Epidemiology

Mission

Our primary activities are managing the Accession Medical Standards Analysis and Research Activity (AMSARA) efforts in support of evidence-based DoD medical standards and developing collaborations to conduct epidemiologic research using unique military resources to benefit the health of our military and civilian populations.

Major Accomplishments

- The quadrennial review for the medical accession standards by the Accession Medical Standards Working Group (AMSWG) was completed and led to the evidence-based publication of DoD Instruction 6130.04, Medical Standards for Appointment, Enlistment, or Induction in the Military Services in April 28, 2010.
- The Accession of Recruit Motivation and Strength (ARMS) study in Army enlistees compared those who exceed weight/body fat standards but passed a physical fitness test to those who were weight/body fat qualified. No increase in attrition and minimal increase in morbidity outcomes including heat illness and musculoskeletal injury were observed.
- The 2010 AMSARA Annual Report was published with descriptive statistics of applicants and accessions for enlisted service, including attrition, medical waivers, hospitalizations, disability discharges, and existed prior to service discharges.

Scope of Problem

- Recruiting, screening, and training costs are approximately $75,000 per enlistee
- About 11% (>18,000/year) of recruits fail to complete Initial Entry Training
- About 3% leave with Existed Prior to Service (EPTS) discharge conditions
- About 30% of enlistees fail to finish first tour of duty
- The current accession screening process disqualifies many who can serve successfully:
  - Active Duty accessions have a 6% waiver rate
  - Few of those waived receive an EPTS discharge for the waived condition
- The current accession screening process fails to identify many disqualifying conditions:
  - Approximately 3% of all accessions receive an EPTS discharge