

JOSEPH POSSENTI, JR.
Secretary
CATHY D'ANGELO
Treasurer
FRANCIS CATANIA
Solicitor
JOSEPH VISCUSO
Engineer
RAYMOND NICKSON
Inspector



COMMISSIONERS:

ROCCO GASPARI, JR.
President

RAYMOND BALDWIN
Vice President

JOHNSCHLACHTUN
MARK LAMPLUGH
SHAWN BEDWELL

1410 Market Street, P.O. Box 1255
Linwood, PA 19061-7255
Phone: (610) 485-1472 ~ Fax: (610) 485-1432
lowerchitwp@comcast.net

VIA FED-EX FIRST OVERNIGHT

April 30, 2025

Fed Ex No: [REDACTED]

Honorable Josh Shapiro
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Governor's Office
501 North 3rd Street
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: Scheduled Closing of Crozer and Taylor Hospitals in
Delaware County

Governor,

We need your help.

I am the President of the Lower Chichester Township ("LCT") Board of Commissioners in Delaware County. I write on behalf of the five (5) elected LCT Commissioners. The Township is a community of about 3400 residents nestled in the southeasternmost corner of Pennsylvania between Marcus Hook Borough, the City of Chester and Upper Chichester Township. Many of our residents are over 60.

Our community is facing a crisis regarding access to emergency medical care and we need your immediate help.

The LCT Commissioners recently were forced to declare a Township wide emergency because of the scheduled Friday closing of Crozer Hospital and Taylor Hospital and because of the general shortage of Ambulance and EMS services to transport patients needing emergency care to hospitals.

Lives are in danger not only in Lower Chichester Township but in the communities around us and throughout Delaware County, including any victims of unfortunate accidents along the I-95 corridor which bisects the County.

A Federal Bankruptcy Judge in Texas is presiding over the Friday closing of our essential local hospitals. What will we do without the hospitals?

My neighbor, an 80-year-old widow who has lived in the Township all her life deserves to know that when she has an emergency and calls 911 someone will come to help her and get her to the hospital. What happens to my neighbor who suffers a life-threatening accident at his job at one of the Refineries on the Delaware river and needs quick medical attention? Are these trauma center/ emergency room closings and lack of transport a death sentence for my retired firefighter neighbor who suffers an age-related stroke or heart attack and who now won't get treatment within the Golden Hour after a traumatic injury.

Our residents don't deserve to be treated like this.

Every day I read and hear from people trying to assign blame for these long developing problems. My Commissioners and I have a **lot to say** about how we got here but now is the time to act to solve the problem. We can talk about how we got here later.

Here is our Request:

Would you please deploy the Pennsylvania National Guard Medical Units headquartered at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania to staff hospital type trauma units/ emergency rooms at Crozer and Taylor until these crises are resolved?

My staff has advised me that past Pennsylvania Governors have used this special problem-solving power at your disposal.

I am advised that no other Pennsylvania elected officials have this power. Apparently, you can mobilize and assign the Pennsylvania National Guard Medical Units to operate hospital type trauma units/emergency rooms until these crises pass.

These special National Guard Medical Units have tested experience in these chaotic situations and the expertise to do what is needed to handle this dire emergency.

Our research (attached) shows the following:

One of the county's largest Army National Guard medical schools is located in Fort Indiantown Gap, PA.

The Pennsylvania National Guard is constantly training to provide the type of trauma related services now critically needed by our Southeastern PA residents.

Recently the Pennsylvania National Guard joined with Penn State Health to train medical soldiers in areas such as emergency medicine, labor and delivery, and emergency medical services.

With Crozer and Taylor Hospitals' closing **Southeastern PA residents are desperate for these services now.**

Indeed, the Pennsylvania Guard Medical Units are the right problem-solving tool at your disposal. When you need medical help fast you dispatch them. These skilled National Medical Guardsmen and Guardswomen stand ready, willing and able to serve. Let's put them to work.

Attached are copies of selected news articles showcasing the skills and experience of these specialized units:

- October 25, 2017, *Pennsylvania National Guard sends medical personnel and equipment to the U.S. Virgin Islands*, by Sgt. Zane Craig.
- May 22, 2020, *Fighting an invisible enemy: Pa. National Guard coordinates state's largest medical military team to respond to coronavirus*, PennLive.
- March 9, 2023, *Pennsylvania Guard Institute Educates Medics Across Army*, by Maj. Travis Mueller, Joint Force Headquarters- Pennsylvania National Guard.
- February 11, 2025, *Pennsylvania Guardsmen Graduate New Hospital Partnership Program*, by Maj. Travis Mueller, Joint Force Headquarters - Pennsylvania National Guard

We are sending this letter and its attachments overnight via FedEx after calling your office and being told that there is no mechanism to email communication to you and that your office fax is not working. Your website advises the following options to Contact you: Call the Governor's Office, Text the Governor, Send Mail or to complete the Online Form within the "General Contact Form". Unfortunately, letters and attachments (like this one) are not able to be attached to your Online Form. Also, your website says the following:

Due to mail security screening and processing times, the online form is the fastest method to write to the Governor's Office.

