**MEDCOM History**

The U.S Army Medical Command (MEDCOM) is a unit managed by the Army Surgeon General, and it is responsible for the management and the provision of medical treatment facilities to the United States Army. The paper enables the familiarization of MEDCOM by providing the unit's historical information.

The Congress allowed the creation of a ‘Medical Service’ on 27th July 1775 where it provided one healthcare practitioner to every 10 workers. This move was of great importance because it increased soldiers’ accessibility to medical services. Before the authorization, many soldiers died because they were unable to access health care while in the war zone. Besides this, it saved the U.S costs associated with burials and transporting injured soldiers to medical facilities because it made nurses available to soldiers in the war zone and military camp (Housing Source, 2012).

General Order 29 allowed the army to have hospital stewards and all medical services in the military camp. The order’s importance was the attaching of Hospital Corps to the medical department to improve their accessibility to training facilities. (The Official U.S Army Magazine, 2014).  Besides this, it also allowed them to have a chance to advance their careers and be more skilled hence enabling them to provide efficient medical services to the members of the US army. Also, the order paved way for the formation of (The Army Medical Department) AMEDD which coordinated health care in the U.S army.

  The position of the Hospital Steward arose in December 1775: five months after the Congress authorized medical service. However, it was never authorized until 17 July 1776. However, despite its authorization, the steward’s significance was not clearly defined. The Congress clearly defined the position in 1777 after stating that every steward would be responsible for 100 sick soldiers hence enabling soldiers’ recovery and access to treatment. Two years later the Congress allowed all military hospitals to have a Hospital Steward hence improving hospital accountability. The steward position was abolished in the period from 1784 to 1789 because this period lacked an organized medical department. However, the position was officially authorized in 1886 and permanently by attaching it to the Medical Department.

First and foremost, the Hospital Stewards were taught how to read and write. Secondly, the Congress demanded the stewards be taught Chemistry and Pharmacy to make them know about various medicines and the human body. Also, they were trained to be Mathematicians because they were also responsible for hospital accounting (Simonetti, 2005). Later, they were trained to be highly ethical and approachable individuals. They were also required to be experts in logistics when their responsibilities expanded. The stewards were then required to perform physical training like other soldiers so that they could defend themselves when enemies infiltrated their camp or war zone. The physical training also enabled them to confidently perform treatment services on the battlefield. Further, the Medical Field Service School was created in 1920 to provide specialized training to stewards.

The World War resulted in a great famine in Russia and this threatened the lives of Armenian refugees. For this reason, in 1921 the 28th US president decided to help Armenian refugees by requiring the hospital stewards to provide them relief food. With the help of many civilians, he established the American relief Administration Program which had several stewards in it (Simonetti, 2005). The stewards claimed that it was a hard humanitarian mission because of the hostile political climate during that period They established an American-Armenian medical center that provided food and treatment services to more than 3,000 Armenian refugees. They managed to eliminate diseases such as typhoid and smallpox through vaccination programs. This humanitarian mission resulted in the survival of many Armenians who were to die of hunger and hazardous infections.

**References**

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