

















REV CELEBRATING A YEAR OF SUCCESS

WRAIR

US ARMY I

LETTER FROM COL CLINTON MURRAY

COMMANDER OF THE WALTER REED ARMY INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH



As the Department of Defense continues to reorganize and modernize to conduct Multi-Domain Operations, the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research continued to evolve its research focus to develop medical products that safeguard the Warfighter at homestation and during deployment. 2020 brought the added danger of COVID-19, a stark reminder of the continuing threat posed by infectious disease as well as the need for strategies that build resilient, cognitively dominant Warfighters.

WRAIR's global research network, including the Center for Infectious Disease Research, the Center for Military Psychiatry and Neuroscience and four expeditionary medical research directorates in Africa, Southeast Asia, the Republic of Georgia and Washington State, worked hard to meet this threat, developing strategies to prevent, detect and treat COVID-19 as well as provide commanders and leaders actionable guidance to mitigate the pandemic's behavioral health impact—while also maintaining the organization's broader research mission to overcome infectious disease and protect brain health.

Thank you for joining us as we highlight the accomplishments of WRAIR's approximately 2,700 Soldiers, civilians and contractors, operating across five continents, over 20 countries and eight time zones.





COVID-19 RESPONSE Supported by: WRAIR, AFRIMS, USAMRD-A, USAMRD-W, USAMRD-G

Building upon its ability to rapidly respond to outbreaks and develop diagnostics, vaccines and treatments, WRAIR is playing a key role in the ongoing COVID-19 response.





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COVID-19 RESPONSE





WRAIR scientists developed and evaluated diagnostic technologies to determine when individuals are no longer infectious, track those who are infected without symptoms and support epidemiological and vaccine studies. Researchers are leading a health surveillance study of Army recruits at Fort Jackson to inform policy around training and develop evidencebased release criteria from quarantine and have conducted over 50,000 COVID-19 tests around the world.

Funded by: *Military Infectious Disease Research Program, Defense Health Program, Global Emerging Infections Surveillance, President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief*



WRAIR researchers have screened over 40 million compounds using artificial intelligence and high-throughput screening to identify and evaluate therapies for COVID-19, identifying several dozen for further development and testing. These techniques have dramatically decreased the time and cost required to evaluate new drugs and can be used for any disease. Funded by: *Military Infectious Diseases Research Program, Defense Health Programs*

WRAIR brought over a century of infectious disease experience to bear, supporting the COVID-19 response around the world with logistics, technical expertise and clinical research sites. WRAIR sites are testing an industry-developed COVID-19 vaccine and are part of a consortium testing therapeutics for COVID-19-positive patients.







Behavioral Health Resources for COVID-19 are available here: https://www.wrair.army.mil/node/348 Scientists from WRAIR and the U.S. Army Public Health Center joined forces to organize the Behavioral Health Advisory Team (BHAT), a study to measure the behavioral health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Soldiers. Surveying more than 20,000 Soldiers across the globe in the spring of 2020, the BHAT identified specific trends about perceptions of COVID-19 and leadership response, behavioral health concerns and use of risk mitigation strategies to provide leaders actionable data and recommendations to bridge communication gaps and address concerns. Follow up-studies will continue through 2021 to continue providing accurate data and relevant solutions to leadership and stakeholders across the Army. **Funded by: Army Public Health Center, Military Infectious Disease**

Research Program





COVID-19 RESPONSE

PATHOGEN SURVEILLANCE FOR OCONUS EXERCISES



courtesy of National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease



PATHOGEN SURVEILLANCE FOR **OCONUS EXERCISES**

Supported by: AFRIMS, USAMRD-G

WRAIR

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Building off robust surveillance capabilities to track endemic and emerging infectious diseases, WRAIR overseas directorates provide direct support for international training exercises.



