

120 MEDICAL GROUP



MISSION

LINEAGE

120 USAF Dispensary
120 Medical Group

STATIONS

Great Falls, MT

ASSIGNMENTS

120 Airlift Wing

COMMANDERS

LTC William B. Gerlach

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The medical department was established 27 June 1947. It consisted of a three man aid station attached to the 186th Fighter Interceptor Squadron and remained as such until 16 April 1956, when the 120th USAF Infirmary came into being. The unit then grew from its three man aid station to an authorized strength of nine officers and 36 airmen. The unit remained as the 120th USAF Infirmary until 5 July 1957, when it was re organized into the present 120th USAF Dispensary (A) with an authorized strength of 12 officers and 34 airmen. The medical unit has grown from the one room aid station to its present 18 room location.

A combined effort by the Montana Air National Guard and the American Red Cross turned a sad story into one of triumph for a North Dakota family. Just one day old, the infant was in critical condition and needed more blood. The Williston hospital contacted the Red Cross Blood Bank in Great Falls about 8:00 P.M. The Red Cross contacted the local blood donors and the 120th. As the donors were giving blood the 120th was preparing a T-33 for flight. As soon as the blood was drawn it was rushed to Gore Hill and the T-33 departed for Williston. On landing at about 9:30 P.M., the blood was rushed to the hospital and a third transfusion took place which saved the lad's life.

For two and a half days beginning on March 17, twenty-one members of the 120 Clinic were placed on state active duty in response to a short strike by workers at the Boulder River School and Hospital.

Desert Storm saw 72 of its members activated in support of the effort, all of them providing backfill at U.S. bases. The 120th Clinic ran the 842nd Strategic Hospital at Grand Forks AFB for 56 days starting on 8 February 1991. Security at "the Hill" was increased during the period.

A new Medical/Dining facility was approved in 1994 and construction of the 22,000 square foot building began on September 1. It was programmed to be completed within 12 months. On December 1, the fire department building was accepted for occupation and guard/city fire crews moved into the new 19,000 square foot facility. Touted as the largest in the state, the fire station was the first in the US to be funded through three separate sources. The National Guard dedicated \$700,000 toward its construction while the Federal Aviation Administration contributed \$1,215,000 and the Great Falls Airport Authority funded \$290,000.

Air Force Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.