

White House Taps Military Medicine Expertise for Emergency Preparedness Campaign

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Courtesy Photo

The White House Administration alongside other government leadership announced a new national public service campaign Oct. 6, designed to boost public awareness of what each person can do to help save lives during a major disaster.

The campaign, called "Stop the Bleed," is based on the success of the U.S. military in reducing combat deaths during recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. In those cases, since most combat fatalities occurred on the battlefield prior to reaching a hospital and the majority of potentially preventable deaths occurred due to hemorrhage, bleeding control is now a cornerstone of the improved survival techniques used by the Armed Forces.

A person who is bleeding can die from blood loss within five minutes. The "Stop the Bleed" campaign aims to teach everyday citizens basic techniques in hemorrhage control so that an injured person has a greater chance of living long enough to reach a doctor's care at the hospital.

“The Department of Defense’s clinical experience and research in these areas underpins this entire effort,” said Col. Todd Rasmussen, director of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command’s Combat Casualty Care Research Program, during his remarks at the campaign launch.

The CCCRP played an integral role in the development of the campaign, creating the “Stop the Bleed” logo and official campaign slogan, as well as advising the DOD and National Security Council on program content.

The American College of Surgeons has also joined the campaign, establishing the Hartford Consensus Group that has championed the translation of military advances in external hemorrhage control to bystanders, law enforcement, firefighters and emergency medical service medics.

“The efforts of this group have been compiled into the Hartford Consensus Group compendium that was recently released as a special communication of the college in an effort to improve survival from these events which are, unfortunately, becoming increasingly common in the United States,” said Chairman of the Committee on Tactical Combat Casualty Care Dr. Frank Butler, who is also the director of prehospital trauma care at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research Joint Trauma System.

As a special operations surgeon while on active duty, Butler learned firsthand that someone with severe bleeding can bleed to death in a matter of minutes—often before the arrival of a trained medic. He has also seen the dramatic increases in survival achieved by the 75th Ranger Regiment and other special operations units that adopted the use of tourniquets and hemostatic dressings.

“Thanks largely to the efforts of the Tactical Combat Casualty Care group that have been ongoing since 1993, all of the U.S. military is now trained to provide life-saving external hemorrhage control interventions,” said Butler.

Butler added that these advances in combat trauma care have saved many lives on the battlefield, and now this knowledge will do the same thing in the civilian sector.

Learn more about how to “Stop the Bleed” and help save a life by accessing training and resources: <http://www.dhs.gov/stopthebleed> (<http://www.dhs.gov/stopthebleed>).