

*Rounds*   
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

SEPTEMBER 2020

# Back to school: the same only different

Going back to school means learning new things ... learning more things ... learning different things. This year, back-to-school screenings at Eisenhower Army Medical Center also means new ways of doing things ... maybe better, maybe different. It's certainly a time to review and improve. (Photo by Scott Speaks)

# Load more fruits, veggies, whole grains in today's diet

**Capt. Jennifer West, MS, RD, LD**  
Nutrition Care Division  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

Eating the recommended amounts of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains provides long-term health benefits. These foods can help manage weight, improve heart health, assist with blood sugar control, and improve gut function. Additionally, a diet rich in these foods can protect against the risk of some types of cancers and other chronic diseases. Fruits, vegetables, and whole grains contain a variety of vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other health-promoting factors that are essential for good health.

The recommended amounts for adults are roughly two servings of fruit, three servings of veggies, and six servings of grains (make sure one half are whole grains) per day. More simply, aim for filling half your plate with fruits and veggies, and just a quarter of your plate with grains.

## Get more into your diet

**Breakfast:** Add veggies to egg dishes, fruit to cereals/yogurts, or opt for old-fashioned or steel-cut oats instead of “instant” sugary versions.

**Lunch:** Add extra veggies such as lettuce and tomato to a sandwich or wrap; ask for whole wheat breads or wraps; have a small piece of fruit instead of a “treat” at lunch.

**Dinner:** Try veggie-noodles (also called “zoodles,” made from zucchini, butternut squash, or spaghetti squash) instead of traditional pasta; try swapping riced-cauliflower for rice for a veggie boost. Add veggies to casseroles like lasagna; shop for whole-grain pasta and bread; try whole grains like brown rice, quinoa, or bulgur instead of white rice.

**Snacks:** Swap popcorn for potato chips (avoid/limit butter and salt); try fresh veggies with hummus or other dips; pair a piece of fruit with almond or peanut

butter; try unflavored corn tortilla chips with fresh salsa for a whole grain option and some fresh veggies.

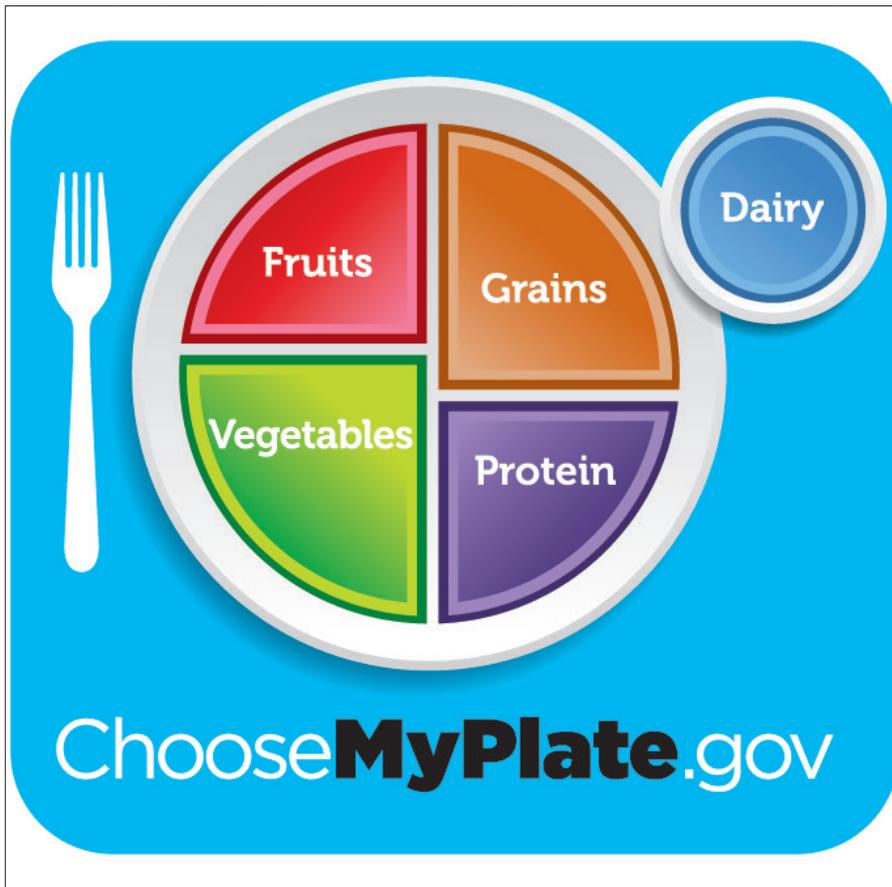
## Cooking/prep tips

If you “don't like vegetables,” commit to trying them in a new way: grilling, sautéing, broiling, roasting, steaming, add them to noodles with a low-calorie sauce, or try them raw with a low-calorie dip or dressing. The flavors of vegetables change with different cooking techniques. Don't leave seasoning just to your proteins either. Add herbs and spices to your veggies before cooking them.

## Shopping tips

Grocery stores and commissaries usually display the freshest foods along the perimeter of the store. Buying fresh vegetables and fruit in-season is typically less expensive and more nutritious. It's OK to purchase frozen items, too, especially if you are concerned about fresh produce going to waste. Using frozen produce can be a great time-saver as most items are ready to cook and eat. Choosing 100 percent whole grain baked products such as breads, muffins, tortillas and cereals is a good way to incorporate whole grains into your diet. Most Americans eat more than enough protein, and animal proteins are usually the most expensive item in the grocery basket. Try a vegetarian meal once or twice a week to reduce your overall meal cost and get extra servings of veggies throughout the week.

see **NUTRITION** on page 15



File photo

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*Rounds* ★★★★★  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

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Editorial content is under the direction of and serves the mission of the EAMC commanding officer. Email: usarmy.gordon.medcom-eamc.mbx.pao@mail.mil.



# Every member of EAMC's staff adds value to each other

**Col. Carlene A.S Blanding**  
Commander

Eisenhower Army Medical Center

September is Suicide Prevention month: a month where we pause and engage in critical dialogue about mental and emotional health. At no other time in our collective memories is this discussion more critical and more needed than now.

The last six months has stretched us physically, emotionally and mentally. In the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have had to alter how we work, how we parent, how we socialize and how we school our children. Coupled with the pandemic, we watch our nation embroiled in civil unrest reminiscent of the 1960s. So how has this impacted our country, our families and our lives? And how have we dealt with the increase stress, anxiety and fear of these culminating events?

Suicide is not the answer.