Cobra Gold 2020

USAMRD-G





WRAIR's U.S. Army Medical Directorate-Armed Forces Research Institute of the Medical Sciences (USAMD-AFRIMS), headquartered in Thailand, conducted an entomological risk assessment in anticipation of the 2020 Cobra Gold exercises, an annual exercise co-hosted between the United States and Thailand and the largest of its kind in the Indo-Pacific region; furthermore, as the novel coronavirus pandemic emerged, AFRIMS rapidly pivoted its resource to surveil COVID-19 among exercise participants. WRAIR's U.S. Army Medical Research Directorate-Georgia (USAMRD-G), headquartered in the country of Georgia, supported the 2020 Noble Partner exercise, a joint U.S.-Georgian exercise, by identifying disease-carrying vectors and the prevalence of acute diarrhea and respiratory illness in U.S. forces. These data provided exercise surgeons timely threat assessments for infectious disease, resulting in improved mitigation strategies for participants. Funded by: Global Emerging Infections Surveillance



Noble Partners 2020











In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, WRAIR's overseas laboratories bolstered host nation capacities to test for COVID-19; additionally, WRAIR's network of OCONUS laboratories provided personal protective equipment like masks, surgical gowns, gloves and face shields to host nation partners. WRAIR's U.S. Army Medical Research Directorate-Africa (USAMRD-A) celebrated several milestones including 15 years of partnership with the Nigerian military and 20 years of partnership in Tanzania as well as the transfer of two newly-renovated HIV laboratories to the Tanzanian government. WRAIR continued to support the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and in 2020 provided life-saving anti-retroviral therapy to nearly 350,000 people. These partnerships enhance healthcare infrastructure and clinical research capabilities, and provide training and resources for host-nation militaries, scientists and health-professionals. A new pilot program with the Uniformed Services University's Center for Global Health Engagement aims to optimize and quantify the impact of WRAIR's overseas relationships to combatant commands.



MEDICAL DIPLOMACY AND PARTNER CAPACITY BUILDING

Supported by: AFRIMS, USAMRD-A, USAMRD-G

WRAIR's network of expeditionary laboratories are models of medical diplomacy, working to foster product development, outbreak response and disease surveillance to support Soldier health and global health.

USAMRD-G



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MEDICAL DIPLOMACY





DRUG-RESISTANT BACTERIA AND WOUND INFECTIONS

BACTERIOPHAGE THERAPEUTICS



1. Phage invades target cell

2. Phage reproduces within target cell

3. Phage bursts from target cell, destroying it and begins search for new target cell

MDR bacteria remain a significant threat to the public as well as Service Members, on and off the battlefield. WRAIR's Multidrugresistant organism Repository and Surveillance Network serves as the primary surveillance organization to track antibiotic-resistant bacteria across the military healthcare system and works closely with WRAIR's international laboratories to study MDR in partner countries. WRAIR is also leading efforts to transition an antibiotic drug candidate from discovery to advanced development—as well as other efforts like bacteriophages, or viruses that inactivate specific strains of bacteria. WRAIR-developed bacteriophage cocktails were used in three emergency cases to clear infections not responding to antibiotics and work continues around the world to identify and characterize new bacteriophages in support of these efforts. Funded by: Defense Health Programs, Global Emerging Infections Surveillance

DRUG-RESISTANT BACTERIA AND WOUND INFECTIONS Supported by: WRAIR, AFRIMS, USAMRD-A, USAMRD-G

WRAIR continues its support for the Combatting Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria national action plan, a whole-of-government approach to overcome multidrug-resistant (MDR) bacteria.

DISEASE OUTBREAKS IN THE MILITARY HEALTHCARE SSTEM



GLOBAL ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE SURVELIANCE



CENTCOM INDO-PACOM OCONUS LABS

DISEASE OUTBREAK INVESTIGATIONS IN THE MHS

- Response assistance requested by healthcare professionals
- 6-8 outbreak investigations per month
- Turnaround time as short as 48-72 hours

MTF MDR ORGANISMS SURVEILLANCE

- All MTFs send MDR bacteria to MRSN in accordance with DOD/DHA policy
- 500-800 bacterial samples per month received from around the world
- MRSN performs real-time molecular epidemiology



GLOBAL ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE SURVEILLANCE

- OCONUS and Global Emerging Infections Surveillance (GEIS) funded labs in 22 countries
- Thousands of bacteria collected per year
- Track superbugs worldwide
- · Provide actionable infectious disease surveillance data to geographic combatant commands









VACCINE CLINICAL TRIALS Supported by: WRAIR, AFRIMS, USAMRD-A

WRAIR's Clinical Trials Center, international research directorates, and network of nearly 20 independent yet affiliated sites serve as the proving ground for new medical countermeasures.



