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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DENTAL PROGRAM IMPROVES ARMY READINESS, WELLNESS

Scheduling multiple dental visits will soon be unnecessary for most Soldiers thanks to the Go First Class (GFC) program led by the U.S. Army Dental Command (DENCOM). Under the new initiative, Soldiers will receive routine oral care procedures including exams, cleanings, tooth varnishing, and simple fillings in a single appointment.

“Go First Class addresses several pillars of the Army Medicine 2020 campaign plan including prevention, wellness, and readiness,” said COL Bryan Kalish, Director of Health Care Delivery, at DENCOM. “It helps us transform from a healthcare system, to a system of health.”

GFC pilot programs are currently in place at Fort Bliss, Texas and Fort Gordon, Georgia. Results show significant reductions in the number of Soldiers that are dentally non-deployable (class three or four). At the same time, the number of Soldiers with no dental treatment needs (class one) is on the rise.

Bundled services, combined with a shift to scheduled appointments, enables dental teams to treat more patients and increase overall satisfaction. “The feedback I’m getting from Commanders and Soldiers is very positive,” said COL Ken Dunn, Director of Health Care Support. “With GFC most Soldiers only need to visit the dentist once a year. They are away from their units much less.”

As oral health improves, sick days decrease. Workload models predict up to 1.25 million hours of time will be returned to unit Commanders Army-wide as a result of the initiative.

Distribution of marketing material is underway and dental officials are briefing unit leaders to increase program awareness. Additional information on Go First Class is available at ArmyGFC.info.

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Soldiers need fewer dental visits due to the Go First Class initiative.
(Pictured: LTC Willie Faison provides an oral care briefing to SFC James Harter.)

