

102nd MEDICAL GROUP

LINEAGE

102 USAF Clinic
102 Medical Group

STATIONS

Otis ANGB, MA

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Col. Maureen McCarthy

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

2007 The 102nd Medical Group of Otis Air National Guard Base took a sixteen day trip to San Diego, Calif. Their mission: to provide medical care at the Indian Health Council Clinic in Valley Center, San Diego County. The clinic provides care for nine tribes in areas such as general medicine, general dental, ophthalmology and chiropractic care. It's estimated that the clinic serves close to 7,500 registered Native American patients. The number and the need were great, but the Medical Group went in prepared and enthusiastic. The group consisted of capable Airmen who assisted in everything from administration to examinations. Staff Sgt. Sarah Perry of the group was involved in the coordination of the trip. She and Tech Sgt. Cindy Thomas organized the medical records of the patients being examined at the clinic, and handled administration. Capt. Christina Sampsonis, the group's physician assistant, dealt with patients throughout the trip. She said that

because the clinic is mainly a primary care/family medicine center, they saw a lot of babies for checkups and handled things like diabetes and hypertension (high blood pressure). They actually dealt with a trauma the first day. A man that had been in a motorcycle accident was brought to the clinic where the captain and others worked on him a little before sending him to the nearest hospital. Capt. Sampsonis also had the opportunity to make home visits to the Native Americans that aren't able to get to the clinic. She said that it was tough at times to see the poverty and conditions that some of the people up in the mountains live in. The patients were grateful considering they couldn't even make it to the clinic for something as simple as a yearly checkup. The medical staff at the clinic was also grateful because the Medical Group helped lighten their load during their time on the reservation. Treating patients was not the only goal of this trip. The medical group played a huge role in developing and augmenting emergency action plans for the Indian reservation. Sergeant Perry said that up until the medical group arrived, the reservation did not have any effective plans that could be implemented in case of an emergency. The group made it a priority to develop emergency action plans with the Native Americans. For example, one of the scenarios that they discussed was a gas tank spill. There is much poverty on the reservation in conjunction with high disease rates. Many of the Native Americans on this reservation were diabetics. Sergeant Perry said that one woman came into the clinic with a blood sugar level of over 700. The American Diabetes Association recommends 80 mg/dL to 120 mg/dL before meals and less than 160 mg/dL 1 to 2 hours after meals for diabetics. This extreme blood sugar level rendered the woman not fit to even drive due to its effects on her eyesight. This is an example of the issues that are being worked on by groups such as our very own medical group. There is progress being made. The medical clinic on the reservation is a clean, modern facility with the necessary technology needed to address the needs of the Native Americans. Sergeants Perry and Thomas felt their trip did not change the way the people live, but that they did provide the help that was needed to move the reservation in the right direction. Tech. Sgt. Tom Burchell was among a break-off group that was sent out to the Mexico/California border at Russian Hill. They spent a total of nine days at the border. Two of those days were used to train the crew and familiarize them with the equipment they would use. The ambulances were even different; Ford SUVs had been transformed into the emergency vehicles. The crew provided medical support to the Army group that was stationed there. Sergeant Burchell and others were paired with Army medics who had previously served in Iraq. He said that his time with them gave him a firsthand perspective of what he'll face in Iraq as he and others are deployed in the near future. At the border, they treated things like burns and made sure that the soldiers were sufficiently hydrated and protected from the sun in the 100 degree weather. Treating burns and providing sunblock might not seem very glamorous, but this crew provided exactly what the soldiers protecting our border needed. All in all, the Medical Group had a challenging but fulfilling time. The compassionate work that the group accomplished on the Indian reservation is a testament to the work this team does on Otis Air National Guard Base every day.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources