

Alcohol, Drugs, & the Military focus of Feb. 8 talk

By Rick Gross, Prevention Coordinator, Army Substance Abuse Program 01 February 2018



Alcohol, Drugs, & the Military
Dr. Ron Smith
Feb. 8

Dr. Ron Smith will present two talks at Carlisle Barracks Feb. 8 to discuss strategies for combating the problems associated with alcohol and drugs in the military environment.

Alcohol, Drugs & the Military

Dr. R.E. Smith, MD, PhD
Military Addiction Medicine Specialist

08 February

1145-1245- Wil Wascoe Auditorium

1400-1530- Bliss Hall Auditorium

Open to All

It happened again: a man came up to me after a training I provided as the Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator for Carlisle Barracks and expressed his concern about a friend of his who drinks frequently. He briefly described this friend – active duty Officer who had climbed the ranks and now felt immense pressure to perform and succeed. He had developed a habit of drinking alcohol at night to unwind. The man was concerned that his friend's habit was becoming more prevalent, and possibly causing friction between the friend and his wife.

I get variations of this story often. It isn't always an active duty soldier. People describe family members, peers, teenagers or young adults, or even grandchildren. But the theme is the same: alcohol use that started innocently, or drug use that started as experimentation, becomes problematic and in some cases addictive. The people reaching out to me often don't know what to do or say.

Working for the Army since June 2010, I have learned that the military environment offers unique challenges and stressors to its servicemen and women. While the dangers of excessive use are more appreciated and

understood now than they were even 20 years ago, alcohol remains embedded in the military lifestyle.

Dr. Ronald E. Smith (retired Captain, Navy Medical Corps) is all too familiar with the nuances of alcohol use in the military. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps immediately following high school and was soon after appointed to the U.S. Naval Academy, graduating in 1966. After attending medical school and completing a residency at the Mayo Graduate School of Medicine and Naval Hospital San Diego, he was the first physician trained in critical care and later became one of the first physicians involved in the Navy's alcohol treatment program. Through his career he has earned many other accolades and accomplishments. Smith is a man who understands the role of alcohol in the military, and the unique stressors that servicemen and women experience as part of their military service. The level of knowledge, training, and experience this man has is almost unparalleled in the profession.

We are excited to present an opportunity to hear Dr. Smith here at Carlisle Barracks on Thursday, 8 February 2018. He will give two presentations: one in Wil Washcoe auditorium from 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. and one in the Bliss Hall Auditorium from 2 to 3:30 p.m. This training is targeted to service members, active and retired, and their families, as well as all individuals who are in any way linked to the military. This is a unique opportunity to hear a high-level career expert elucidate and discuss strategies for combatting the problems associated with alcohol and drugs in the military environment. We welcome and encourage you to join us. These presentations will count toward annual ASAP training requirements.

About Smith

Captain (Retired) Dr. Ronald E. Smith, Medical Corps, United States Navy, and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis, Uniformed Services University of Health Science, is all too familiar with the nuances of alcohol use in the military. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps upon graduation from Amarillo High School and was soon after appointed to the U. S. Naval Academy, graduating in 1966. He attended the University of Texas Medical School and completed an internal Medicine residency at the Mayo Graduate School of Medicine and Naval Hospital San Diego. Dr. Smith was the first physician trained in critical care medicine by the U.S. Navy, completing his fellowship at the University of Southern California Center for Critically Ill in Los Angeles in 1976. He soon became one of the first physicians involved in Navy alcohol treatment, and was instrumental in the founding of the Betty Ford Center. Dr. Smith is board certified in internal

medicine, emergency medicine, psychiatry, and addiction medicine. He completes his psychoanalytic training at the Southern California Psychoanalytic Institute in Beverly Hills, CA and has a doctorate in philosophy and psychoanalysis.

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