We have many great resources available to assist in managing our stress, fears and anxiety. Our Behavioral Health Department staffed with experience clinicians who are the best in their field. Our chaplains are compassionate, caring professionals. Our Wellness Center provides a host of great services and if we so choose, family, friends and colleagues at work and at home. Every



Photo by David M. White

**Eisenhower Army Medical Center Commander Col. Carlene Blanding, left, speaks with a member of the maintenance staff during Staff Appreciation Day, July 31. Every member of EAMC's leadership team knows the importance to the hospital's overall mission of each and every person who serves EAMC's service members and beneficiaries.**

soldier and civilian assigned or attached to Eisenhower Army Medical Center is a valued and exceptional member of the team and we do not want to lose any member of this team to preventable causes. We each need to seek help early and often to assist in strengthening our physical, mental and emotional health. We need you.

Team, collectively we have done an exceptional job of maintaining the standard when it comes to the health and safety

of each other and our patients. We continue to strictly adhere to and enforce the masking, hand hygiene and social distancing policies. We here at EAMC continue to focus on restoring pre-COVID services to get back to our core mission of "Providing 5-Star health care." Restoring services requires all Eisenhower teammates to return to work.

see **COMMANDER** on page 15

# Thoughts from the command sergeant major

**Command Sgt. Maj. William Allen**  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

After a little more a year of work, Spc. Lynn Hardy, left, and Spc. Savannah Vela, finished the mural on the third floor, outside of the surgical suites.

One of our staff, Dave Davis, presented the idea, and [then-Commander] Col. David Ristedt and I endorsed it. Vela competed for the honor to draw and paint it, and she quickly recruited Hardy to help. They were assisted by the original artist, May Boudreaux's, wife of Maj. Daniel Boudreaux. Even I jumped in and tried to do some of the touching up. If you saw this painting at first, you were likely filled with some apprehension.

In its infancy, it was not what we expect

see **IKE 7** on page 15



Photo by Command Sgt. Maj. William Allen

**Spc. Lynn Hardy, left, interim executive assistant to the Command Sergeant Major and Soldier of the Year 2019, and Spc. Savannah Vela, executive assistant to the Command Sergeant Major, pose Aug. 3 with their completed mural outside of Eisenhower Army Medical Center's surgical area on the third floor.**

# EAMC welcomes new deputy commander for nursing

## Staff Reports

Eisenhower Army Medical Center welcomes Col. Ronald S. Gesaman as the new deputy commander for Nursing. Gesaman succeeds Col. Andrew Powell and congratulations him on his retirement.

A native of Salem, Ohio, Col. Ronald Gesaman is a master's-prepared and Nationally certified Nurse Executive with a diverse Army career.

He graduated from George Mason University, Fairfax, Va., with a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1996, via the Army Enlisted Commissioning Program. In 2010, he obtained his Master of Health Administration from Baylor University Graduate School of Health Care and Business Administration, and a member of the Upsilon Phi Delta-Health Care Administration National Academic Honor Society.

Gesaman is a graduate of the U.S. Army Basic Combat Training, Combat Medic AIT, PLDC, Practical Nurse Course Phase I, Practical Nurse Course Phase II, BNCOC, AMEDD Wardmaster Course, Officer Basic Course, Medical Management of Biological Casualties, Trauma Nurse Care Course, AMEDD Critical Care Nurse Course, AMEDD Officer Advanced Course, DEPMEDS NET Training, Field Management of Chemical and Biological Casualties Course, U.S. Army Nurse Corps-Advanced Nurse Leadership Course, and the U.S. Army Medical Department-Executive Skills Course.

He entered the Army in 1986 and held numerous assignments as a combat medic and Army Nurse Corps officer including Staff LPN and Wardmaster of Same Day Surgery USA MEDDAC, Fort Meade, Md.; Charge Nurse USA MEDDAC, Fort Irwin, Calif.; Charge Nurse SICU EAMC, Fort Gordon, Ga.; Chief Nurse 135th FST ROK, Head Nurse ICU 121st General Hospital ROK, Assistant Chief Nurse/OIC Clinical Operations 249th General Hospital, Fort Gordon, Ga.; Assistant S-3-Battle CPT Medical Task Force Strength OEF VI



Photo by Scott Speaks

**Eisenhower Army Medical Center welcomes Col. Ronald S. Gesaman as the new deputy commander for Nursing, Eisenhower Army Medical Center who arrived in mid-August.**

Afghanistan, Head Nurse Specialty Care Ward and Chief Nursing Education USA MEDDAC, Fort Belvoir, Va.; (2007) Acting Assistant Deputy Commander for Nursing, USA MEDDAC, Fort Belvoir,

see **GESAMAN** on page 10

## Animal research and the health sciences library

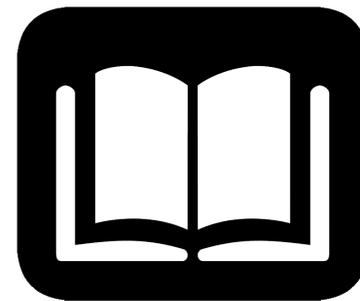
**Mary E. Gaudette**  
Librarian  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

As one of its services, the library assists Eisenhower Army Medical Center staff in locating information that applies to their research and teaching needs. Among those so helped are the researchers and instructors who use the animals housed at the Department of Clinical Information. Also helped are the members of the EAMC's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, a federally mandated committee that has oversight of any EAMC investigative or instructional procedures involving animals, as well as compliance with their keep.

The library's animal-research assistance is two-part. The first part is a literature survey that helps researchers and instructors decide whether animals are actually the necessary and/or preferred models for their proposed

research projects or teaching protocols, or are there other models they can use to accomplish their goals in a non-invasive manner. Once the use or nonuse of animals is determined, then the library can assist with part two — helping the researchers locate literature references that enable them to establish the importance and validity of their work and to ensure that their study designs adhere to the scientific method.

Additionally, located on the Library's IKeNet page is a section titled "Resources for Animal Research." It lists websites created to assist researchers in locating information pertinent to using animals both for experimental and teaching purposes, including those websites devoted to helping researchers make sure that they comply with the requisite 3Rs for determining the use of animals: Replacement, Refinement and Reduction. Broadly, "Replacement" refers



to alternatives to animal use, "Refinement" refers to minimizing pain and stress, and "Reduction" refers to using as few animals as possible per study or teaching event.

