



Always **Ready**, Always **There...**
Always **Healthy**.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. What is the Decade of Health?

A. The Decade of Health is a ten-year strategic deployability and readiness marketing campaign supporting personal responsibility for health and wellness. The Army National Guard launched an intense, focused media strategy targeted at Soldiers and their Families that will promote readiness and enhance strength management in August 2006. The objectives are best reflected in the Decade of Health Campaign tag line, "Always Ready, Always There...Always Healthy."

Q. Why the Decade of Health?

A. Maintaining force strength and sustaining critical operations rely heavily on healthy, fit Soldiers. The ARNG has implemented Soldier health and wellness programs in the past, but they took a "broad-brush" approach rather than focusing on a single deployment and readiness issue at a time. The Decade of Health will target a specific concern each year and will leverage existing programs and launch an intensive outreach to enhance health literacy and produce measurable results.

Q. Who is the target audience?

A. Army National Guard Soldiers and their Families.

Q. How will the Decade of Health reach the target audience?

A. Traditional outreach methods have not been effective in reaching the ARNG Soldier. The Decade of Health communications plan includes a multi-media, guerilla marketing approach that maximizes funding to support the deployability and readiness objectives of the campaign. This plan will use a nontraditional approach to reach traditional ARNG Soldiers and Families.

Q. What is guerilla marketing and how will this approach be implemented?

A. Guerilla marketing is the term used to describe an intense, targeted outreach to a specific audience. Market research will drive a communications plan that uses commercial techniques and applies funding to maximize outcomes and return on investment. Tools will include web-based resources, Soldier-direct mail, print and broadcast advertising, public service announcements, and alliances, such as that with the American Heart Association, to proliferate and saturate the audience.

Q. Who will sponsor and manage the Decade of Health Campaign?

A. The ARNG Chief Surgeon's office will fund and manage the effort.



Colonel David B. Sproat, ARNG Chief Surgeon, assumed leadership of the Decade of Health Program in May 2007. Lieutenant Colonel Jose M. Ortiz, Chief, Preventive Medicine, ARNG is the Decade of Health Program Manager.

FAQs continued

Q. What kind of partnerships will be established through the Decade of Health?

A. The first level of partnership will be with internal National Guard Bureau (NGB) programs; such as Family Program, Well-Being, and Strength Maintenance with close coordination of the NGB Public Affairs Office. The plan calls for partnerships with Federal, State and local health and wellness initiatives such as Healthy People 2010, HealthierUS, and the President's Fitness Challenge. Approved not-for-profit partnerships are anticipated, such as the ongoing collaboration established in January 2007 with the American Heart Association.

Q. Why was oral health selected for the first focus area?

A. Dental readiness is a problem for the Reserve Components; therefore, oral health education and prevention was selected to enhance readiness and deployability. Over 340,000 floss cards and oral health education packages were sent to ARNG Soldiers in 2006.

Q. Why was blood pressure awareness selected as the 2007 Decade of Health topic?

A. A determination was made that high blood pressure is a significant issue among Guard Soldiers and that it can be stabilized by education and medication, making this an immediate opportunity for positively impacting readiness and mobilization. As part of the outreach for the Get Cuffed!® campaign, 430 blood pressure machines and 430,000 pieces of educational materials were distributed in all 54 States and Territories to extend consistent opportunities to all Citizen Soldiers to have their blood pressure checked, record their numbers, and most importantly, to know what those numbers mean top and bottom.

Q. Why is healthy weight management the 2008 Decade of Health campaign theme?

A. According to Lieutenant General Clyde Vaughn, "weight management is a readiness issue that leaders must confront head-on in order to maintain and sustain the health of our Force." "Overweight Soldiers are at increased risk for multiple health problems, which may affect mission readiness." ARNG Lighten Up! targets the current national epidemic of excessive weight and obesity. The goal of this campaign is to increase awareness and provide essential tools to all National Guard Soldiers and their Families to support them in achieving and maintaining healthy weight management.

Q. Why isn't the Decade of Health featuring a focus on mental health and stress?

A. The ARNG is very concerned about mental health and stress. Much mental health awareness information and education exists as part of a larger Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) program, the Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) program. The Decade of Health will address mental health, stress management, and resiliency issues in the future and will leverage the information in these OSD programs and other resources.

Q. How will outcomes and return on investment be measured?

A. The Decade of Health strategic plan includes a specific task to establish baseline data, gather statistical input, monitor results, and provide an annual report for each year's health focus topic and the overall effectiveness of the Decade of Health campaign. A team has been established by the ARNG Chief Surgeon's office to support this task. Improved Soldier deployability and readiness will be the return on investment to the ARNG.

Q. How will the annual campaigns, health information, and resources be made available to ARNG Soldiers and Families?

A. Strategic planning, design and development is on-going and a web site was launched at www.decadeofhealth.com on 1 May 06. It highlights the annual campaign objectives and provides health and wellness information 365 days a year around-the-clock in partnership with the NGB's public web site. The entire communications plan includes downloadable, printable information packages, Soldier-direct mail, broadcast and print stories, and incentives. All of these elements play an important role in the outreach strategy. ARNG Soldiers and Families are offered active involvement opportunities through an electronic focus room on the web site.