



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

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MEMORANDUM FOR ALMAJCOM/SG

FROM: HQ USAF/SG
110 Luke Ave, Room 400
Bolling AFB DC 20032-7050

SUBJECT: After Duty Hours Mental Health Evaluations

The MTF emergency department (ED) is the safest and most appropriate venue for conducting after-hours mental health assessments, including suicide risk assessments. In MTFs without an ED, the MTF will handle these mental health assessments similar to other acute medical emergencies, using community resources. These evaluations should not be performed in places such as the duty section, at the patient's residence, or after-hours in a closed MTF since medical support and security are not available.

On-call personnel performing after-hours mental health evaluations face an increased risk of work-related assaults when working in locations other than the MTF. In such venues, they often have no back up or means of requesting assistance such as communication devices and alarm systems. In accordance with DoDD 6490.1, *Mental Health Evaluations of Members of the Armed Forces*, the unit commander is responsible for taking precautions to ensure the safety of the service member and others, and for making arrangements for transportation to the emergency evaluation. Ideally, transportation of emergency mental health patients should occur in a manner similar to other acute medical emergencies. Informal assessments of the patient's condition prior to transport are counterproductive.

The presence of established procedures, formalized by memoranda of understanding with civilian facilities, coordinated in advance of a crisis, ensures collaboration and cooperation between mental health personnel and unit leadership when managing individuals experiencing mental health emergencies. A mental health provider should be readily available as a consultant to advise the unit on safety precautions including the appropriate type of transportation. I encourage Life Skills Support Center staff to work with medical and line leadership to formulate local processes to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all involved.

My point of contact on this issue is Lt Col Kevin Mulligan, Chief Consultant for BSC Clinical Services, AFMOA/SGZC, 110 Luke Avenue, Room 405, Bolling AFB DC 20032-7050, DSN 297-4061 or e-mail: kevin.mulligan@pentagon.af.mil.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James G. Roudebush".

JAMES G. ROUDEBUSH
Major General, USAF, MC, CFS
Deputy Surgeon General