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Electronic ICU touches-off new era of patient telemedicine here

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. – A new era of telemedicine partnership began with electronic intensive care unit connections between the General Leonard Wood Army Community Hospital and Arkansas Baptist Health Clinic, Little Rock, Ark., Jan. 7.

Such connections will allow access to computer systems that contain the latest medical information for diagnosing and treating various medical conditions. Electronic ICU care teams can speak directly into each other's ICU rooms with nurses and physicians.

“The eICU is a highly integrated and choreographed project that establishes a long-distance, high-functioning and secure telemedicine connection with our critical-care partners at Baptist Health,” said John Ingersoll, hospital Clinical Operations supervisor.

High-speed data lines connect experienced critical care physicians and nurses more than 200 miles away using real-time video. Computer monitors at both locations display patients' vital signs, medications, blood test results, X-rays and other diagnostic information.

“This cutting-edge technology translates new meaning from Army Medicine's ‘System for Health’ and ‘team-based’ care concepts,” said Col. Marie Dominguez, hospital commander.

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“It brings new life to new acronyms like ‘PCMH.’ We are now a ‘Patient-Centered Medical Home’ in a more tangible way. Often times, if your Family member is in the ICU, you stay with them,” Dominguez said.

The first eICU connection transpired with system demonstrator Dr. Jack Griebel, Baptist Health eICU medical director, and a few members of the Arkansas Baptist Health Clinic staff who braved winter storm conditions to be at the hospital.

“This new system provides a constant patient monitoring safety net, additional provider and nurse rounding, plus expert second medical opinion consultation. It’s on its way to demonstrating highly effective care at a great value to the taxpayer,” Ingersoll said.

The Information Management Department, Intensive Care Unit, Credentialing, Biomedical Services and Clinical Operations teams worked closely with counterparts at Baptist Health to deliver a higher capability than originally forecasted, completing the start-up phase at 25 percent lower than projected cost, according to Ingersoll.

“Baptist Health is a regional center of critical care excellence and has been recognized for achievements in inpatient outcomes,” Ingersoll said. “This service is truly value added for our patients and in line with new Army patient-centered care protocols. We look forward to improved clinical outcomes through this partnership.”

For an overview of the eICU system, visit www.Facebook.com/GLWACH.

For more information, contact the General Leonard Wood Army Community Hospital at (573) 596-0131, ext. 6-9632.

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(Brooks is the marketing and public affairs officer at General Leonard Wood Army Community Hospital.)

About Fort Leonard Wood

Fort Leonard Wood is a thriving and prosperous installation that has evolved from a small basic training post 70 years ago to a premier Army Center of Excellence that trains 80-90,000 military and civilians each year.

Home to the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence, Fort Leonard Wood now trains and educates service members and develops doctrine and capabilities for the Training and Doctrine Command’s U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear School, U.S. Army Engineer School, and U.S. Army Military Police School, three gender integrated Initial Military Training brigades, one of only five reception stations in the Army, and the Army’s largest Non Commissioned Officers Academy.

Over the past several years, Fort Leonard Wood has received numerous additional responsibilities to include supporting the 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, a large Forces Command unit that is responsible for all deployable capabilities at Fort Leonard Wood. A colonel-commanded Marine Corps Detachment and an Air Force Detachment, which are both the largest on any Army installation, are located on Fort Leonard Wood; a large Navy Seabee Detachment and elements of the Coast Guard train here as well.
