Increasing Access to Care in Rheinland-Pfalz

LANDSTUHL REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER, Germany – Whether you’re a new arrival to USAG Rheinland-Pfalz or a longtime resident, there are new access to care initiatives and existing quality services at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center you should know about, to include:

Enhanced Access Clinic - The Enhanced Access Clinic opened in March to better serve our TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Plus beneficiaries unable to be seen on any given duty day by their Primary Care Manager. This additional primary care capacity provides significant access to our Space-Available patients in the greater KMC area for care that includes routine wellness exams, health promotion, disease prevention, health maintenance, counseling, diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic illnesses, and referrals for access to specialty consultation.

The Enhanced Access Clinic offers primary care to Space-A patients in the following Medical Service Account/Pay Patient categories: Air Force, Army and Navy civilians; DODDS employees; NAF employees; U.S. contract employees; authorized foreign military members/civilians; and command sponsored family members of any of the above. For more information, call DSN 590-5202/Commercial 06371-9464-5202 or visited the Enhanced Access Clinic website at http://rhce.amedd.army.mil/landstuhl/services.cfm?MTFinfo_id=902

Specialty Care Services - Did you know that high quality specialty care services are available at LRMC on a Space-Available basis? Many specialty services are open to retirees, DOD civilians, contractors, DODDS teachers and their family members, as well as active duty servicemembers and their families. Beginning last March, LRMC began offering a monthly availability report on its public website at http://rhce.amedd.army.mil/landstuhl/services.cfm?MTFinfo_id=895 where you can go to for updates on what specific specialty care services are available. For more information, please contact the Managed Care
Office at the TRICARE Service Center (Bldg 3744) at DSN 590-6443/Commercial 06371-9464-6443 or visit in person at Bldg. 3744 near the AAFES Gas Station on Mondays through Thursdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

LRMC has made great strides to make your specialty care appointment happen as fast as possible. As of January, LRMC has reduced the time it takes to be contacted for a specialty appointment to only 72 hours after your Primary Care Manager refers you to see a specialist. Please take advantage of these appointments available to you and make LRMC your first choice for specialty care!

**Robot Assisted Surgery** – Beginning last October, LRMC began using the da Vinci Surgical System, a robotic system controlled by surgeons to perform minimally invasive surgeries. It can be used by multiple disciplines for operations on the digestive tract, kidneys, bladder and reproductive organs.

This minimally invasive and precise surgical procedure can speed up recovery time thanks in part to smaller, precise movements inside the patient’s body that can help reduce blood loss from up to one liter to one tenth that amount for procedures such as prostate surgery.

One of the first patients to receive their surgery with da Vinci at LRMC was sent home the same day and was well on her way to recovery within days of her gallbladder surgery. “(The day after the surgery) I was up and moving around all on my own, in very little pain,” the patient said. “I wouldn't even really call it pain; it feels more like I had a very intensive ab workout.”

**Physical Medicine & Rehabilitative Services** - Physical Medicine & Rehabilitative (PM&R) Services treats patients for a variety of muscle, tendon, joint and nerve disorders using a patient-centered focus on improving your quality of life. PM&R is staffed with specialists with a broad spectrum of training, including pain management, orthopedics, neurology, rheumatology, physical therapy, and occupational therapy, and provide state-of-the-art diagnostic and treatment methods to not only reduce pain but also to increase function. In addition, PM&R also offers chiropractic services for active duty Service Members from all branches of the military. PM&R is also leading the way by developing Pediatric Concussion Guidelines for Regional Health Command Europe, which for the first time will provide comprehensive evaluation and triage guidelines for children with minor head trauma. Please see your Primary Care Provider for a consult to our clinic.
**TBI & Rehabilitation Program** – Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) has been referred to as the signature wound for injuries sustained in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, Traumatic Brain Injuries, more commonly known as a concussion, account for approximately 2.4 million trips to the Emergency Room each year for injuries sustained from routine activities around the house, spills on the playground or falls while biking or skating. The TBI Clinic offers evaluation, assessment, treatment and follow-up services for Servicemembers, beneficiaries and retirees who have sustained a TBI and have ongoing symptoms. Treating more than 1,300 appointments per month, the TBI Clinic helps patients address sleep difficulties, chronic pain, mood disorders and cognitive issues. You can contact the TBI Clinic at DSN 590-5601/Commercial 06371-9464-5601.

