



## CSRA WOUNDED WARRIOR CARE PROJECT OVERVIEW

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Since its foundation in September 2007, the CSRA Wounded Warrior Care Project has expanded partnerships and collaborations and established new relationships for the benefit of service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, and their families, **creating the model for increased collaboration and communication** among agencies. The Augusta community has:

- The nation's only **Active Duty Rehabilitation Unit** located within a VA facility, which has treated more than 700 inpatients and 1,235 total patients to date, all of them active duty Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen. The Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center, in addition to being home to this unique and revolutionary example of DoD/VA cooperation and collaboration, is also home to the VA's 71 bed Spinal Cord Injury Unit, the largest within the system in number of patients followed, and a 15-bed Blind Rehabilitation Center.
- **Eisenhower Army Medical Center**, consistently ranking in the top five (and in July of 2007 ranked second only to Walter Reed) military treatment facilities for receiving air evacuees directly from Iraq and Afghanistan. Eisenhower AMC has a level 1 center for traumatic brain injury care, behavioral and mental health expertise, the Army's only inpatient substance abuse treatment facility, and collaborates with the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center in ways not found elsewhere in the nation. The Warrior Transition Battalion on Fort Gordon has 354 soldiers assigned to it, and a full staff and cadre dedicated to assisting wounded, ill and injured soldiers.
- Three **Federal Recovery Coordinators**, among the first assigned in the nation to coordinate the care for seriously wounded returning service members and veterans. The first is a master's-prepared nurse, and two recently added Federal Recovery Coordinators are social workers newly assigned to Ft. Gordon.
- The capability to train Dole/Shalala Commission Recovery Coordinators at the **Medical College of Georgia School of Nursing**. These Federal Recovery Coordinators are designed to advocate for and coordinate the care for wounded warriors and their families.
- The nation's first **Veterans Curation Project**, an award-winning employment and training program for Iraq and Afghanistan returnees (a

- collaboration with the US Army Corps of Engineers, Warrior Transition Battalion, the Charlie Norwood VAMC, Department of Labor and CSRA Wounded Warrior Care Project).
- Formed a **Transition Round Table**, where Army, VA, Department of Labor and community organizations and agencies network and streamline efforts for returning service members and their families (an initiative of the CSRA Wounded Warrior Care Project).
  - Formed a **Medical Research Consortium**, providing the platform for networking for researchers from the Charlie Norwood VAMC, Eisenhower AMC, the Medical College of Georgia, Telemedicine and Advanced Technology Research Center-South, and Savannah River National Laboratory (an initiative of the CSRA Wounded Warrior Care Project).
  - One **Fisher House** on Fort Gordon (7 bedrooms) and soon a 2<sup>nd</sup> Fisher House at the site of the Active Duty Rehab Unit (20 suites). This \$5.7 million home broke ground December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009.
  - Formed a partnership through the CSRA Wounded Warrior Care Project with the state of Georgia's Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to host a **January 2010 statewide collaborative summit on warrior care: From Front Lines to Front Lawns**. This two-day conference features participation and input from the Army and other Department of Defense entities, Warrior Transition Battalions, the VA, the Department of Labor, state and local agencies, nonprofits, service members, veterans, families, and veterans service organizations. The purpose of this conference is to streamline statewide warrior care efforts and to develop a statewide action plan to harness resources, simplify the process of reintegration into community after combat, eliminate or reduce the tendency of agencies to stove pipe, and develop cross state and cross agency connectivity.
  - Started an initiative (launching in 2010) with Augusta State University, Augusta Technical College, and Paine College to hire and support a Veterans Coordinator to conduct outreach, recruiting and retention of active duty personnel and veterans in **higher education programs**.

**Action items:**

- Expansion of behavioral health resources and programs for returning service members, veterans and their families (such as the Fort Bliss Center for Restoration and Resilience)
- Designation of the MCG School of Nursing to lead collaborative recovery coordinator training, literature review and consensus conference to develop evidence-based guidelines on care coordination and development of care coordination software tools
- Transitional housing for Warrior Transition Battalion soldiers and their families
- Designation of a retreat center for joint use by Department of Defense and VA chaplains and funding for marriage enrichment and family programs to help with family and community reintegration after combat
- Extension and expansion of the Veterans Curation Project beyond August of 2010 to continue to provide meaningful employment and training to OEF/OIF returnees in a supportive environment