability, although its modular design allows for flexibility in responding to the unique requirements of each situation.

This engagement was fueled by the strong desire to strengthen and further develop existing agreements between the U.S. DoD and India's Armed Forces to include initiatives between their respective medical universities. These initiatives to expand health engagements between the militaries of India and the U.S. stems from the multitude of similarities between our military health systems. The U.S. and India share many challenges and this key leadership engagement shed much light on potential opportunities for an expanded, mutually beneficial relationship. Future planning will prioritize USPACOM Surgeon working with India's AFMS to enhance India-U.S. military-to-military cooperation.

NEPMU-6 maximizes the mission readiness of operational forces in the Pacific Theater by providing specialized public health services that enhance force health protection. Visit the [NEPMU-6 webpage](#) to learn more.

## Developing a Positive Fitness Mindset for Active Living

By: NMCPHC, Health Promotion and Wellness Staff



Sailors participate in a 5K fun run hosted by the ship's Morale, Welfare and Recreation Division, on the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). Carl Vinson and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 17 are deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Dean M. Cates)

Many of us tend to make excuses as to why we can't get fit or be consistently active. Common excuse include: "I don't have the time," or "my gym is too far away," or "exercise is boring." If you have uttered the excuses above (or others), it might be time to consider shifting your mindset towards fitness.

Many of us have said at one time or another that we're too busy to exercise. However with some planning, it's possible to incorporate fitness into a busy life. It may be a challenge at first, but once you develop a mindset for fitness, you might be surprised at how quickly physical activity becomes a habit.

It is important to note that you don't need a gym to get started! It's important to just get moving and incorporate regular physical activity into your life.

Try brisk walking, bicycling, swimming, basketball, mowing the lawn or gardening to help you get started. Physical activity is anything that gets your body moving.

You may be wondering "why should I change my mindset towards active living?" Regular physical activity helps improve your overall health and fitness, and reduces your risk for many chronic diseases. Exercise helps you reach your personal best. You look good, feel good and perform at your peak on and off the job.

### The no excuse zone!

If you don't like working out, just be active... play tennis, join a team, participate in a fun run, etc.

- Start at a comfortable level
- Be active everyday
- Add a little more activity each time

Visit the [Active Living webpage](#) for workout routines that eliminate the guesswork and photos, videos and descriptions of exercise movements to help you exercise wherever you are.

## Navy Drug Screening Labs Awarded Meritorious Unit Commendation

By: NMCPHC, Public Affairs

The Navy's three drug screening laboratories (NDSLs) were awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation (MUC) in a ceremony held at the NDSL Great Lakes, Illinois on June 30, 2015. Capt. Scott R. Jonson, commanding officer, Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC), presented the MUC citation to the NDSL Great Lakes staff.

Rear Adm. Elaine C. Wagner, deputy chief, Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Wounded, Ill and Injured, was the guest of honor and presiding officer the day before at the NDSL Great Lakes ribbon cutting ceremony. In her remarks, Wagner emphasized the importance of the drug lab's mission. "A lot of things have changed in the navy over the last 31 years," said Wagner. "One thing hasn't changed. The Navy is still committed to keeping the greatest military in the world drug-free."

The award recognizes the collective achievement of each drug lab for their role in effectively executing the Department of the Navy's (DON) Drug Testing Program. The program supports mission readiness through deterrence and detection of drug abuse by military service members. As noted in award, the NDSLs played a key role in the DoD Drug Testing Enterprise by implementing mandates from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) to add commonly-abused prescription drugs and synthetic cannabinoids (Spice) to the drug testing panel.

The citation also highlighted the efforts of the NDSLs in expanding the testing panel from 12 to 21 drugs. According to Cmdr. Eric Welsh, NMCPHC director for Laboratory Services, and Navy Drug Testing program manager, the award represents the byproduct of a total team effort from each of the drug labs. "This represents the hard work of the Navy Drug Testing Program in answering the call to expand both drug testing capacity and capability," said Welsh. "As a result, the Navy is now testing more specimens for more drugs of abuse than ever before and is postured to deftly respond to future drug abuse threats."