**Anesthesia Interventional Pain Management Clinic Offered to Everyone:** Pain is a complicated, often debilitating medical problem that can have a major impact on your physical and mental well-being. The Anesthesia Interventional Pain Management Clinic, also known as the Pain Clinic, offers a comprehensive range of services for patients suffering from chronic pain. Our team of pain medicine specialists provides advanced treatment options for various chronic pain syndromes in a supportive, compassionate environment. They have successfully helped patients return to independence and comfort, and have restored their quality of life. The clinic offers innovative techniques such as nerve blocks; Battlefield Acupuncture, which consists of small studs placed on the earlobe and around the ear; as well as traditional acupuncture. The clinic is also leading the way in research with the Stellate Ganglion Block for PTSD Study that began this month. LRMC is teaming with other Army medical centers a research study to evaluate the effect of treating PTSD by injecting a local anesthetic into a group of nerve cells and nerves in the neck. For more information, call DSN 590-7522/Commercial 06371-9464-7522.

**TeleHealth** – Wouldn’t it be great if you could just Skype with a LRMC specialist instead of making a four-hour drive from places such as Vilseck? LRMC is helping to make that happen with TeleHealth. TeleHealth is paving the way for the future of military medicine in Europe by bridging geographical distances between patients and specialty care providers, increasing patient access to care, and supporting mission readiness. This innovative approach to military medicine allows more than 30 specialty care providers at LRMC to cross commands, countries, and continents to provide high-quality, patient-centered care to beneficiaries residing in or deployed to Europe by using video-teleconferencing technology and advanced medical devices that allow LRMC providers to listen in real-time to patient heart and lung sounds. Those unneeded four-hour trips have added up. To date, LRMC TeleHealth has saved more than 2,300 work and school days, 1.5 million dollars in travel costs, and more than 900,000 kilometers. In recognition for its accomplishments, LRMC TeleHealth
received the Wolf Pack Award in March from U.S. Army Medical Command, which “recognizes and celebrates successes of teams throughout Army Medicine, and highlights teamwork that drives excellence.” Specifically, LRMC TeleHealth was lauded for accomplishing 2,658 TeleHealth visits in a 12-month period, marking a 160 percent increase from the previous year.

**Combining Forces:** The Pain Clinic, TBI Clinic, TeleHealth, Physical Medicine and Neurology have combined forces to offer more comprehensive care. Doctors from Physical Medicine and the Pain Clinic travel each month from LRMC to the Vicenza Army Health Clinic to provide direct care, and follow up with their patients via Virtual Health. Physical Medicine provides the same service at the Vilseck Army Health Clinic. In addition, Physical Medicine, TBI and Neurology now work in unison to form the Department of Neurorehabilitation for more effective treatment for medical conditions with overlapping problems.

**Evolution Program:** The Evolution Intensive Outpatient Treatment Program for Post-Traumatic Stress at LRMC is the only one of its kind in the European theater. Evolution is an evidence-based, eight-week therapeutic program designed to help Service Members from all branches deal with the lasting effects of traumatic events. Evolution can be contacted at DSN 590-6302/Commercial 06371-9464-6303 or 24/7 at usarmy.lrmc.evolution@mail.mil

**Patient Transfer Center:** Whether you are in Paris or Pirmasens, the LRMC Patient Transfer Center can assist 24/7 with inpatients transfers to LRMC, determining whether LRMC has capabilities and capacity to accept the patient, and facilitating communication between LRMC providers and Host Nation medical facilities. When you call for help, your primary POC will be a bilingual Nurse Case Manager who will gather clinical info, coordinate air/ground evacuation and communicate with necessary LRMC personnel. For more information, contact the Patient Transfer Center for more information at DSN 590-5075/Commercial 06371-9464-5075.

**New Patient Survey:** LRMC outpatients began seeing a new satisfaction survey sent to them this summer, but the new survey’s impact remains the same – changes and improvements happen as a direct result from patient feedback. The Joint Outpatient Experience Survey (JOES) replaced the Army Provider Level Satisfaction Survey (APLSS) used by the Army, as well as outpatient surveys used by the Air Force and Navy. In areas such as the Kaiserslautern Military Community where a patient can be seen by an Air Force and/or Army provider for the same medical condition, JOES will provide a standardized customer service questionnaire regardless of the branch of service where the care was provided.
Patient satisfaction surveys lead to noticeable improvements for patients. Through feedback provided from patient satisfaction surveys, LRMC was able to establish Wi-Fi in patient waiting rooms at the Emergency Department and Pharmacy, purchase new equipment for accelerated scheduling of mammograms and MRIs, and enhance the dining experience through a la carte menus for inpatients.