



## Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation in the U.S. Army

A Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) physician is also known as a physiatrist. The word 'physiatry' is derived from the Greek words *physikos* (physical) and *iatreia* (art of healing). A physiatrist treats musculoskeletal and neurological conditions with the goal of treating the whole person, educating in prevention, and restoring maximal physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and vocational function.

### U.S. Army History

PM&R originated and continues to evolve from many milestones embedded in U.S. Army history.

- 1926 Dr. Stanley Coulter, a prior U.S. military physician, established Northwestern University's physical medicine residency training program
- During World War II (WWII) physiatrists were at the center of rehabilitation for the thousands of injured service members who were returning to the U.S. with serious musculoskeletal and neurological injuries
- WWII injuries were also treated at Army Air Corps Convalescence and Rehabilitation Services at Jefferson Barracks by Dr. Rusk. He developed active rehabilitation and successfully reintegrated many injured Service Members back to active duty and others back into civilian life. He later established the Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine at the New York University Medical Center
- 1943 Baruch committee recommended funding for training and research in the field of physiatry after testimony in front of Congress

identified the injured Service Members who were being returned to productive members of society



### Today

PM&R continues to be at the forefront of research, training, and education in the field. Physiatrists continue to treat those with musculoskeletal and neurological injuries, especially those injured in combat. They work as part of an interdisciplinary team which may include: Physical, Occupational, and Recreational Therapists, Nurses, Social Workers, and Veterans Affairs liaisons to ensure that rehabilitation is individualized and optimal. develop best practice pathways for patients with musculoskeletal injuries

### U.S. Army PM&R Mission

The mission of Army PM&R is to provide world class care to military beneficiaries of all ages, especially combat casualties with multiple injuries requiring complex rehabilitation. Through

**Rehabilitation & Reintegration Division (R2D)**  
**Health Policy & Services, Army Medical Department, Office of The Surgeon General**

5109 Leesburg Pike, Suite 684, Falls Church, VA 22041

[www.armymedicine.army.mil/prr](http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/prr)

Telephone: (703) 681-3051 | Fax: (703) 325-6301





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coordinated interdisciplinary, comprehensive and holistic care, their goal is to restore maximal physical, cognitive, emotional and vocational function. This is achieved through state-of-the-science education, the application of cutting-edge technologies and an unwavering commitment to customer focused care.

### Clinical Practice Settings

- Polytrauma Rehabilitation at Walter Reed's Military Advanced Training Center, Ft. Sam Houston's Center for the Intrepid, and Naval Medical Center San Diego's Comprehensive Combat and Complex Casualty Care (C5)
- The military's only acute inpatient polytrauma and traditional rehabilitation service at Walter Reed Army Medical Center
- Outpatient Specialty Clinics, to include Amputee, TBI, Wheelchair Seating Clinic, Electromyography, and Interventional Pain
- Outpatient Clinics treating a wide range of conditions encompassing musculoskeletal, neurological, chronic pain syndromes, and the complex polytrauma Wounded Warriors

### Administrative Settings

- Commanders of Army clinics, hospitals, and other units
- Department Chiefs and Service Chiefs at Army hospitals
- Residency Program Director for Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
- Staff Officer at the Office of The Surgeon General

- Adjunct Professors at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences Medical School

### Graduate Medical Education

The Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Residency Program at Walter Reed is the only PM&R training program in the U.S. military. It is fully accredited by the American Board of Medical Specialties and the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. The program is three years in duration after a one year transitional internship. In addition, physiatrists may pursue further fellowships after residency, to include a one year Interventional Pain fellowship, also located at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

### More Information

[www.goarmy.com/amedd](http://www.goarmy.com/amedd)

[www.wramc.amedd.army.mil/Patients/healthcare/orthorehab/medicine/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.wramc.amedd.army.mil/Patients/healthcare/orthorehab/medicine/Pages/default.aspx)

[www.mods.army.mil/medicaleducation/](http://www.mods.army.mil/medicaleducation/)

[www.armymedicine.army.mil/jobs/military-medical-training.html](http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/jobs/military-medical-training.html)

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