

Emergency Medicine Residents receive outstanding scores on national exam

By Amy Stover

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Residents in Darnall Army Community Hospital's Emergency Medicine Residency Program scored the highest test average in the nation on the annual In-Training Exam given by the American Board of Emergency Medicine.

This is the fourth year in a row the program has earned top honors by receiving the highest average score on the exam out of 125 civilian and military emergency medicine residency programs around the country.

"These outstanding scores are a reflection of the excellent training we provide here at Darnall," said Col. Bernard L. DeKoning, hospital commander.

"This shows that we have a well constructed program that emphasizes the key areas of learning," said Maj. Michael Miller, emergency residency program director.

One of the senior residents, Dr. (Capt.) Chad Crystal was one of the top five residents nationwide. Crystal is now deployed to Iraq.

Dr. (Capt.) Sudip Bose, the interim assistant program director, helped the residents prepare for the exam by organizing review sessions and spending much of his free time helping them prepare. He was also named Staff of the Year by the Emergency Medicine Department in 2002.

"Dr. Bose was key to our residents' success. He was always encouraging them to study," said Miller.

Almost all emergency medicine residency programs take the exam, said Dr. Miller. He credited the support of the senior leadership as essential to the success of the program.

"Our senior leaders allow us to maximize our training by attending conferences and specific training courses, such as ultrasound training that many other programs don't have the opportunity to attend," he said.

The test can be an indication of how well a resident will do on the board certification exam. Studies have shown that if a

resident score above 85 to 90 percent correct on the in-service exam, their chances of passing the written ABEM board certification exam approaches 99 percent, according to an ABEM study.

"We are training in a pretty autonomous environment. Without the specialists a medical center has to consult with, our residents must do more which leads to excellent better training opportunities. This really is a great place to train emergency medicine residents," Miller said.

"We like to think that residents who are taught well will teach others just as well in the future, continuing Darnall's tradition as a great place to train residents," said Bose.

Upon graduation from medical school, physicians have the opportunity to enter a residency program to earn specialized training in a certain field of medicine. The three-year-long emergency medicine residency program is one of the more popular programs throughout the nation and physicians wishing to enter the program face stiff competition.

Residents take an in-service exam in February of each year of their residency which tests their knowledge of emergency medicine. The test, administered in the same format as the board certification examination, helps programs determine the quality of their program.

"It will be a challenge in the next year to maintain our excellent achievement scores on the exam. We have a lot of our staff members deployed right now and many of our other staff members are moving on to other assignments. Although it will be a challenge, we are ready for it," said Miller.

According to the American Board of Emergency Medicine, the purpose of the ABEM in-training examination is to "provide one piece of information to Emergency Medicine residents and their faculty to supplement other evaluation information that may be used to determine the residents' degree of preparedness for taking the ABEM written certification examination."