Link for webpage [Contact Us | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

We will send a message to you on your Online Form within the "General Contact Form" on your webpage. The message will include the Fed Ex tracking number so that you can identify this letter when you receive it tomorrow morning. We will also post the letter and attachments on the Lower Chichester Township website for public viewing. The website is: <http://lowerchitwp.com/township>

Governor, we look forward to hearing from you or your representatives. Our phone number, email address and fax number are on the letterhead on the first page of this letter.

The time to talk is over. It's time to act. Let's solve this problem together.

**For the Board of Commissioners of
Lower Chichester Township**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rocco Gaspari, Jr.", written over a faint blue line.

By: Rocco Gaspari, Jr., President

Four (4) Attachments



Pennsylvania National Guard sends medical personnel and equipment to the U.S. Virgin Islands



Pennsylvania National Guard sends medical personnel and equipment to the U.S. Virgin Islands as part of Hurricane Maria relief efforts. Soldiers with the Pennsylvania Army National Guard Medical Detachment and with the 108th Area Support Medical Company, 213th Regional Support Group, Pennsylvania National Guard stand with Maj. Gen. Tony Carrelli, Pennsylvania's adjutant general, Oct. 12, 2017 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, before departing to the United States Virgin Islands in support of Hurricane Maria relief operations.

By Sgt. Zane Craig / Published Oct. 25, 2017

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, Pa. – The Pennsylvania National Guard sent 20 Soldiers to assist the U.S. Virgin Islands in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria on Oct. 12.

The anticipated mission for the Guard members is to provide first aid, point of injury care and sick call for the service members providing relief to civilians there.

In addition, they will be providing urgent care to civilians on the islands of St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix, expanding an outreach mission established by the preceding unit.

Upon arrival the medical personnel will integrate with thousands of National Guard members, active-duty military, and first responders.

"We have a great opportunity to do some good in this world, and do some meaningful service. It's an honor to command these Soldiers," said Maj. Daniel Wise, commander of the 108th Area Support Medical Company.

Additional Pennsylvania National Guard members are on duty at the Pennsylvania National Guard's joint emergency operations center. The center maintains continuous communications with National Guard Bureau and the state emergency management agency in order to anticipate future requirements that could be assigned to Pennsylvania National Guard Soldiers and Airmen.

There are about 20 Pennsylvania National Guard members and two CH-47 Chinook helicopters in Puerto Rico supporting relief operations. Last month the Pennsylvania National Guard sent a variety of both troops and equipment to support Texas after Hurricane Harvey, Florida after Hurricane Irma and the U.S. Virgin Islands during Hurricane Maria.

Fighting an invisible enemy: Pa. National Guard coordinates state's largest medical military team to respond to coronavirus

Updated: May. 22, 2020, 6:53 a.m. | Published: May. 22, 2020, 5:30 a.m.

HARRISBURG -- Maj. Nathan Snee has trained for a lot of different scenarios.

The Lebanon resident is a medical planning officer with the 193rd Special Operations Medical Group of the Air National Guard, specializing in the military acronym of CBRN – chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear events.

While he's trained for heading up responses to these events, he's leading a new kind of group to fight a new kind of enemy. An invisible one.

The coronavirus.

"It's something that's totally different," he said.

And the Pennsylvania Army and Air National Guard are playing a big role in this new fight.

About 1,300 Pennsylvania National Guard members have been activated over the past two months to help out through the pandemic. Some have been in the news as they filled staff vacancies at nursing homes, but they've had plenty of other jobs in this fight, too. They've helped establish testing sites, have transported supplies and trained people in the use of personal protective equipment.

These activities are happening all over Pennsylvania, and it's all being coordinated out of Harrisburg in a joint medical operation.

It's called Joint Task Force Iron, headquartered at the 28th Infantry Division's location on 14th and Calder streets. Their command center is a large room designed for warfighter exercises – large screens on the walls, stadium seating with laptop plug ins. It has now been converted into a coronavirus-response hub in what military leaders say is the first major medical operation of its kind in Pennsylvania, combining Army and Air Force National Guard, along with some Reservists who had been activated early on.



The Pennsylvania Army and Air National Guard are working together to fight the coronavirus, coordinating out of Harrisburg. Here the task force's leadership holds a briefing while social distancing.

Army National Guard Lt. Col. Mark Thomas, of Mechanicsburg, is the operations officer for the task force, helping to coordinate the deployment of troops to support the missions requested by the communities around the state, he said.

