

Navy Surgeon General Addresses Military Health System Conference

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NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. (NNS) -- The Navy Surgeon General addressed mission readiness and the importance of total force management at the Annual Military Health System (MHS) Conference held at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center Jan. 24-27.

The overall theme of this year's conference is "The MHS Quadruple Aim: Working Together, Achieving Success." The Quadruple Aim is the military health care concept that focuses on the encouragement of healthy behaviors, beneficiary satisfaction, maximizing force readiness and the successful management of per capita health costs.

The annual conference allows all the stakeholders in the U.S. military health system, including the representatives from all branches of service, TRICARE Management Activity, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to come together and share lessons learned and best practices throughout the military medicine field.

Vice Adm. Adam M. Robinson, Jr., emphasized the need for proper training and education and highlighted Navy Medicine programs that he believes can be effectively replicated within the MHS.

"It's about the ability to train and educate a fully ready force in order to deliver health care, anytime, anywhere," said Robinson. "Whether we're providing care to beneficiaries at home, developing new life-saving vaccines in medical research and development, or providing the best in casualty care, we must meet our missions—from the battlefield to the bedside."

Robinson discussed the benefits of the Joint Medical Education and Training Center (METC) in San Antonio, Texas, the first ever fully integrated, tri-service education and training school to prepare our Sailors, Soldiers, and Airmen, making it the largest consolidation of service training in defense history.

"We need to standardize our training and education across the Navy Medicine Enterprise, across the services, and across the MHS," said Robinson. "This will eliminate gaps and overlaps, increase efficiencies through resource sharing, and integrate learning strategies. METC will help us achieve this."

Robinson further stressed transparent and calculated management of resources and the importance of developing a diverse workforce.

"We must know how best to allocate our limited resources and the diversity of our talent across the Enterprise," said Robinson. "We must continue to build inclusive thinking into our culture, to work towards institutionalizing formal mentoring and open up key and nominative billets that offer more opportunities for promotion of diversity candidates."

Robinson said it is everyone's responsibility to be good stewards of the taxpayer dollars and said initiatives like the Navy's new Medical Home Port initiative are ways to do so. Robinson said Medical Home Port represents a paradigm shift in how the Navy Medicine Enterprise will provide care to and communicate with our beneficiaries.

Medical Home Port is a model of care that emphasizes a team-based, coordinated, and proactive approach. Each patient will be assigned to a Medical Home Port team, led by one's provider. The patient is a part of that team that also includes a nurse educator, a care coordinator, and other support staff. The new model better utilizes the health care team, as well as integrated ancillary care, such as behavioral health, case management, and pharmacy. Providers have greater ability to diagnose and treat patients by leveraging support staff to manage other aspects of clinic operations and patient care. Patients will have more access to directly engage in their own care and by focusing on prevention, wellness, and disease management, Medical Home Port will drive down costs over time.

"Medical Home Port is a philosophical construct that will force us to change the way we think," said Robinson. "In the coming years, full implementation of Medical Home Port worldwide will reduce overall costs in the long term and also improve population health, patient satisfaction, and readiness across the board."

Robinson concluded his remarks by affirming his commitment to Navy Medicine personnel and the MHS core mission.

"Our people are our number one asset and we must take care of them. We must know them, we need to counsel them, we need to affirm them, we need to understand them because without them, we cannot complete our mission," said Robinson. "When they know that we are committed to them, they will be committed to the mission and in turn those who serve our nation along with their families will always be able to count on the entire MHS to provide quality and compassionate patient and family-centered health care."

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