For assistance with an animal-use literature search, contact the librarian at 787-4446 or email [mary.e.gaudette.civ@mail.mil](mailto:mary.e.gaudette.civ@mail.mil). To learn about the scope of the IACUC's responsibilities, go to <https://olaw.nih.gov/resources/tutorial/iacuc.htm>.

# Reducing suicide during a pandemic

**Spc. Hyunwoong Choi**  
Behavioral Health Technician  
Department of Behavioral Health  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

COVID-19 has changed our daily lives in many ways. It has effected how we socialize with friends, the nature of our jobs and our finances. Many families are experiencing challenges with juggling childcare and work from home. Meanwhile, those living alone may be struggling with the isolation and lack of in-person human interaction. All of the “new norms” to include social distancing to stay-at-home orders may feel overwhelming.

According to the recent study, it was predicted that the ‘Corona Blue’ phenomenon, which means depression or lethargy caused by major changes in daily life due to the spread of COVID-19, will dominate our society for a considerable period of time even if COVID-19 ends. As a result, there are concerns that the suicide rate will increase rapidly.

Therefore, in the situation of a pandemic, a psychological defense is essential.

## Stay psychologically healthy

By adhering to social distancing policies, you can help save lives in your community. However, being physically separated from

others may lead to a feeling of loneliness. For some, this alone time is also accompanied by feelings of anxiety, loss of appetite, decreased energy levels and hopelessness. It’s important to remember that social distancing doesn’t have to mean social isolation and losing your sense of hope.

Below are some tips to help you maintain psychological health and wellness during a pandemic.

**Maintain your routine:** Continue to wake up and go to bed at your regular time. If you’re working from home or learning from home, changing into “work clothes” or “school clothes” can help individuals stay focused and motivated.

**Set schedules and boundaries:** If you’re at home with family or roommates, designate individual spaces for completing daily work or schooling. Also, setting aside alone time and sharing schedules with others in the house can help prevent disruptions and conflict.

**Eat smart:** Focus on trying to eat healthy and limit caffeine and alcohol consumption. Good nutrition can boost your mood and help manage stress.

**Plan fun activities:** Binge watching your favorite series could get old fast, so get creative! Some ideas include planning a virtual board game night with friends or hosting a virtual dinner party. Kids can have virtual

sleepovers with friends.

**Connect virtually:** At least once a day, try connecting with a friend, coworker, or family member. Text, call, video chat or use social media to stay in touch while separated physically. Having strong social ties can help combat loneliness and supports your psychological health.

## Warning signs on social media

As you are connecting virtually with others, it is also the time to look out for any warning signs that your friends may be struggling. Signs of emotional crisis or thoughts of suicide are not always obvious on social media. A co-worker, friend or loved one may share that they’re going through a challenging time and may mention feeling hopeless or ending their lives.

If someone you know makes comments about suicide or expresses emotional pain online, always take them seriously. Whether it’s a single post or multiple, do not ignore them. They may mention or post images that relate to the following:

- Overusing substances in response to emotional or physical pain
- Feeling alone or isolated
- Feeling guilt, shame, anger or rage
- Feeling like a burden to coworkers or loved ones

see **PREVENTION** on page 15

## You are not alone

**Alice Jackson, MSN, RN**  
Army Public Health Nurse  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

One person has the power to teach resilience, recognize warning signs, intervene, chat, or make a call; it only takes one person or one act to save another person’s life.

On July 16, 2020, the Federal Communications Commission adopted rules to establish 988 as the new, nationwide, 3-digit phone number for Americans in crisis to connect with suicide prevention and mental health crisis counselors. 988 will be available beginning on July 16, 2022.

According to Ajit Pai, FCC Chairman, “During the pandemic, many Americans, have been binge watching television shows while staying at home. We are facing a

suicide crisis in America. Since 1999, the number of suicides in America has gone up 35 percent. For young people, the suicide rate is rising even faster, up 56 percent over a decade. We are losing an American to suicide every 11 minutes. With these increases, we now have the highest suicide rates in the United States since World War II.”

Maintaining mental wellness during these traumatic times with the pandemic has become a priority, not only in the US, but around the world also.

“There is a tendency for some people to think they are isolated in their challenges, but people around the world have mental health commonalities,” said therapist, Dr. Mawiyah Kambon.

Mental stress is a part of life. Even our former first lady Michelle Obama admitted to experiencing “low grade depression.” The stresses of today, the trauma we’re enduring

from injustice, the pandemic, and uncertainty can feel like the weight of the world is on your shoulders. Luckily, we all have tools at our disposal to combat the blues.

Establish a routine. An idle mind is fertile ground for depression. During these difficult times, it’s important to establish a routine. Upon rising, clean your space. Make your bed. Do some light stretching and read your affirmations. Feed yourself some good, nutritious food. Make your to-do list for the day. That’s just a sample of a morning routine. Make it your own.

Do not reflect on past defeats, mistakes, rejections, and to experience anxiety and despair. With a little awareness, we can recognize and combat depression and being suicidal.

Many factors contribute to depression and suicide, such as increasingly hectic  
see **DEPRESSION** on page 11

# Government ethics: Political activity, public demonstrations

**Heather K. Cross, Esq., attorney advisor**  
Administrative Law  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

The Under Secretary of the Army recently mandated training on political activity and public demonstrations for all employees. For some at Eisenhower Army Medical Center, this training was a refresher. For others, some of the ideas may have taken you by surprise.

The topic of ethics and political activity is commonly broached as campaign season bears down upon us quickly. But in this election year, a large number of issue-based demonstrations occurring across the country raise ethical issues that the training addresses.

In the training it is mentioned that active duty and civilians face real penalties for violation of the rules. For example, two federal employees were recently suspended for violating the Hatch Act. The first, a postal worker, told a customer it cost more to mail a ballot if they were from the opposite political party. That employee was suspended for 10 days without pay. The second, an FAA employee, posted several items over many months on Facebook in support of his favored candidate while on duty from a government computer. He was suspended for 30 days without pay.

But suspension is not the most serious penalty — potential consequences include removal, reduction in grade, debarment for up to five years, reprimands and civil fines.

Please be mindful of the long-standing norm that Army employees remain apolitical. To that end, here are the nine, main take-aways from the most-recent training:

Political activity is any activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, partisan political group, or candidate for partisan political office.

Participation in issue-based events and discussions (for example, immigration or Black Lives Matter) are not prohibited under the Hatch Act or Department of Defense Directive 1344.10. However, other regulations and policies may limit certain actions. For example, a 2020 MEDCOM information paper holds that face masks should not have messages that could cause

disruption in the workplace — and that commands may limit masks to not include wording, slogans, or pictures.