VACCINE CLINICAL TRIALS

Testing products developed within the WRAIR enterprise and by external partners, these sites are strategically located in geographic areas of interest to overcome diseases of interest to the Warfighter. 2020 marked the beginning of a range of vaccine clinical trials against highly relevant infectious diseases like Ebola, Marburg, dengue and chikungunya viruses, and the conclusion of a clinical trial for a separate Marburg vaccine and a therapeutic HIV vaccine. These trials included multisite studies, conducted in partnership with institutions like the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Disease and National Institutes of Health's Vaccine Research Center. Continuing its leadership in the field of diarrheal diseases, WRAIR completed a clinical trial for a vaccine against the diarrheal disease-causing bacterium Shigella and began a separate trial at the U.S. Army Medical Research Directorate-Africa (USAMRD-A); diarrheal diseases are currently listed as the most consequential infectious disease threat to the deployed Soldier. In 2021, WRAIR's clinical trials enterprise plans to be part of multiple vaccine and drug treatment trials against SARS-CoV-2, as well as initiating trials against other highly relevant diseases such as Lassa virus, malaria and yellow fever.

> WRAIR works hard to build close, trust-based relationships with partners in communities where we conduct clinical research around the world. Expanding this work to meet the COVID-19 pandemic, WRAIR began outreach efforts in its Silver Spring, Md., headquarters to improve understanding of COVID-19-related research and ultimately its outcomes.

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LAUNCH OF NEW AND IMPROVED PBF Supported by: WRAIR

The Pilot Bioproduction Facility (PBF) is a cGMPcompliant pharmaceutical manufacturing facility at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research specializing in the rapid development of vaccines and biologics for military-relevant infectious disease threats.



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www.wrair.army.mil

LAUNCH OF NEW AND IMPROVED PBF

Since 2016, the PBF has undergone extensive renovations to expand and improve its state-of-the-art capabilities including the ability to manufacture vaccines to meet a DOD-wide need. During the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, the PBF has worked to complete its post-overhaul regulatory certification and rapidly pivoted to work with researchers and contract manufacturing organizations to produce WRAIR's coronavirus vaccine candidates in support of clinical trials beginning in 2021; additionally, it manufactured WRAIR-developed cocktails bacteriophages, or viruses that inactivate specific strains of bacteria, for emergency use in patients with infections not responding to antibiotics.

Funded by: Military Infectious Disease Research Program, **Defense Health Programs**

> Founded in 1953, WRAIR's Pilot Bioproduction Facility has manufactured vaccines against hepatitis A, meningitis, dengue fever, malaria, adenovirus, Japanese encephalitis, shigellosis and, most recently Zika. Many of these experimental vaccines have progressed to advanced clinical testing and licensure









WRAIR has partnered with the Biotechnology High Performance Computing Software Applications Institute (BHSAI) and the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Development Activity (USAMMDA) to develop the currently used internal version of 2B-Alert into a forward facing mobile application for wider use by military operational units.

2B-ALERT APPLICATION LICENSED TO AN **INTERNATIONAL FATIGUE** MANAGEMENT COMPANY Supported by: MOMRP

The 2B-Alert mobile application is a technology that facilitates fatigue management in operational environments using established sleep/wake patterns to predict caffeine effectiveness, tactical nap effectiveness and performance.







The application is the result of a multi-year collaborative effort between scientists at BHSAI and WRAIR. Because it provides individualized predictions and guidance for optimal caffeine dosing during any activity involving sleep loss or biological clock disruption (eg. nighttime operations), it can be used by units as a mission planning tool. Currently, 2B-Alert is available as a web-tool. Future fielding of the application to Soldiers will provide an individualized tool that monitors a Soldier's current level of alertness. predicts future alertness and provides guidance (to both the individual Soldier and leadership) on optimal timing and dosing of fatigue countermeasures to enhance Warfighter alertness, readiness and lethality during continuous and sustained operations when there is little or no opportunity to sleep. Funded by: Military Operational Medicine Research Program



Tactical Operations Centers (TOCs) serve as main hubs for command and control operations at theater level.