NMCPHC functions as the Navy's ultimate technical authority on drug testing matters for the Navy and Marine Corps and has oversight for the three NDSLs. Visit the [Drug Screening Labs webpage](#) to learn more.

## NEPMU-7 Receives Commissioning Pennant

By: NEPMU-7, Public Affairs



Sailors assigned to NEPMU-7 present Rear Adm. Terry Moulton, left of center, commander, Navy Medicine East, a commissioning pennant and Plank Owner certificate during the NEPMU 7 Plank Owner ceremony. The unit was christened on May 28, 2014 and celebrated its first year of operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Brian Dietrick)

NEPMU-7 celebrated its first year of operations with a Commissioning Pennant and Plank Owner ceremony July 24.

The event celebrates the final stage in re-establishing the unit which had supported the U.S. 6th Fleet and European area of operations for almost 50 years before it was decommissioned in 2006. Rear Adm. Terry Moulton, commander, Navy Medicine East attended as guest of honor.

"You really are the force multiplier, just one of you deployed in support of operations can support a population of 10 to 20 thousand just by fixing a water system or spraying for different vectors. You really wasted no time getting



established and making a difference and can be very proud of all that you have accomplished over the year," said Moulton. "I look forward to hearing the great stories and accomplishments of your support to the fleet as we go forward, I thank you for what you do each and every day and truly appreciate the partnership that you have here with the hospital and the rest of Navy Medicine in supporting the fleet."

The unit was officially re-commissioned by Vice Adm. Matthew Nathan, Navy Surgeon General, on June 20, 2014 in a ribbon cutting and commissioning ceremony. Only six personnel had been assigned to NEPMU-7 at the time of the re-commissioning. Now fully manned and operationally capable, the officers and enlisted personnel of NEPMU-7 formally recognized this achievement by encasing their commissioning pennant for display and presenting each member with a framed certificate granting them the entitlements of plank owner.

"Most people go through their entire military careers and never have a chance to do this, a chance to stand up a unit from scratch, to become a plank owner," said Capt. Juliann Althoff, NEPMU-7 officer in charge. "This ceremony is designed to celebrate and recognize our NEPMU-7 plank owners who got our unit where it is today - fully manned and mission capable in an amazingly short period of time."

The NEPMU-7 officers and crew presented U.S. Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota and U.S. Naval Hospital Rota with honorary Plank Owner certificates in appreciation and acknowledgment of the critical support they played in the unit's standup. Rear Adm. Moulton was also presented with a replica commissioning pennant and an honorary Plank Owner certificate.

The unit commemorated several important milestones including a christening ceremony on May 28, 2014 when they moved from a temporary office space inside U.S. Naval Hospital Rota and into their current building. This symbolic move from "dry-dock" was followed by the unit's official commissioning ceremony.

Over the last year the unit has taken on its full complement of active duty staff, nearly tripling in size. This event marks the end of the unit's "sea trials" as it has proved itself self-sufficient and fully operationally capable.

"NEPMU-7 has now written another chapter in our rich history by getting this proud unit delivered back online (and once again) providing services to the fleet and expeditionary forces, I look forward to great things in our future as we begin the next chapter in our history." said Althoff.

As is the nature of comradery aboard NAVSTA Rota, the unit's ceremony was supported by enlisted personnel from various tenant commands, including the return of Pako, the military working dog who served as one of Vice Adm. Nathan's sideboys last year.

NEPMU-7 provides public health support to Navy and Marine Corps forces throughout Europe and Africa. For more information visit the [NEPMU-7 webpage](#).

## Incase You Missed It

Check out the following articles:

[Navy's ShipShape Program: It's Your Job to Stay Fit and Our Job to Help](#) – Navy Medicine Live

[Navy Public Health Experts Recognized for Outstanding Research](#) – Navy News

[I am Navy Medicine: Lt. Cmdr. Jamal Dejl](#) – Navy Medicine Live