The Hatch Act applies to civilians.

It was initially passed in 1939, and significantly amended in 1993.

The current version allows most government civilians to engage in certain types of political activities while in their personal capacities.

Soldiers are not covered by the Hatch Act. Their political activities are governed by Department of Defense Directive 1344.10, Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces on Active Duty. Army Regulation 600-20 also provides some restrictions.

For soldiers, activities not expressly prohibited may still be contrary to the spirit and intent of the DOD Directive. Activity that violates the spirit and intent may still be punishable, even if the directive does not explicitly prohibit it.

Although most civilian employees may take part in political activities, the extent and nature of that participation may be limited. For instance, participation should not occur during duty hours, while in a government building, or using government resources.

Public demonstrations, vigils, or the like, are not considered political activity unless organized or conducted in support of a partisan group or political party.

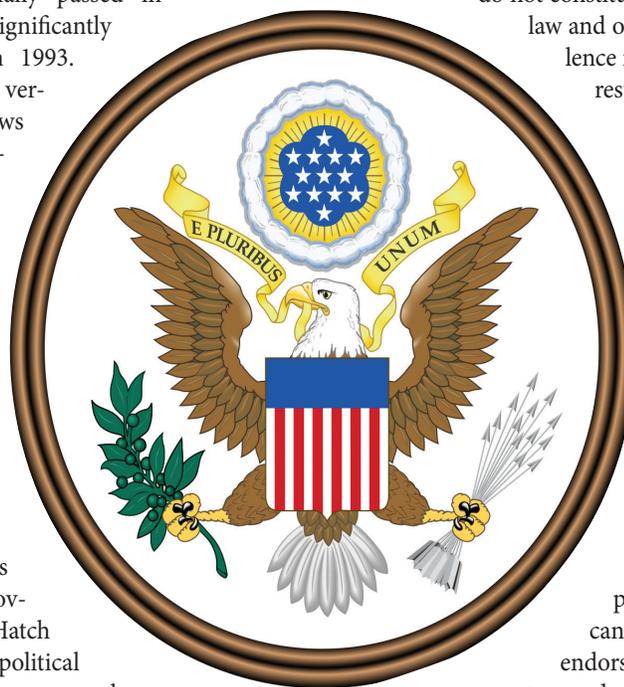
Soldiers have a first amendment right to participate in public demonstrations, but commanders may weigh that right against

unit effectiveness. Soldiers may participate in off-post, non-political issue demonstrations if they are off duty, not in uniform, and not in a foreign country; the activities do not constitute a breach of law and order; and violence is not likely to result.

Civilians may participate in public demonstrations, but only during their off-duty time or while on leave. Their participation cannot officially endorse or appear to endorse non-federal entities or groups, and

should make clear they are expressing their personal opinions, not that of their official position.

These are just some of the rules, and you are encouraged to reach out if you have questions or find yourself in a situation where you are unsure. Your ethics counselors and here to help — and welcome any questions you may have.



# 'A miss is as good as a mile' ... maybe better

Vincent L. Wilson

Chief, Safety and Occupational Health Manager  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

Patient Safety is a public health concern throughout the world. According to the World Health Organization there is a one in a million chance of being harmed while traveling by plane, compared to a 1 in 300 chance of being harmed while receiving care in a health care facility. The latest data indicates that being harmed while receiving health care is the 14th cause of morbidity and mortality, according to WHO, 2019.

From a global perspective, 1 in every 10 patients is harmed

while receiving health care in a hospital, and 4 out of 10 patients are harmed in primary and outpatient health care settings, according to WHO/Fierce Health Care, 2019.

There are a variety of incidents or adverse events that can cause harm, approximately 80 percent of these incidents are determined to be preventable, according to WHO, 2019.

According to, Slawomirski, A. etal (2018), "The most detrimental errors in health care are related to diagnosis, prescribing, and medication use."

Herbert Heinrich was a pioneer in industrial safety and theories. His pyramid-styled triangle illustrating the "The Near Miss Connection" can be applied to patient safety as well. Incorporating this model in patient safety illustrates that many serious safety or catastrophic events are preceded by at least 300 near misses, followed by a minor injury, then a severe injury.

In Heinrich's pyramid style model there were at least 300 warning signs or near miss incidents. Consistently identifying and reporting near miss incidents may render improvements in patient safety as well as promote a culture of safety. A near miss is an event in which no personal injury was sustained due to a proactive intervention or process improvement such as implementing a safeguard to avoid injury.

Imagine if safeguards were implemented as a result of proactive actions or lessons learned from a "good catch" or near miss reporting. The return on investment for near miss reporting and good catches would most likely yield a significant decrease in patient harm, lower healthcare costs, better quality of health care, better outcomes and improved readiness. Other benefits for reporting near misses and good catches includes the following:

- Obtaining data and analyzing trends needed to construct a foundation for performance improvement.
- Provides all team members with an opportunity to participate in promoting a culture of safety. For these reasons mentioned above, near-miss reporting is one of the best tools we could have in our toolkits to prevent patient harm.

Eisenhower Army Medical Center leadership seeks to recognize employees for exercising their keen sense of patient safety by awarding the title of "Patient Safety Employee of the Month." The criteria for patient safety employee of the month are as follows (one or more):

- Demonstrate a consistent commitment to patient safety
- Help foster a culture of safe, reliable patient care
- Create a solution to a potential or actual patient safety issue that is original or innovative.
- Created solutions that have an impact on the overall operations of the organization.

## Eisenhower Army Medical Center leadership seeks to recognize employees for exercising their keen sense of patient safety

### August

### Patient Safety Employee of the Month



Photo by Scott Speaks

Col. Carlene A.S Blanding, left, Eisenhower Army Medical Center commander, recognizes Kimberly Plooster, RN from the ICU, in the fourth floor lobby, June 31, as the EAMC Patient Safety Employee of the Month for August.

#### Patient Safety Division

Kimberly Plooster, RN in Eisenhower Army Medical Center's ICU, has prioritized accountability and maintenance of the ICU's medical equipment. She understands the importance of mission ready equipment, especially in a critical care setting. A native of Herrin, Ill., she has taken initiative for thorough inspection of equipment and reports deficiencies that require clinical engineering's immediate attention.

Plooster has found eight major faults in equipment that could have degraded the ICU's ability to support COVID response, and/or critical patients. Also, she has re-organized the storage of equipment and ensure it's maintained in an orderly fashion, reducing unnecessary hazards in the work environment.