“What’s unique about this mission is it’s the first time that we have mobilized a large force to work within the medical community in support of staffing needs in Pennsylvania long-term care facilities,” he said.

He explained it starts with the medical planning team, which goes in to assess what kind of support a nursing home needs. They then provide that support, which often involves assisting with staffing shortages.

“We have nurses and medics who go in and backfilling those personnel,” Thomas explained. “We are also providing some additional personnel to perform ongoing, daily duties to help sterilize and provide a safe environment.”

While many of the guard members have been deployed overseas at one point in their careers, they may not necessarily have experience in elder care and are experiencing that for the first time, he said. But some are also in this line of work for their civilian jobs, bringing in their expertise.

“The National Guard has hundreds of different jobs,” Thomas said. “We’re very proud of our personnel and the missions they’ve performed. This is a new role for us, it has worked out very well, and we’re glad we were able to assist the communities at their time of need.”

Snee has been part of this new fight since the beginning. As the task force’s medical planning officer, he helped establish the state’s first coronavirus testing site in Montgomery County back in March. It’s still in operation and has conducted more than 10,500 tests so far, he said.

He also coordinates the teams that assess and go into to nursing homes.

“Based on their needs, we’re able to tailor a team to go out and provide support,” he said.

So far, the guard has helped out in one way or another at about two dozen nursing homes.

But the troops out in the field need their support, too, and that’s where Capt. Ashely Dotson, of Williamsport, comes in. She’s a psychiatrist in her civilian job and is one with the 28th Division Surgeon Cell on her guard weekends, too. But now, she’s working as the lead behavioral health specialist for the planning team.

They have six behavioral health officers on staff who go out to see the guard members who are working in the nursing homes to help them deal with the stress, and sometimes the grief, that can come with the job.

“We’re not used to fighting this enemy,” Dotson said. “This is very new for everybody, and we want to make sure we’re evaluating the needs that might be coming up for our teams.”

Troops in nursing homes, like any employee there, become attached to the residents in their care. And since nursing homes account for two-thirds of Pennsylvania’s coronavirus deaths, the troops are often faced with the grief that comes with this kind of loss.

“A lot of them are not used to anything medical, let alone being in a nursing home and managing different situations where people are dying at pretty rapid rates,” she said.

It’s an enemy that is invisible and unpredictable, she said. And they’re not used to becoming friends with the people they’re there to protect.

But she said the troops are holding up well and are using her services when they need to as they continue to fight the coronavirus.

The task force is wrapping up its large-scale operation this week as many of the state’s counties are transitioning to the yellow phase, lifting some coronavirus restrictions.

But the medical team will still be on hand, coordinating National Guard support throughout the pandemic.

Thanks for visiting PennLive. Quality local journalism has never been more important. We need your support. Not a subscriber yet? Please consider supporting our work.

More from PennLive

Which Pa. counties could move into green reopening phase, and which could go to yellow next?:
Analysis

A window of hope during the coronavirus pandemic: More portraits of how central Pennsylvania is coping, week 7

If you purchase a product or register for an account through a link on our site, we may receive compensation. By using this site, you consent to our User Agreement and agree that your clicks, interactions, and personal information may be collected, recorded, and/or stored by us and social media and other third-party partners in accordance with our Privacy Policy.



NEWS | March 9, 2023

Pennsylvania Guard Institute Educates Medics Across Army

By Maj. Travis Mueller, Joint Force Headquarters - Pennsylvania National Guard

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, Pa. - Instructors with the Pennsylvania National Guard's 4th Battalion, 166th Regiment Regional Training Institute (Medical Battalion Training Site), sent off the Army's newest batch of combat medics after a

culminating training exercise March 3.

The combat medics, from the Regular Army, National Guard and Army Reserve, were attending the 68W Healthcare Specialist Military Occupational Specialty Transition Course, hoping to earn the 68W MOS after serving in other MOSs.

Located at Fort Indiantown Gap, the 4/166th RTI (MBTS) is one of the nation's largest Army National Guard medical schoolhouses. The school's mission is to train medical tasks to medical and non-medical personnel, with the MOS transition course one of its primary functions.

"There are seven Army National Guard locations that teach this course. Pennsylvania and Mississippi are the largest Army National Guard medical schoolhouses," said Capt. Catherine Green, administrative officer for the 4/166th RTI (MBTS). "We are slightly larger than Mississippi in manning and footprint."

The 68W MOS Transition Course, offered three times a year, lasts 57 days. Each class starts with 48 students. Phase 1 consists of national registry EMT certification, and Phase 2 consists of limited primary care and field craft. The final phase is the field training exercise.

