

Five Army programs doing well, according to IMCOM survey

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Last year Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch, the commanding general of the U.S. Army Installation Management Command, focused his efforts on the future of the IMCOM community. To do this he asked the Soldiers, families and civilians that make up the Army community three questions: “Are we doing the right things? Are we doing things right? What are we missing?”

“The point of asking for input from so many different people is to build a shared vision of where we are going in the next year,” said Lynch. “Once we have a shared vision of what right looks like, we can figure out how to get there from here.”

To figure out what right looks like, the 2010 Installation Management community’s Campaign Plan laid out a vision, strategy and the way ahead for providing the programs, services and facilities that support Soldiers and their families.

Feedback from IMCOM community members has shown that they are satisfied with several Army programs such as the Exceptional Family Members Program, Survivor Outreach Services, the Total Army Sponsorship Program, the Army Substance Abuse Program, and the Army Continuing Education System.

All five of the programs are available at Carlisle Barracks.

Survivor Outreach Service

“The SOS program at Carlisle Barracks provides dedicated and comprehensive support to survivors of deceased Soldiers throughout 11 counties in Central Pennsylvania,” said David Cumiskey, AFAP Program Manager.

“Two of the most important things that SOS does is to make sure that survivors are receiving all the benefits that they are entitled to and that they remain an integral part of the Army family for as long as they desire,” said Cumiskey.

However, one of the problems that many survivors face is that many of them do not have a Department of Defense decal on their car, which means if they are not in the military or retired military, they must obtain a visitors pass to come on post. To make it easier for these family members to access Army installations IMCOM Protection Services Division has announced that survivors will be able to apply for a Survivor Decal, which will work like the standard installation access decal, and facilitate easier access to the post.

Current DoD Physical Access Control policy requires everyone seeking entrance to a military installation to stop at the gate and present a government-issued, photo identification. Survivors must still follow that policy, but once they have obtained a decal, they will no longer be required to apply for a visitor's pass each time they enter an installation.

“We have requested 150 of these decals,” said Linda Slaughter, the director of the Carlisle Barracks Army Community Services. Once Carlisle Barracks receives these decals more information will be provide on how to obtain one.

The SOS program at Carlisle Barracks also provides free financial counseling for survivors. “The financial planning offered is anything the survivor may need, be that planning for a child's college, reducing debt, or investing the Soldier's life insurance,” said Slaughter.

Exceptional Family Member Program

The EFMP program is a mandatory enrollment program that works with military and civilian agencies to provide comprehensive and coordinated community support, housing, educational, medical and personnel services to families with special needs. Family members must be screened for EFMP enrollment prior to accompanying a Soldier on an OCONUS assignment.

“Enrollment in EFMP is increasing due to the diagnosis of autism,” said Anne Hurst, Carlisle Barracks Family Advocacy program.

“One of the things that many people don't realize about the EFMP program is that the Army will fund up to 40 hours a month of respite care for families,” said Hurst. “This allows the family members to take a break from caring for their loved one so they can run errands or just get away for a few hours. It doesn't matter what your rank is, everyone needs a break.”

The program at Carlisle Barracks provides assistance from a wide range of areas including youth services which runs an EFMP Sports Program, the school liaison office which assists families in making sure that the child's school has the necessary resources and facilities for the child's needs. The post

housing office will also work with EFMP families if they have specific housing needs such as access ramps for their housing.

Army Substance Abuse Program

“One of the biggest changes in the ASAP program is that the clinical side of drug and alcohol counseling is being transferred from MEDCOM to IMCOM,” said Dan Hocker, Carlisle Barracks ASAP Program Manager. “What this means for us at Carlisle Barracks, is that the counselors will move from Dunham Clinic to building 632 where the ASAP offices are located.”

The move will begin March 31, and be finalized on April 4.

“There is a common misconception that all ASAP does is drug testing,” said Ann Wolf, Prevention Coordinator, ASAP. “However we provide prevention education training for both military and civilian personnel.”

ASAP also runs the Installation Employee Assistance Program which provides short-term counseling, education and mediation to civilian employees and military family members who may need help.

“One of the biggest fears that Soldiers have coming to the ASAP program is that their commander will find out that they are seeking treatment,” said Mancini. “For both self-referral and command referral the Soldiers command team is notified that they are seeking treatment. This is so the Soldier will be given the time needed to get treated not for punitive reasons,” said Mancini. “We do respect patient confidentiality.”

Total Army Sponsorship Program

“We are currently reengineering the Carlisle Barracks Soldier and civilian sponsorship process, along the new Army model,” said Elton Manske, the Director of Human Resources.

According to an Army directive that is expected to be published soon, the two programs will merge into one. “The idea is to merge the two similar programs under one system to facilitate newcomers,” said Manske.

“The reason for the reengineering of the process is so the installation will be able to gain much better visibility of incoming individuals, especially civilian personnel,” said Manske. “Incoming permanent party military are already tracked through this system. We are adding the civilian personnel to the existing military system. They will be the ones who will see the most change to the system.”

“With a standard web based system Soldiers and civilians can go on-line and see who their sponsors are,

have access to information about their new installation and their sponger, and then provide feedback on their experience.”

Army Continuing Education Services Center

While Carlisle Barracks has a small number of Soldiers, the Army Continuing Education Services Center helps nearly 1,200 Soldiers sign up for classes and receives tuition assistance. “We assist Soldiers all over Pennsylvania between reservists, active duty Soldiers and recruiters,” said Susan Ziegler, Education Services Specialist.

The biggest change to the ACES program is of course the post-911 GI Bill, which allows Soldiers to transfer their benefits to their spouse or their children. “You must be in the Army for six years to transfer GI bill benefits to your spouse and 10 years to transfer them to your children,” said Ziegler. “While you are in the Army you can add people but once you get out you cannot add anyone else. So be sure you have everything in place prior to leaving the Army.”

The ACESC is located at building 632.