She earned a Bachelor Music Education, and Bachelor of Science Nursing. She also spent eight years in the Navy band and is a FAA Certified Weather Observer.

Her efforts greatly reduced unsafe health care experiences, and an unsafe employee environment by being proactive in the management and ownership of her section's equipment.

# From dietitian to captain

**David M. White**  
Public Affairs Office  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

These things happen, though not very often. One day you pass Danielle in the hall and the next day she's got her hand in the air as Capt. Dunnigan.

A native of Lexington, S.C., Dunnigan earned a BS in Food Science from Clemson University in December 2013 and a Master's in MS in Nutrition & Culinary Science in May 2015. She completed her dietetic internship at the University of Kentucky Albert B. Chandler Hospital and Lexington, Ky., VA Medical Center in May 2016. She joined Eisenhower Army Medical Center's Nutrition Care Division in February 2018.

She signed her commission as an officer in the U.S. Army in April of this year.

"I joined the Army to serve the United States beyond my role as a civilian and further develop myself as a soldier, leader and officer," she said in a recent email. "I have also always wanted to serve alongside my older brother, who I always look up to, a first generation soldier."

Her brother, Jason, spent about 13 years in the Army National Guard, first enlisted then commissioned into the Corps of Engineers. He is now a civilian employee for the Air Force.

Newly minted Capt. Dunnigan looks forward to putting her specialized education to good work in the AMEDD.

"I want to use the knowledge I have acquired as a registered dietitian — and now soldier," she said, "to enhance warfighter readiness and teach upcoming dietitians and future leaders how to be both soldiers and providers of exceptional health care."

She graduated Aug. 7 from the AMEDD Direct Commission Course in Fort Sill, Okla. She's headed to Womack Army Medical Center, Fort Bragg, N.C.

see **DISPATCHES** on page 10



Photo by Scott Speaks

**Maj. Lori W. Maggioni, deputy chief, Eisenhower Army Medical Center's Nutrition Care Division congratulates newly commissioned Capt. Danielle Dunnigan following her ceremony in April.**



Photo by John Corley

**Eisenhower Army Medical Center dietitian Danielle Dunnigan in an outtake from a photo shoot for the cover of a 2018 edition of Rounds magazine.**

# Every day early intervention during coronavirus

**Lt. Col. Joseph Walker,**  
Commander, Rodriguez Army Health Clinic  
Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico

The Educational and Developmental Intervention Services program is an Army program that offers early intervention services to active duty military and Coast Guard families.

The goal of EDIS is to support families in their efforts to facilitate their child's growth, development, and learning. EDIS knows that the first three years of a child's life are critical years for learning. Infants and toddlers learn best through everyday experiences and interactions with familiar people in their natural environment

such as the home, day care centers and other community settings. Therefore, EDIS helps families identify and enhance natural learning opportunities for their children.

The RAHC EDIS program is composed of Maria de los Angeles Ortiz, MSC OTR/L, Program Manager and Occupational Therapist; Daphne Narvaez, MA, Early Childhood Special Educator; Soide Y. Rodriguez, MA, CCC-SLP, Speech-Language Pathologist; and Daisy Vidal, administrative assistant.

Early intervention focuses on helping eligible babies and toddlers learn the basic and brand-new skills that typically develop during the first 36 months of life, such

as physical (reaching, rolling, crawling, and walking), cognitive (thinking, learning, solving problems), communication (talking, listening, understanding), social/emotional (playing, feeling secure and happy), and self-help (eating, dressing).

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began and affected Puerto Rico in March, the RAHC EDIS program has continued to provide 5-Star early intervention services to their Families. Following directives from Head Quarters EDIS Program Manager, Linda Roach, the Fort Buchanan EDIS team completed online training on how to provide services using audio and visual communication technology.

Although telepractice has been widely used for service delivery in the medical field for some time now, it had not been used as a primary form of service delivery for early intervention programs.

This posed an opportunity for EDIS staff to grow as professionals, learning to adapt to the current changes in the field of early intervention. Each family enrolled in the EDIS program was notified of the new modality of services in lieu of home visits to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 infection. During this unprecedented time, virtual home visits have been critical to continue to support families and their child's early development skills. It has been a tool to remain close to the families and provide consistent coaching to promote increased learning opportunities while families are at home. Though not traditional, virtual home visits meet the standards of quality services in the child's natural environment and have been proven to be just as effective in coaching families as are traditional home visits.

Examples of what parents in the program are saying about EDIS visits during the pandemic include notes from Cinthia Morales, whose child receives interventions with EDIS. She said, "communication with our service provider, Soide, has been excellent, allowing us to work together to ensure my child does not regress in skills, but continues to improve toward developmental goals.

"In spite of everything, we are grateful because the services never stopped. Instead, we have continued to work together to help our daughter in these difficult moments we are living."

see **RODRIGUEZ** on page 13



Photo by Karina Betancourt

**Maria Ortiz, Fort Buchanan Educational and Developmental Intervention Services program manager and pediatric occupational therapist, models to parents, Yang Burgos, PO2 U.S. Coast Guard, and Karina Betancourt, how to teach their child, Kayliah, to bear weight on her elbows while playing with her 6-year old brother, Kyan, during a home visit in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, before the COVID-19 pandemic.**

## JOINING THE ARMY IN ISOLATION: EARLY DISPATCHES IN THE DAYS OF COVID-19

As reported by Capt. Danielle Dunnigan  
— *Joining the Army during the COVID-19 pandemic certainly impacted my experience as a newly commissioned officer and I now have my own story to tell as a recent graduate of the Army Medical Department Direct Commissioning Course.*

*The comradery gained during those first few weeks is unparalleled and fundamental for building a new team of soldiers expected to integrate into the Army after graduation. But what if those first few weeks are spent in isolation instead of getting to know new battle buddies?*

*AMEDD DEC is located in hot and sunny Fort Sill, Oklahoma. It was a 16-hour drive from Fort Gordon and thankfully I made it on my report date without any hiccups. Upon arrival to DEC, I signed in, had my temperature checked, and was immediately placed into quarantine with a roommate.*

*We remained in our barracks for 14 days and were only released once all 200 students tested negative for COVID-19.*

*Our first 14 days entailed numerous online courses, chow, and occasional outside time. ... Daily assignments tested our knowledge on military history, UCMJ, and Army policies and procedures.*

*Chow was often MREs but word quickly moved through the barracks over group chats when cadre were spotted arriving with food from the DFAC sealed in mermite, or insulated food containers. This meant we were getting a hot meal, yum!*

