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Naval Medical Center San Diego Opens New Multidisciplinary Spine Center

Lt. Cmdr. Charles Craven Jr. | Naval Medical Center San Diego Public Affairs

April 08, 2010

Naval Medical Center San Diego (NMCS D) celebrated the grand opening of the new Multidisciplinary Spine Center (MDSC) with a ribbon-cutting ceremony April 2.

The creation of the MDSC marks a significant collaborative effort between the departments of Orthopedics, Physical Therapy, Interventional Radiology, Anesthesia Pain Management and Primary Care Sports Medicine services at NMCS D. Through the combined efforts of these departments, patients receive comprehensive diagnosis and treatment for spinal disorders in one clinic visit. Patients can be seen by an orthopedic spine surgeon, a physical therapist as well as receive diagnostic and therapeutic treatments by interventional radiology and pain management specialists on the same day.



"The concept of a MDSC marks a new era in spinal care for the patients," said director of MDSC and NMCS D's Orthopedic Spine Surgeon Lt. Cmdr. Eric Harris. "By having all the players on the spine treatment team seeing patients in close proximity and communicating regularly about patient treatment plans, we have been able to more effectively manage our patients with a wide variety of spinal ailments. We have all the tools in place here to make the logistics of patient care seamless."

The typical injuries seen at MDSC include everything from low back pain to fractures of the cervical, thoracic, or lumbar spine. In addition, MDSC treats degenerative conditions of the spine as well as scoliosis and other complex deformities of the entire spine.

"Lt. Cmdr. Harris, Lt. Cmdr. Paul G. Shupe and the entire spinal surgery team, including the corpsman and nurses are top shelf," said Cmdr. Lawrence F. Guest, an NMCS D patient. "They really take care of you like mom and dad would and I appreciate being able to be seen by physical therapy and the surgeon in one visit."

MDSC currently has the capability to perform nearly 200 surgeries and accommodate approximately 5,000 outpatient encounters per year. NMCS D has the potential to more than double those numbers with two more spine surgeons joining the team and interaction with the sports medicine physicians at the SMART clinics.

"The multidisciplinary approach allows patients to begin care immediately from all angles," said Kirsten M. Wiley, a physical therapist on the MDSC team.

MDSC is made up of a staff surgeon, resident, nurse, 1-2 corpsman and a physical therapist. MDSC is located in the Physical Therapy Department in building three and open between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. every Friday along with every second and fourth Thursday's of the month.