



Screening and Referral Tools Targeted to Reduce Days of Limited Duty among Soldiers

FALLS CHURCH, Va. (Aug. 13, 2008) - The U.S. Army Proponency Office for Rehabilitation and Reintegration announced today the release of Screening and Referral Tools (S&RTs) to assist providers in the management of musculoskeletal injuries of Soldiers. The tools were created under the direction of the Medical Command Chief of Staff's Strategic Performance Action Plan.

Musculoskeletal injuries include sprains, strains, ligament tears and fractures and are a primary health concern among young Service Members. A Soldier who sustains a musculoskeletal injury usually limits his or her duty and performance during recovery. If not treated properly in the early stages, musculoskeletal injuries can lead to chronic pain and dysfunction.

S&RTs provide health care providers a "point of care" decision support tool to quickly move a patient along a proper treatment path to expedite care and speed the Soldier's recovery. They were developed specifically for primary care doctors, physician assistants and nurse practitioners to aid in deciding initial treatment and referral," says Maj. Craig Paige, director, U.S. Army Orthopaedic Physician Assistants Programs.

"If implemented and used appropriately, S&RTs may help reduce an injured Soldier's days of limited duty."

According to the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM), in 2004, the total number of Soldier days of limited duty (DLD's) due to injury was estimated at nearly 14 million.

The S&RTs were developed by a joint team of Army and Air Force physical therapists, occupational therapists, physician assistants and primary care physicians. They are available on the Quality Management Office's (QMO) Web site <https://www.qmo.amedd.army.mil/> and will be distributed to Department of Defense (DoD) primary care providers, military treatment facilities (MTFs) and clinics where patients with musculoskeletal injuries are most often evaluated first.

Providers can access the S&RTs on the QMO Web site either directly from their Internet browser or via an embedded URL in AHLTA, the DoD electronic medical record system.

PR&R will work closely with USACHPPM and other DoD organizations to track DLD over the next year to determine if the S&RTs are effective in reducing DLD.

About PR&R

The U.S. Army Surgeon General Health Policy and Services Proponency Office for Rehabilitation and Reintegration (PR&R), located in Falls Church, Va., is the Army's lead organization for policy, direction, and oversight of rehabilitation and reintegration. PR&R was established in 2007 to institute Army-wide standards of care for all rehabilitation and transition of injured Soldiers with diagnoses to include: traumatic brain injury, amputations, polytrauma, vision and hearing impairments, burns, chronic and

acute musculoskeletal injuries and functional limitations related to combat stress or post traumatic stress disorder. For more information about PR&R, contact cynthia.vaughan@us.army.mil. For additional information about the S&RTs, contact cpg@amedd.army.mil.

Resources:

USACHPPM: <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/>, <http://hooah4health.com>

Quality Management Office: <https://www.qmo.amedd.army.mil/>