*Once my classmates found out I was a dietitian, I answered plenty of questions about MRE nutrition and DFAC menu options. I even did a grocery store tour with a classmate once we were out of quarantine.*

*Once we were out of quarantine and in uniform, we learned basic Army skills such as marching, drill and ceremony, land navigation and marksmanship.*

*100+ degrees here. When outside, we were always on the lookout for rattlesnakes and scorpions and a few soldiers even spotted some bison.*

*Luckily our class made it through without any critter or snake bites! I am also proud to say my team found all four points we were provided during land navigation using only our map and compass and I can officially clean a M4 Carbine for hours when needed.*

### GESAMAN from page 4

Va.; Chief Programs Analysis and Evaluation Branch and Business System Branch USA MEDCEN, Fort Bragg, N.C.; the Deputy Commander for Nursing Fox Army Health Center Redstone Arsenal Ala.; Chief, Nursing Operations, Brooke Army Medical Center, JBSA-FSH, Texas; the Deputy Director (Business of Medicine) Army-Baylor MHA/MBA Graduate Program, AMEDD Center & School/Health Readiness Cen-

ter of Excellence, and currently the Deputy Commander for Nursing at the 531st Hospital Center, Fort Campbell, Ky.

His awards include Meritorious Service Medal (seven oak leaf clusters), Army Commendation Medal (four oak leaf clusters), Army Achievement Medal (second oak leaf), National Defense Service Medal (bronze star), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Army Ser-

vice Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal (3rd Award), the Overseas Ribbon (3), NCO Professional Development Ribbon (2nd Award), Expert Field Medical Badge, and Drivers Badge, and the Order of Military Medical Merit.

Gesaman is married to DJ (Peppel) Gesaman of Columbiana, Ohio. Ron and DJ have two children, Andy and Stacey, and nine grandchildren: Preston, Jayelyn, Skylar, Whitney, Liam, Paige, Miles, Carter and Ellie.

# Joint Commission basics; mock survey Oct.13-16

Page Lewis

Joint Commission Coordinator  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

The Joint Commission is the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting accrediting body in health care. It is an independent, not-for-profit organization that accredits and certifies over 22,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States.

Earning this accreditation is recognized as a symbol of quality that reflects an organization's commitment to meeting certain performance standards in patient care and safety.

TJC surveys are conducted triennially (every three years). Eisenhower Army Medical Center's last accreditation survey was May 2018.

The survey analyzes the hospital's system of providing care, treatment, and services across disciplines and services/programs – a look at the overall processes.

The ultimate goal is to ensure the organization is delivering safe, quality care for patients and staff. The commission members work collaboratively with the organization being surveyed to identify any vulnerabilities. There is always room for improvement in the process.

Achieving and maintaining TJC certification is a requirement for military facilities.

The cornerstone of The Joint Commission Survey is the "Tracer Methodology." Surveyors will follow the course of care,



treatment or service provided to a patient from pre-admission through post-discharge. Typically there are five surveyors for hospital the size of EAMC, and the duration of the survey is one week.

Surveyors tour the facility, review the documentation, and interview staff and patients to assess compliance with both TJC Standards and hospital policies and procedures. CAF folders will be assessed for staff that provided care, treatment or services to the patient as well.

The Joint Commission standards that apply to EAMC are found within the Hospital Accreditation Standards Manual. Some standards are very specific, while others are very general.

Although staff is generally not expected to know all of the Joint Commission Standards, staff does need to be familiar with hospital/department policies/procedures. There is not a need to memorize everything, but there is a need to know where to look to find the correct answer.

There is often a Mock Survey scheduled six-12 months prior to the actual Joint Commission Survey. This is performed by a contracted agency and mimics a TJC survey.

They perform a thorough assessment of the organization to detect any needed improvements in the processes. The Mock Survey will often find numerous deficiencies and provides the organization a list of recommended corrections. The organization makes and sustains those corrections in order to limit or prevent findings on the actual TJC survey. EAMC's Mock Survey is scheduled for Oct. 13-16.

Daily staff must be familiar with the hospital/department policies/procedures and follow them. And always put quality and safety first. Maintain your CAF folder. During a survey, be friendly and engaging with surveyors, but don't volunteer information.

Don't hide. If a question is asked and you are unsure of the answer, it is perfectly acceptable to say so and ask for assistance from your teammates. Remember that Joint Commission readiness should be every day and is everyone's responsibility.

## DEPRESSION from page 5

schedules; financial stress, feelings of sadness caused by failures, real or perceived, feelings of loneliness, especially for people who are unable to be with loved ones; and unrealistic expectations. Individuals who do not usually experience symptoms of depression may fall prey to such symptoms as fatigue, poor sleep, headaches, anxiety, and excessive drinking. For individuals who do have depression, symptoms can be intensified, which can lead to suicide.

People may be embarrassed to admit they are depressed and often suffer in silence.

There are ways to combat depression and suicide tendencies however, some suggestions include:

• Set realistic expectations for yourself.

Resist the urge to accept more duties or responsibilities than you can handle.

- Prioritize activities, and be willing to let a few of the lower ones go undone.
- Don't focus strictly on one day.
- Don't compare this year with past years. Every year has its ups and downs, and current woes are more likely to feel serious than those that have had a few years to fade in your memory, while former good times may magnify themselves in retrospect.
- If you are lonely or unable to be with loved ones, spend some time volunteering.
- Limit alcohol consumption. Alcohol will only intensify feelings of sadness, depression and suicide.
- Try to maintain a balanced diet.
- Try to maintain an exercise routine. The endorphins generated by exercise help

battle depression, and help prevent unwanted pounds.

- Remember that you don't have to be happy all the time, in spite of what others would have you believe.
- If depression becomes overwhelming or unmanageable, don't be afraid to seek help.
- Be sure to take time to take care of yourself.

Results of a survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirm that the ongoing pandemic is significantly harming Americans' mental health. The hardest hit were younger adults, racial/ethnic minorities, essential workers, and those with pre-existing psychiatric conditions. Nearly twice as many respondents described serious consideration of suicide in the month prior, compared with 2018 findings.

# Biomedical research advances medical care, training

**Maj. Alicia Cawfield, DVM, DACLAM**  
Attending Veterinarian  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

Through the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, the Department of Defense sponsors and funds biomedical research to advance military medical care.