During the culminating exercise at Fort Indiantown Gap's Combined Arms Collective Training Facility, medic trainees were immersed in a simulated mass casualty event in an urban setting. They responded in a convoy, providing security, repelling attacks from an opposing force, providing first aid and evacuating the simulated casualties to a field hospital where they received further care, all while being assessed by instructors.

In addition to the MOS Transition Course, the 4/166th RTI (MBTS) offers the Comprehensive Medical Training Course. That course lasts 15 days and is offered twice a year to students from the Army Reserve, National Guard and Active Guard Reserve.

Green said that course is for Soldiers who require continuing education recertification. They receive 114.5 hours of training in emergency medical limited primary care, force health protection, invasive care skills, combat trauma assessment and evacuation in various clinical settings, from the point of injury or illness through the continuum of military health care.



SHARE



PRINT

Latest News

Minnesota Guard Joins Wildfire Experts for Training

Guard News • 55 minutes ago

Kansas National Guard Airmen Recognized for Excellence

Guard News • 1 hour ago

Wyoming Guard Aviators Sharpen Wildfire Response Skills in Training

Guard News • 3 days ago

West Virginia Guard Hosts Workshop to Address Potential Infrastructure Threats

Guard News • 5 days ago

Army Establishes New Fitness Test of Record to Strengthen Readiness and Lethality

Guard News • 6 days ago

Guard News Archive

2025 (119)
2024 (422)
2023 (420)
2022 (520)
2021 (688)
2020 (928)
2019 (379)
2018 (318)
2017 (339)
2016 (232)
2015 (343)
2014 (373)
2013 (450)
2012 (540)
2011 (523)
2010 (1046)
2009 (352)
2008 (633)
2007 (288)
2006 (180)



Pennsylvania Guardsmen Graduate New Hospital Partnership Program

Published Feb. 11, 2025

By Maj. Travis Mueller,

Joint Force Headquarters - Pennsylvania National Guard

HERSHEY, Pa. – Three Airmen with the Pennsylvania National Guard's 193rd Special Operations Wing are the inaugural graduates of a new program and partnership between Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center and the National Guard Bureau.

Shortly before graduating, Air Force Capt. Steven Thompson, a nurse, and Tech. Sgts. Suzanne Nowalk and Carlos Patino, both medics, performed lifesaving techniques on simulated patients during a mass casualty exercise at the medical center Feb. 7.

The exercise was the capstone of a two-week course where these Airmen learned from civilian doctors, emergency medical technicians, nurses, and critical care transport specialists how to respond effectively in emergencies or combat situations. It was the first class to graduate from this new partnership between the National Guard and Hershey Medical Center.

Hershey Medical Center is now the first National Guard training center of its kind on the East Coast and third nationwide, joining HonorHealth in Scottsdale, Arizona, and Renown Health in Reno, Nevada.

According to the participants, Hershey Medical Center is an attractive site for Soldiers and Airmen to receive advanced training in critical care under pressure. The medical center is nationally ranked in multiple specialties and highly regarded in trauma care and education. It has the only Level 1 trauma center for both children and adults in Pennsylvania.

"Being able to see how a trauma is run from start to finish, how it is actually supposed to look ... like you can look at the theory and practice it in a simulation lab all you want but to actually be able to see it and experience it yourself, I think is the best part," Nowalk said. "I found this training to be very beneficial. I learned lots and everybody here was so helpful."

Army Maj. Gen. Lisa Hou, joint surgeon general of the National Guard Bureau, attended the capstone exercise to see what these Airmen learned. She expressed appreciation for the medical center's instructors and staff for their dedication to the program and efforts to keep Soldiers and Airmen mission-ready.

"I'm extremely excited for this new collaboration," Hou said. "Trauma training is critical for our Soldiers and Airmen for them to be proficient in their medical fields and so they can support other Soldiers and Airmen."

Though many National Guardsmen work in civilian careers that relate to their work in the military, the participants noted that this course gave them experiences they might not otherwise receive.

Thompson is a nurse in the post-anesthesia care unit at Hershey Medical Center.

"It was really great to come into a facility that I've known well but see different elements in the ER, some of the ICUs and even the pre-hospital," Thompson said. "That really allowed me to get hands-on training in a way that I don't typically get in my day-to-day civilian job but is very key to my military success."

Patino is a former Soldier who deployed to the Middle East with the Pennsylvania National Guard's 28th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade in 2020. During his time there, his civilian skills came in handy when he saved the life of a military working dog in Iraq. During this course, he liked learning how Penn State Health operates and said it was beneficial to see how a civilian hospital like Hershey Medical Center handles certain situations. He appreciated the warm welcome from the medical center's employees throughout the course.

"I would recommend this program to anyone I know in the military," Patino said. "We all have different levels of experience and expertise, and this program helps you see different areas of health care that we don't usually see."

Pennsylvania National Guard Innovation medics

