



DEFENSE CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE
For Psychological Health & Traumatic Brain Injury

Questions to the Board:

- 1) Request Guidance for Prescribing and the Proper Use of Psychiatric Medications
- 2) Request Guidance for Use of Complementary and Alternative Medical Treatments

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Background

- **Psychiatric medications vary widely in safety, addictive properties, interactivity, and overall impact**
- **Recent media attention and anecdotal evidence have highlighted an increased use of psychiatric medications**
- **The use of complementary and alternative treatments have also drawn questioning attention from the media**
- **Please provide recommendations for steps we might take in these two areas to ensure health and safety of our warriors**

Questions

- **What medications are commonly recommended for PTSD and Acute Stress Disorder?**
- **What psychotropic medications may be safe for a deployed combat environment or other operational environments?**
- **What medications carry an increased risk for suicidal or violent behavior?**
- **Should warriors receive talk therapy with prescribed medications?**

Questions

- **What medications have a potential for abuse?**
- **What procedures should be in place to ensure off-label prescription medication use is consistent with current standards of practice?**
- **What policies should be in place to ensure psychiatric medication use does not result in drug seeking and/or drug dependence?**
- **What are recommendations for psychiatric medication quality improvement?**

Questions

- **What are recommendations for drug interactions with over the counter medications and dietary supplements?**
- **What are the best practice standards that can be applied for treatment and prescribing medications for multiple and various symptoms related to the mental health of our warriors?**
- **How do you recommend best practices be determined?**

Questions

- **What are the Board's thoughts and recommendations regarding complementary and alternative medicine (CAM)?**
- **What level of evidence exists to support CAM?**
- **Does a threshold for standard of care exist for CAM?**
- **Advise on if/how Department might extend TRICARE program to cover these benefits**

Conclusion

- **These two areas cover very important topics in helping the Department provide the best care possible for our Wounded, Ill, and Injured**
- **Why is this information needed from the Defense Health Board?**
 - **Having an esteemed body of external health experts weigh in and advise increases credibility**
- **Two additional points:**
 - **Encourage the Board to speak with those recently redeployed**
 - **Encourage the Board to consider similar professions where individuals face danger (police, fireman, etc)**
- **Would appreciate the Board's recommendations by March 31, 2011**