



USAP Medical Program

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USAP Medical Program: Overview



- OPEHS Organization
- Program Components
- Scope
- Medical Program Support Structure
- Waiver Process
- Other Medical Functions



Office of Polar Environment, Safety, and Health (OPEHS)



- OEPHS manages and oversees the environmental, safety, and health aspects of research and operations conducted in polar regions.
- Created in 2005 to concentrate EH&S policy and oversight functions
- EH&S Staff:
 - Office Head: Michael A. Montopoli, MD, MPH
 - Environmental Officer: Polly A. Penhale, Ph.D.
 - Safety & Occupational Health Managers: Gwendolyn M. Adams & James N. Karcher
 - Polar Coordination Specialist: Nadene Kennedy



Medical Program Components I



Medical Screening: procedures to determine whether candidates for participation in USAP are physically qualified and psychologically adapted for assignment or travel to Antarctica.

Medical Care: health care services provided to deployed personnel at permanent stations, field camps, and on research vessels.



Medical Program Components II



- Pre-deployment Medical Screening (aka “PQ Process”)
 - Regulated by 45 CFR 675: *Medical Clearance Process for Deployment to Antarctica*
 - Primary implementing document: *USAP Medical Screening Guidelines, 2000-2001*
- Medical Care
 - All participants eligible for care
 - Level of care varies by location and activity
 - Health care professionals range from Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) to licensed physician
 - Highest level of care comparable to urgent care center in US



Scope of Pre-deployment Medical Screening



- NSF sets screening policy and criteria
- Annual requirement
- All civilian USAP participants screened
- Only NSF forms, approved by OMB, may be used for data collection



Scope of Medical Care



- All participants eligible for care
- Fixed health care facilities at stations and aboard research vessels
- Other medical personnel and assets deployed as needed to support field camps and other activities
- At stations, normal office hours
- Continual availability of emergency services 24/7/365
- No surgical capability
- Clinics not accredited



Current Medical Program Support Structure



- Antarctic Support Contractor Medical Department (on and off ice)
- Subcontractors (off-ice)
- US Air Force & Air National Guard Medical Contingent (Summer only at McMurdo Station)



Medical Waivers



- Administrative Process
- Applicant must apply in writing
- Employer support required
- Decision made on case-by-case basis
- Director, Office of Polar Programs makes final determination (delegated to USAP Chief Medical Officer)



Other Important Medical Functions



- Medical Records Management
 - Protection of health information in accordance with the Privacy Act and NSF System of Records. *NSF-19: Medical Examination Records for Service in the Polar Regions.*
- Public Health
 - Operate immunization, health education, and health maintenance programs.
- Emergency Preparedness
 - Medical providers not only respond to emergencies, but they also help prepare others through planning, training, and drills.
- Program Integration
 - Medical program interacts with other program elements, particularly operations, safety, and fire department.



McMurdo General Hospital



QUESTIONS?