



National Intrepid
Center of Excellence

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The National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE) is the Military Health System institute for complex, comorbid traumatic brain injury and psychological health conditions. We deliver comprehensive and holistic care, conduct focused research, and export knowledge to benefit service members, their families and society. Combat and mission-related traumatic brain injury with psychological health conditions affects countless service members and their families each year. Although each condition can cause specific symptoms, co-occurrence can cause a complex constellation of symptoms that requires a different treatment plan.

- **RESEARCH:** As a hub of intellectual exchange, the NICoE leverages its unique patient base and current technical and clinical resources to initiate innovative pilot studies designed to advance evaluation and treatment of service members with the complex interaction of mild traumatic brain injury and psychological health conditions. The NICoE aims to better understand the pathophysiology and natural history of the comorbid disease by collaborating with federal, academic and industry partners in cutting-edge research to rapidly advance clinical care standards across the country
- **CLINICAL CARE:** The NICoE care model relies on an interdisciplinary, holistic patient-centered approach to clinical care and empowers service members to achieve long-term balance, optimum healing (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) and personal well-being. The care model includes unique clinical evaluation, patient- and family-focused intervention, treatment initiation and individualized treatment planning, and utilizes care teams representing more than 16 different disciplines.
- **EDUCATION:** The NICoE is a resource for active-duty service members suffering from combat and mission-related mild traumatic brain injury with psychological health conditions who are not responding to conventional forms of treatment. Beyond patient care, the NICoE is committed to ongoing intellectual exchange with the entire Military Health System, private healthcare facilities and academic organizations by facilitating communication and sharing expertise focused on our patient population.



COMMITMENT

Built and equipped through the philanthropic contributions of the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund and operated by the Department of Defense, the NICoE is a tribute to all who serve and a lasting legacy of the patriotic citizens who have made its existence possible. The 72,000 square foot, \$65 million facility was funded entirely by private donations from the American people and then donated to the Department of Defense (DoD).

Located on the campus of Naval Support Activity Bethesda, home of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, the NICoE opened its doors in June of 2010.

THE NICoE APPROACH

The NICoE supports – but does not replace – the work of other DoD Military Treatment Facilities or providers; the NICoE provides advanced diagnostic and treatment planning capabilities and is not a long-term treatment facility. The NICoE possesses a full range of complimentary resources, including comprehensive staff, cutting-edge technology and alternative therapies, and engages families in care from intake to follow-up.

INNOVATION

The NICoE facility offers a high-tech care environment, complemented by a clinical team that provides a high-touch approach to patient assessment with an emphasis on both mind and body.

The NICoE's neuroimaging suite - 3T MRI, PET/CT, MEG - offers an array of technology that is uniquely available all in one location. The NICoE also features a sleep lab and a virtual reality suite with various distinct capabilities. In addition, the NICoE integrates traditional and complementary approaches, providing clinical care, education, and the self-efficacy and self-advocacy skills for service members and their families.

PATIENT REFERRALS AND ACCEPTANCE

Patients must be referred to the NICoE by a Primary Care Manager or treating physicians on the patient's home care team. The NICoE collaborates closely with the PCM to ensure that both the PCM and the patient receive the full benefit of the diagnostic and treatment planning capabilities. The PCM then continues long-term, follow-up patient care utilizing the information gathered and the treatment plans created during the patient's stay at the NICoE.

The clinical factors taken into consideration for patient selection include: history of TBI and comorbid psychological health diagnoses; severity and duration of symptoms; complexity of co-morbidities; combat- and mission-related injuries; confounding social, occupational, and spiritual stressors; ability to independently perform activities of daily living; and capacity to engage safely in an intensive outpatient clinical environment. For those who are not appropriate NICoE candidates, a follow-up mechanism provides recommendations for appropriate treatment modalities. Referrals can be faxed to NICoE Continuity Services at 301-319-3700.

*For questions or more information about NICoE,
please email nicoe@health.mil or call 301.319.3600*

