



British Forces Germany Health Service

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BFG HEALTH SERVICE AND SSAFA FH WIN PRESTIGIOUS INDUSTRY AWARD

The British Forces Germany Health Service (BFG HS) and Soldiers Sailors Airmen and Families Association Forces Help (SSAFA FH - the Operational arm of the SSAFA GSTT Care LLP responsible for the delivery of Primary and Community Care services on behalf of BFGHS) won the Innovation and Service Development category award at the Military and Civilian Health Partnership Award ceremony, last week.

The awards recognise best practice in the delivery of healthcare to the Armed Forces, their families and veterans.

BFG HS and SSAFA FH submission was for out of hours treatment in Primary care services. Since 2008, out of hours (20.00 – 08.00) care is telephone-based. When patients ring their local Medical Centre, the call is automatically diverted to the Telephone Advice Service, manned throughout the night by a team of nurses. Using a series of internationally agreed clinical guidelines, the on-call nurses are able to offer appropriate advice for minor ailments without the need for the patient to be referred to a doctor. For urgent cases, there is an on-call doctor in each garrison. In case of an emergency, patients are directed to the local Designated German Provider (DGP) hospital.

Mrs Jan Dowlen-Gilliland, Director of Operations and Clinical Services said: "I am proud of the achievement of everybody involved in the development, implementation and day to day management of the Telephone Advice Service. I work with a dedicated team who are constantly looking for innovative ways to deliver healthcare, which means that the BFG community receive the best possible care."

Before the implementation of the Telephone Advice Service, Medical Centres in BFG used to remain open overnight. However, the limited need for out of Hours services meant that it was not costs effective. Col David Williams, Assistant Director Strategic Development said: "Gaining the community's acceptance that a telephone advice service was as effective as Medical Centres opened throughout the night was the main challenge. However, the latest evaluation of the out of service shows high level of satisfaction. Switching to a telephone service has enabled BFG HS to reduce costs whilst ensuring an appropriate level of care and support to patients."

For more information on how to access the local Primary and Community Services, please visit www.bfgnet.de/bfghs/bfghs.html

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