The Command manages and executes research in five basic areas: military infectious diseases, combat casualty care, military operational medicine, chemical biological defense and clinical and rehabilitative medicine. At Eisenhower Army Medical Center's Department of Clinical Investigation, medical research focuses mostly on combat casualty care, medical training and clinical medicine.

By establishing working relationships with DCI staff, including a specially trained veterinarian, and under the oversight of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, and the Institutional Review Board, physicians are able to turn real-world health topics of interest among our local beneficiary population into research projects. Topics include diabetes, hemodynamic shock, periodontal diseases and bariatric surgeries.

Using DCI resources, physicians are empowered to conduct pre-clinical and clinical studies to improve human health, and advance medical and surgical care.

In the realm of combat casualty care and operational medicine, examples include using a blast simulator to develop lifesav-

**Eisenhower Army Medical Center's Department of Clinical Investigation supports all of the graduate medical education residency programs by supporting their medical education and research requirements.**

ing strategies specifically related to blast exposures and injuries and traumatic brain injuries. Surgeons can also use animal models, simulators and tissue cultures to research life-saving measures and improved surgical and microvascular surgical procedures for combat trauma.

Perhaps the greatest research endeavor at

DCI is in medical training. The DCI supports all of the graduate medical education residency programs by supporting their medical education and research requirements.

The DCI staff and resources make possible numerous research projects ranging from molecular to pre-clinical and clinical studies.

The DCI Comparative Medicine Service supports all the pre-clinical animal research programs, and the vivarium proudly maintains its full accreditation by the AAALAC International since 1996.

According to its literature, the AAALAC International is a private, nonprofit organization that promotes the humane treatment of animals in science through voluntary accreditation and assessment programs.

More than 1,000 companies, universities, hospitals, government agencies and other research institutions in 49 countries have earned AAALAC accreditation, demonstrating their commitment to responsible animal care and use. These institutions volunteer to participate in AAALAC's program, in addition to complying with the local, state and federal laws that regulate animal research.

Some of the institutions that have earned AAALAC accreditation include the Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, The American Red Cross, and the National Institutes of Health.

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# School screenings always an educational activity

## Staff reports

The annual four-point school screenings is a first-rate service Eisenhower Army Medical Center performs for its beneficiaries with school-aged children. And, as should be expected on a military installation, that population is always in flux with children aging into school age and new kids joining the block.

For years EAMC has been providing this service and every year is an opportunity to learn, refine, polish, make mistakes – some new, some old – but always that chance to be face-to-face with fellow service members and their families and deliver on EAMC’s mission of the care for those who defend this country.

This year, due to the abundance of health care caution, EAMC is following prudent health care guidelines in keeping people safe by maintaining safe physical distance, proper masking policies, high-commitment cleaning protocols and more screening events that ever before. Three screening events have stretched to seven

events, thanks primarily to the generosity of volunteer health care providers and professionals.

And the continuing professional education grows due to feedback from EAMC staff as well as beneficiaries. Early after-action reports report positive and negative reactions. There were, for example, a couple of obvious suggestions such as a coffee pot, military should be allowed to wear civilian attire, enforce 1:1 parent/child ratio and the need for more morning appointments

to avoid lag times early in the day.

Positive comments include: “[it’s] very well organized; great flow [with great teamwork and social distancing. Loved the ‘no walk-ins’/appointment-only concept, great experience for 68C, communication was good, and ‘best school screening yet.’”

School screening will always be with us as long as they are required by the State of Georgia. It’s a great service and a good training and educational exercise for EAMC.



Photo by Scott Speaks

Members of the Eisenhower Army Medical Center all-volunteer school screening team stands ready just before door open the morning of Aug. 8.



The Monthly Mindset Minute is a tool you can use to continually implement an Outward Mindset in your work with others. Simply take a minute to read the application tool below and just do it.

**SEPTEMBER:**  
Do something for your boss you believe would relieve some of the pressure he/she is feeling.

## RODRIGUEZ from page 9

Nicole Martinez said, “We are very grateful for EDIS and our service provider, Daphne. She has helped us better understand our child, has educated us about language development and given us strategies to use during this pandemic.”

“Virtual home visits have not changed the quality of services we are receiving and it is what we needed during this time.”

Jennifer Pou said, “Virtual services have been excellent. It is like having a counselor and therapist available at all times. It

has been beneficial to us to have access to Maria’s consultations and to be able to send her videos of our child’s progress. It does not feel invasive and we have learned a lot.”

“Our team,” said Ortiz, program manager, “is committed to helping families support their children, even in unique times as the one we are experiencing now. It makes us happy to support families and see their children learning new skills each day.”

“It is our honor to provide a 5-Star experience to each of our families,” she said.

For information about EDIS, call 787-707-2165 or 787-707-2167.

# Where is my gift?

**Capt. Dae Lee, chaplain**

Chaplain Clinician, Department of Ministry  
and Pastoral Care  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

I once heard a story of a mother and baby camel. They were lying under a tree. The baby camel asked its mother, "Why do we have humps?" The mother camel took a moment to consider this and said, "We are desert animals, so we have the humps to store fat so we can survive with very little food."

The baby camel thought for a moment and then said, "Okay ... why are our legs long and our feet rounded? The mother camel replied, "They are meant for walking in the desert." The baby paused, and then asked, "Why are our eyelashes long? Sometimes they get in my way."

The mama camel responded, "Those long, thick eyelashes protect your eyes from the desert sand when it blows in the wind." The baby thought and thought. Then he said, "I see. So the hump stores fat when

we are in the desert, the legs are for walking through the desert, and these eyelashes protect our eyes from the desert ... so how come we're in a zoo?"

The moral of the story is that skills and abilities are only useful if you're in the right place at the right time; if not, they go to waste.

Likewise, God has given each one of us unique abilities, talents, and gifts to use every day. The question is, how do we put them to work?

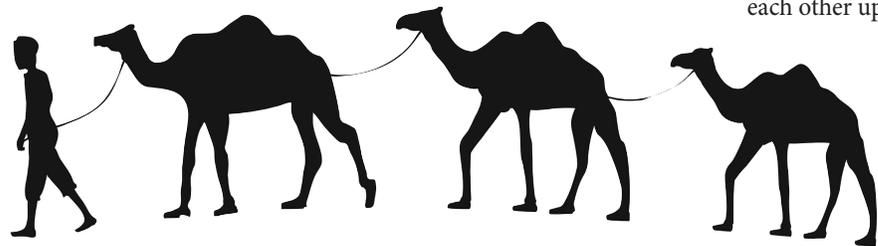
The short answer is that you can put your gifts to work right now. Oftentimes people wait and wait for the "perfect time" to use their gifts.

