

Medical Simulation Center Brings Life-Saving Skills to Grafenwoehr

Story by Don Wagner
Soldiers Magazine

Fourteen Soldiers were ambushed upon entering a small building.

In a room filled with smoke and the sounds of gunfire, explosions and screams of agony, the Soldiers found several casualties with a multitude of injuries. The Soldiers treat the wounded.

The "ambush" was simulated, but the training offered by the cadre of the 7th U.S. Army Joint Multinational Training Command in Germany is real.

The Command supports training exercises for U.S. and coalition units deploying throughout the EUCOM, CENTCOM, and AFRICOM areas of responsibility. NATO forces and allied countries, such as Poland, Russia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Romania, also train at its ranges and facilities.

The JMTC's state-of-the-art Medical Simulation Training Center (MSTC) is designed to help Soldiers complete Combat Medic Advanced Skills and Combat Life Saver training.

The training focuses on the three most common causes of death in combat: hemorrhages, blocked airways and collapsed lungs.

"We train our students to save lives in combat," said Sgt. 1st Class Humberto Figueroa, MSTC course manager. The course ensures all students

receive hands-on tactical and technical combat medical training to save lives during small unit operations in close combat.

"We encourage Soldiers to respond and treat



Jose E. Rodriguez

Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Hasbrouck of Grafenwoehr applies a pressure bandage to a simulated victim of a chest wound during training at JMTC's Medical Simulation Training Center in Grafenwoehr, Germany.

casualties within minutes of the "golden hour," said Figueroa. The golden hour is the first 60 minutes after the occurrence of multi-system trauma, and Figueroa added a victim's chances of survival are better if they receive care within that first hour after a severe injury.

Before being "ambushed" and thrown into "combat," to treat simulated "battle-casualties," Soldiers are introduced to life-sized, computer-monitored mannequins connected to a power and fluid supply, making it appear life-like, breathing and bleeding. Each mannequin has different injuries, so the necessary care and treatment of each varies.

The virtual patients live or die based on the quality of care provided by the Soldiers during the training.

Trainers teach Soldiers to perform triage, a process for sorting the injured into groups based on their medical treatment needs.

According to William Goodwin, MSTC instructor and trainer, Soldier-students learn to apply tourniquets in treating severed limbs. They learn to treat a blocked airway, by inserting a tube in the patient's nose to ensure an open airway. Soldiers learn to recognize signs and

symptoms and render life-saving care, such as, treating shock, applying splints, and administering saline and intravenous infusions.

Only when the Soldier-medics master the tasks, do they advance to the next level of training, the combat scenarios.

Audio and video recording systems can record each Soldier's performance in the MSTC combat room during the after-action reviews. The results of each Soldier's performance are analyzed.

The training offered at the JMTC's MSTC affords Soldiers the opportunity to hone their life saving skills in an environment where they can learn from their mistakes, and eventually apply that knowledge on the battlefield. □



Jose E. Rodriguez



Don Wagner

"We encourage Soldiers to respond and treat casualties within minutes of the 'golden hour.'"

Sgt. 1st Class Humberto Figueroa, MSTC course manager

The golden hour is the first 60 minutes after the occurrence of multi-system trauma.

A student at the Medical Simulation Training Center cares for a victim of severe stomach trauma during a scenario in the MSTC combat room. The JMTC provides both U.S. and Coalition Soldiers with realistic medical training through the use of computerized mannequins that breathe and bleed, and live or die based on treatment.