2B-Alert's performance prediction and fatigue management capabilities may help commanders and their staff plan, monitor and direct the tactical operations of assigned forces in military operations.



When on mission, Soldiers are expected to be ready and lethal at all times. This requires them to perform at their highest level and under the less than ideal conditions of the harsh operational environment.

Use of 2B-Alert will serve as a tool that provides individualized recommendations for fatigue management to Soldiers and leaders to enhance performance during the times where it is most critical.







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WRAIR brain health researchers helped to develop and implement an evaluation of the Behavioral Health Readiness and Suicide Risk Reduction Review (R4) tool, a means of enhancing Army leader engagement and decision-making, decreasing suicidal behavior and improving behavioral health readiness.





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As part of the Secretary of the Army-directed pilot investigation of the R4 tool, researchers conducted one of the largest in-field data collections and trainings conducted by WRAIR. Thousands of leaders were trained in the use of the R4 and over 40,000 Soldier surveys were collected, documenting use of the R4 tool, behavioral health and other outcomes. The R4 study is the first to deploy a rrigorous, empiric design to evaluate Army leadership's practical methods for identifying and caring for the health and welfare of Soldiers at risk for suicide; the results from this study will determine whether the R4 tool should be tested or deployed throughout the Army.

Funded by: Military Operational Medicine Research Program, Office of the Deputy Undersecretary of the Army

Commander & 15G's Behavioral Health Readiness and Suicide Risk Reduction Review (R4) any applicable section criteria before advancing to the next section; if none checked, select Standard Concern. er have a behavioral health (BH) profile or known condition with any high risk factors? Check all that apply:				
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During high operational tempo missions in far-forward environments, Soldiers are often unable to get the recommended 7-9 hours of sleep. To overcome this, WRAIR has developed a range of operationally-relevant resources to help Soldiers get better sleep when they can and manage the impacts of sleep loss when they cannot, including portable field cards (see below) for use in deployed settings or field training exercises. WRAIR provided direct support to the 7th Infantry Division, dramatically increasing awareness of and access to fatigue management strategies amongst leaders and the unit at-large; the 75th Ranger Regiment, providing guidance for nocturnal operations as well as individual and unit sleep reports and the Uniformed Services University, delivering shiftwork guidance for medical providers and leaders.



WARFIGHTER FATIGUE MANAGEMENT **STRATEGIES MAINTAIN** UNIT READINESS Supported by: WRAIR, USAMRD-W

Sleep is ammunition for your brain and is critical for Soldier performance, cognitive dominance, immune function and other components that will be critical in future Multi-Domain Operations



Fatique management resources are available here: https://www.wrair.army.mil/node/349

Funded by: Military Operational Medicine Research Program











Shaping the Future of Science



WRAIR virtually hosted 679 middle and high school students for one-week summer programs and partnered with area schools in 2020 to engage 450 students in STEM programs. WRAIR laboratories also supported research fellowships for 27 highschool and college students as well as 117 post-baccalaureate post-doctoral scientists. Overseas, the U.S. Army Medical Research Directorate-Georgia (USAMRD-G) hosted two undergraduate interns from local universities. USAMRD-G and the U.S. Army Medical Directorate-Armed Forces Research Institute of Medical Sciences (AFRIMS) both conducted outreach programs area local high schools as well. These programs develop the next generation of researchers and improve relationships with surrounding communities.

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EDUCATIONAL AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS Supported by: WRAIR, AFRIMS, USAMRD-G

WRAIR is proud to support the U.S. Army's mission to develop a more scientifically and technologically literate citizenry with a range of science education and professional development programs to fill the growing need for scientists, engineers and mathematicians.





WRAIR'S 2020 PUBLICATIONS



*6-7 are tied