Then again, some people don't believe they have any gifts. If you are wondering

what your gift is, simply ask your family and friends, you may be surprised you have so many gifts.

In the Bible, 1 Peter 4:10 tells us, "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." Bible clearly tells us we all have gifts to serve one another and bring glory to God. God gives you gifts and talents, and then he expects you to use them, regardless of their size.

Go ahead and use your gifts, then God will begin to bless the work of your hands. However, if you choose to wait for the "perfect moment," you may possibly miss the opportunity to share your gift to those who may need it right now. At the very least, during these challenging times of COVID-19, may each of us use our abilities, talents and gifts to lift each other up.



## Review procedures for Defense Performance Management, Appraisal Program

**Lt. Col. Angela Carter**

Director, Human Resources Division  
Eisenhower Army Medical Center

On April 1, the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program, more generally known as DPMAP, rating cycle began for calendar year 2021.

Supervisors are required to hold a minimum of three formal documented performance discussions throughout the appraisal cycle, the initial performance plan meeting to discuss performance expectations, one progress review and the final appraisal.

At this time, plans should be sent back to the employee to provide their input for the progress review. A meeting should be scheduled and conducted for the review by Oct. 1.

Mandatory Progress Review discussion requires documentation in the My Performance tool. The steps are outlined:

- The Progress Review is created on the "Progress Review" tab (nowhere else).
- The Assessments tab of the Progress

Review is for the employee and Rating Official to make comments on the elements.

- What Must be documented are the Approvals and Acknowledgements by the RO and the employee that the discussion took place
- Higher Level Reviewer approval is required on the plan, progress review and appraisal
- The Progress Review can only be created once the performance plan has been approved. If the plan was modified after the initial approval, it must be re-approved by everyone first before the Progress Review can be created.
- Discussions between employee/supervisor are required before sending action for employee acknowledgement.

The progress review narrative should reflect meaningful communication between the supervisor and employee with the following outcomes: Performance plans are

written at Fully successful level (if changes are required, they should be done at this time and re-approved)

- The employee's current performance plan elements and standards accurately reflects work being evaluated.
- Performance expectations for the remainder of the appraisal cycle.
- Employee's current accomplishments and contributions.
- Employee's current level of performance including any areas that need improvement and plan to improve by the employee/supervisor.
- How the employee's performance will be evaluated?

Finally, supervisors and employees should review the guides and tip sheets to prepare for progress reviews (P:\Civilian HR\DPMAPs). DPMAP trainers are available to assist supervisors and employees with performance evaluation actions that must be completed in the tool.

## COMMANDER from page 3

It is our duty. We cannot effectively administer care without all of us back in place to provide that care.

Next month The Joint Commission team will be here to conduct our Mock Survey. This is a great opportunity for us to receive objective feedback on our health care practice. We welcome the Joint Commission team and look forward to an informative and productive engagement.

A big welcome to all the new employees who have joined the EAMC team last month. Each of you bring the knowledge, skills and abilities that our organization needs to continue providing the 5-Star health care we are accustomed to providing and that is expected of EAMC.

A huge thank you to our house keeping staff for their role in the fight against COVID 19. Our organization remains sanitized and safe because of their hard work and dedication. We are all empowered at EAMC to keep each other, our families and our hospital safe.

Thank you for all you do to make Eisenhower an organization where people are valued and are always treated with dignity and respect.

We are Eisenhower.

—Ike 6

### Mission

Provide high quality, complex, patient-centered health care services, and deliver military readiness through sustained medical education and multidisciplinary care.

### Vision

Deliver Readiness, provide a 5-Star patient experience

### Priorities

- Readiness
- Cultivate an organization-wide quality and safety culture
- Sustain medical education activities
- Deliver 5-Star patient experience
- DHA transition



## PREVENTION from page 5

- Expressing hopelessness or having no reason to live  
Follow these three simple steps when reaching out:
- **Ask:** Are they considering suicide?
- **Listen:** Check in with them and see how they are feeling. Listen to their concerns and remind them that they are not alone.
- **Get help:** Speak with a trained providers through the Military Crisis Line. They can provide guidance to you and/or the person in crisis and help connect you with services. Call 800-273-8255 and press 1, or chat live online. If they are in immediate danger of suicide, call 911.

### Finding help

If you continue to show signs of stress, reach out for support. The Department of Behavioral Health is available and can set up in person or virtual appointments. Contact us at 706-787-8650.

## Ike 7 from page 3

from our type of 5-Star service and work. Initially, there were many voices filled with doubt about the end product. Given time to mature, the final project is magnificent. I think a valuable lesson we can all learn from is that we must allow things to grow and develop; and try help where we can.

It is just as easy to help someone as it is to criticize them. That is the strength of Eisenhower: I have witnessed numerous incidents where a staff member stopped what they were doing to help a patient or another staff member. Long after you leave a job or an assignment, you remember the people. Check on each other, these are tough times, not everyone is OK.

Keep an eye on your coworker, neighbor, family and friends. Some of us hide the hurt and only those closest truly notice. Long after I have become "Mr. Allen," I will remember the people of Eisenhower. You drive me to give my very best every day — keep up the good work.

## NUTRITION from page 2

### Storage/display tips

Place fresh fruit in a bowl on the counter or table as a visual reminder to eat them. If you find you don't use fresh vegetables very quickly, opt for frozen ones. Use what you need for the meal and keep the remainder frozen. Additionally, prep veggies for snacks and store them in pre-portioned packs. Keep them located at eye level in the front of the fridge to make a quick "grab and go" snack.

Eating healthy doesn't have to be expensive or complex. You can use these tips to pack more nutrients into your meals and save money at the same time. If you'd like additional information, contact any of EAMC's Registered Dietitian Nutritionists on staff everyday.

- *Centers for Disease and Control. How to prevent cancer or find it earlier. <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dccp/prevention/>. Accessed July 20, 2017.*
- *United States Department of Agriculture. Choose MyPlate: dietary guidelines. <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/dietary-guidelines>. Accessed July 20, 2017.*



Eisenhower  
Army Medical Center



# We are Eisenhower

FIGHTING COVID-19 AT EVERY TURN

If you are sick, help prevent  
the spread of COVID-19



Stay home  
except to get  
medical care



Separate  
yourself from  
other people  
in your home



Call ahead  
before visiting  
medical  
facilities



Clean your  
hands often  
with soap  
and water