

About the NICoE

What does the NICoE stand for?

The NICoE [N-EYE-co] stands for the National Intrepid Center of Excellence.

What is the NICoE?

The National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE) is the Military Health System institute for complex, comorbid traumatic brain injury and psychological health conditions, dedicated to delivering comprehensive and holistic care, conducting focused research, and exporting knowledge to benefit service members, their families and society.

Where is the NICoE located?

The 72,000 square-foot facility is located on the campus of Naval Support Activity Bethesda, home of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) and the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences. The NICoE's location offers convenient access to accommodations provided for service members and their families at a Fisher House dedicated specifically to the NICoE patients. In addition, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Washington, DC's local public transportation system, the Metro, are also in close proximity.

What is the NICoE mission?

As the Military Health System institute for complex, comorbid traumatic brain injury with psychological health conditions, we deliver comprehensive and holistic care, conduct focused research, and export knowledge to benefit service members, their families and society.

What is the NICoE vision?

To be the nation's institute for traumatic brain injury and psychological health dedicated to advancing science, enhancing understanding, maximizing health and relieving suffering.

Is the NICoE part of the Department of Defense?

Yes, the NICoE operates under the purview of the Department of Defense.

Who does the NICoE serve?

NICoE patients are active duty service members with combat and mission-related mild to moderate traumatic brain injury with psychological health conditions refractory to conventional treatment. Service members must be capable of participating in an intensive outpatient level of care for up to four weeks and engaging in a structured post-NICoE recovery care plan at their home station. Candidate must also:

- Not pose a danger to self or others
- Not be at risk of alcohol or narcotic withdrawal
- Not require medical monitoring or nursing services at a higher level than what can be safely provided at an outpatient facility
- Not have any legal issues or charges pending
- Have completed any inpatient psychiatric and/or addictions treatment at least 30 days prior to their referral

How is the NICoE clinical program different from other PH/TBI programs offered by MTFs?

The NICoE utilizes an interdisciplinary approach to care, featuring a comprehensive team of medical professionals offering intensive diagnosis and treatment planning. Because of our unique clinical care model, providers are able to focus on both service members and their families. The NICoE is also home to the latest medical technology, allowing immediate access to technology required to diagnose and assess TBI and PH conditions. Serving as the hub of a public-private network of military and civilian local, regional, state, federal and global resources, the NICoE develops treatment plans, clinician and service member education programs, long-term follow-up and continuity management in one central location.

Who funded the building and equipment for the NICoE?

The NICoE was built through a gift from the American people by way of the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund. The NICoE is a tribute to America's military heroes and a place to heal the invisible wounds of war.

What is the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund?

The Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund was established in 2000 to provide financial support for the dependents of United States service members who perished while on active duty. The Fund has provided close to \$150 million in support for the families of military personnel lost in service to our nation, and for severely wounded military personnel and veterans. These efforts are funded entirely with donations from the public, and hundreds of thousands of individuals have contributed to the Fund. This continued an effort begun in 1982 by Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher, founders of the Intrepid Museum Foundation and the Fisher House Foundation.

Treatment at the NICoE

How does a service member get selected for evaluation at the NICoE?

Service members are referred to the NICoE program by their primary care manager(s). A medical intake referral team at the NICoE will review each referral and confer with providers as necessary to determine the service member's suitability for the NICoE program.

Can a service member self-refer?

Service members interested in receiving care at the NICoE should contact their primary care manager to initiate the referral process.

What is the first step to referring a service member?

The health care provider should send an email to: NICoEReferral@health.mil and request a copy of the referral form. Upon submission of the completed form, the NICoE's referral team will review the referral request for suitability.

How long is a typical stay at the NICoE?

Patients undergo evaluation, diagnosis and treatment for a four-week period at the NICoE.

Can the service member select the dates they will be at the NICoE?

The NICoE will work with the service member, their primary care manager and the command to select the dates of treatment.

Are service members required to participate in a research study while they are at the NICoE?

The NICoE is a research institute dedicated to learning more about the complex interactions of TBI and PH conditions. As such, service members receiving care at the NICoE are invited to participate in ongoing research protocols throughout their stay. Many service members are interested in helping advance the science and improve the treatment options available to future generations. Participation is not mandatory. Occasionally, service members receiving care at WRNMMC also participate in research protocols at the NICoE, even if not involved in the outpatient program.

What happens if follow-up treatment recommendations require resources or health care providers that are not available in the service member's home area or are located more than 100 miles from the service member's home?

The NICoE clinical team makes their best effort to address specific needs and access to care issues when building each service member's treatment plan. Each plan is created in collaboration with the service member's primary care providers, who are aware of local treatment options.

Does the NICoE admit service members from OCONUS (Alaska, Hawaii, Germany, Japan, etc.)?

Yes. The NICoE receives referrals from military treatment facilities all over the world.

Do service members and their families have an on-site patient advocate who they can contact with specific questions about their care, either before arriving or after departing?

Yes. The NICoE Concierge Services Team (Continuity Managers and Family Advocates) are the primary



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advocates for service members and their families. Beyond this, all typical lines of redress available to active duty service members are in place.

Additional Information and Resources

What is the NICoE's operating schedule?

The NICoE is an outpatient facility and operates Monday-Friday, from 0700-1600. As a federal facility, it follows all posted guidelines for holidays.

Who can organizations contact regarding partnership opportunities?

Send an email to the NICoE Strategic Communications team at: NICoE@health.mil.

Who can the media contact for additional information?

Send an email to the NICoE Public Affairs Officer at: NICoE@health.mil.

Where can I find additional information on PH/TBI?

Contact the DCoE Outreach Center toll free at 866-966-1020 or by emailing: resources@dcoeoutreach.org.