

‘Caring for Our Nation’s Best’
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Cynthia.Vaughan@hbg.amedd.army.mil

Contact: Cynthia Vaughan

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Task Force Medical Eagle vaccinates 100 percent of SFOR soldiers against influenza

Heidelberg, Germany – Thanks to a goal, a strategy, and a committed Army medical team, every soldier deployed in support of Stabilization Force (SFOR) XIV has received a flu shot.

According to Col. You-Ying W. Whipple, Commander, Task Force Medical Eagle (TFME) Tuzla, Bosnia, keeping soldiers healthy and preventing illnesses in a deployed environment is always a priority. “We are warrior medics promoting peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and we want to ensure our soldiers are well-protected so that they may perform their missions.

On October 14th TFME set a goal to vaccinate every service member in SFOR against influenza this season. Leading by example, on October 31st, TFME became the first deployed US Army Reserve and National Guard unit to vaccinate 100 percent of its personnel. On December 16th, they met their SFOR goal by tracking down one lone SFOR unvaccinated service member and giving him his flu shot.

“We are here to provide the best health care possible for these soldiers and it was important to take preventive measures to mitigate any flu outbreaks in SFOR,” Whipple said.

In order to meet their goal of vaccinating each SFOR soldier, Whipple said that creative strategies were used. “We took this job seriously and met our goal through a variety of methods. We contacted soldiers individually, we sent out the brigade surgeon to personally give some flu shots and we tracked medical records.”

According to Whipple, TFME did not do this alone, the support received from commanders of Task Forces Eagle, Iron, Bearcat and Renegade was key. “They all placed a command emphasis on the importance of flu shot and set the example. Also, the NCO Corps and company commanders worked to ensure their soldiers got the shots. It was real team work, and it feels fantastic to be at 100 percent. Most importantly, we are taking care of our most precious resources, our soldiers” said Whipple.

Task Force Medical Eagle (TFME) is composed of soldiers from eight Reserve and National Guard units. The soldiers come from 22 states and Puerto Rico:

334th Medical Group, Grand Rapids, Michigan (USAR)

3297th USAH, Fort Gordon, Georgia (USAR)

427th Medical Logistics, Forest Park, Georgia (USAR)

467th Combat Stress Control, Madison, Wisconsin (USAR)

790th Preventive Medicine, Rockville, Maryland (USAR)

422nd Veterinary Services, Rockville, Maryland (USAR)

E/434 MSB (Ground Ambulance), Cottage Grove, Minnesota (MN National Guard)

86th Air Ambulance, Burlington, Vermont (VT National Guard)