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Europe Regional Medical Command Public Affairs Office

COM 06221 17 3317 or 3316

DSN 371-3317 or 3316

January 7, 2004

News release

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DSN 371-3316

COM 06221 17 3316

Senior Enlisted Medical Advisor visits troops in Germany

By Staff Sgt. Kelly Bridgwater

Europe Regional Medical Command, Public Affairs

Landstuhl, Germany – Command Sgt. Major Sandra K. Townsend, U.S. Army Medical Command (MEDCOM) Senior Enlisted Advisor to Lt. Gen. James B. Peake, Army Surgeon General and MEDCOM Commander, recently visited Germany where she spent time with wounded service members from Operation Iraqi Freedom and shared her goals and vision with Soldiers working in Army medicine.

As the Senior Enlisted Advisor to troops in the medical field Townsend wants Soldiers to know she is there to hear their concerns and ideas. “My intent is to be the sounding board for the AMEDD enlisted Soldiers. To hear their ideas and any issues they may have that will make us more effective in our mission and improve the quality of life of our soldiers,” she said.

One of her primary focuses is the 91 Whiskey Program. The 91W Health Care Specialist is an individual who is highly trained in emergency medical care. “Sustainment of these medical skills is essential, as they are perishable skills,” said Townsend. One of the requirements as a 91W is to maintain certification as a National Registry Emergency Medical Technician-Basic. Army combat medics were not previously required to have this.

The need for a more advanced combat medic came as a result of the Army Medical Department's transformation. Different skills are required to support the changing and diversified battlefield. With that change is the need for a medic that can operate more independently in a variety of situations.

Prior to her arrival in Germany, Townsend was in Kuwait and Qatar where she spent time with medical troops working in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. She had this to say to the service members in Germany about their fellow Soldiers serving in the desert.

“In the medical units that we visited, the Soldiers were very dedicated to their mission and took great pride in their contribution to the Global War on Terrorism,” said Townsend. “They were working really hard, they felt good about the impact they were having on the soldiers they are there to provide care for,” she said.

Townsend described her visit with Soldiers who are patients at Landstuhl as humbling. She had nothing but praise for the hard work and quality care provided by members of the medical field. "Positive comments from the patients – at every level of treatment – have been numerous. They talk about the care, dedication and compassion they have received from the combat medics, nurses and doctors who have cared for them," she said.

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Cut line:

US Army Medical Command, Command Sgt. Maj. Sandra Townsend, talks issues with soldiers at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center. Townsend recently toured Army Medical Department facilities in Europe where she met with AMEDD enlisted service members.

--Photo by Sgt. Phillip Breedlove, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center Public Affairs Office