Primary care medical services returns to Negishi Clinic Feb. 1

By USNH Yokosuka Public Affairs

U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Yokosuka announced today that routine primary care medical services will resume at Branch Health Annex (BHA) Yokohama on board Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Negishi Housing Detachment on Tuesdays and Thursdays starting Feb. 1.

The return of primary care to the clinic will add to pharmacy services which were restored in September and emergency ambulance response service that has remained operational without interruption.

"We made a commitment to the Negishi community back in July to restore these services as soon as possible and today we are making good on that commitment," said USNH Yokosuka Commanding Officer Capt. Stephen Pachuta. "We know the reduction in services has been a challenge for the community and we truly appreciate the patience and understanding they have shown us over the past few months."

According to historical analysis, two days a week will provide routine medical services for the number of appointments normally seen in the clinic with Tuesdays and Thursdays being the most often requested days of the week for appointments.

"We looked at what our patients in Negishi need and the staffing that we have and were able to bring the two together in a sustainable way for the foreseeable future," said Pachuta. "We'll actively monitor patient's access to care and adjust accordingly over time."

To schedule an appointment at BHA Yokohama, eligible beneficiaries can call central appointments at 243-5352 or 046-816-5352 after Jan. 10 and request a primary care appointment in Negishi.

Patients interested in enrolling for primary care in Negishi can do so after Jan. 10 by calling the TRICARE Office at 243-9832 or 046-816-9832 or BHA Yokohama at 242-4161 or 045-281-4161.

Please note that primary care services are for routine medical care only, BHA Yokohama is not an urgent care clinic or emergency room. If you have a medical emergency, please call 911 while on base or 119 while off base for emergency ambulance response.

USNH Yokosuka, *Cowpens* Sailors bring joy to Misono orphanage

By HM3 Daniel Singer, USNH Yokosuka

Holiday spirit filled the air when Sailors from U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Yokosuka and *USS Cowpens* (CG 63) brought Christmas joy and bags full of presents to the Misono orphanage in Fujisawa, Japan during a community service project Dec. 18.

USNH Yokosuka and *Cowpens* have a strong relationship and friendship with Misono orphanage forged during previous community service projects which they continue to foster.

"Seeing the look on the children's faces when they see the uniformed Sailors walk off the bus for these projects and when they open presents for the holidays is just great," said Lt. Michael Anderson, who is the USNH Yokosuka command chaplain and event co-organizer. "Everybody wins, everybody has a great time. We serve children who don't have families and the children serve us by bringing us joy during the holiday season."

Yukie Ida, who has volunteered to translate at several of the joint community service projects, has heard positive feedback from the children at this and previous projects.

"The children are always happy and always look forward to these events," said Ida. "I hear the children say all the time that they appreciate and are happy to have the Sailors here… The children said that they wish they could do this more often."

A sentiment shared by participating Sailors.

USNH Yokosuka Sailors bring holiday joy and a bag full of presents to children of the Misono orphanage in Fujisawa, Japan during a joint community service project with *USS Cowpens* (CG 63) Dec. 18. USNH Yokosuka and *Cowpens* have a strong relationship and friendship with the orphanage, which they continue to foster.
U.S. Navy photo by HN Christopher Connelly

"We need to visit these orphanages more often throughout the year," said Hospitalman Apprentice Kevin McCormick Jr.

It was clear to McCormick and other participants that the children, many of which come from troubled homes, relished the opportunity to celebrate the holidays with the Sailors.

"It's something you can't really explain, to understand it you have to go out there and experience it for yourself," said McCormick. "I definitely learned more Japanese talking to them and they probably learned more English talking to me."

But it was also clear that the children were not the only beneficiaries.

"Sailors were chomping at the bit to volunteer for this project," said Anderson. "I think helping kids, especially during the holidays, reminds our folks of home and family. It reminds them of why they serve and one of the reasons they are forward-deployed to Japan."

USNH Yokosuka is the largest U.S. military treatment facility on mainland Japan and serves approximately 33,000 beneficiaries. A 47-bed core hospital in Yokosuka on the banks of Tokyo Bay is complimented by eight branch health clinics in Japan, Korea and Diego Garcia.

Cowpens is a Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser and is forward-deployed to Yokosuka, Japan as part of Task Force 70, U.S. 7th Fleet.

DoD officials urge service members to quit using tobacco in 2011

By TRICARE Management Activity

Each year, more than a million people successfully quit using tobacco, and Department of Defense (DoD) officials want more service members included in that number in 2011.

"In the tradition of New Year's, we are asking our active-duty and retired service members and their families to make a resolution to quit (using) tobacco," said Navy Cmdr. Aileen Buckler, the chair of the DoD Alcohol and Tobacco Advisory Committee. "Tobacco use impairs military readiness and results in serious health problems, so New Year's is a great time to commit to stopping tobacco use."

With studies showing people are 10 times more likely to succeed in behavior change when acting on a resolution, New Year's appears to be the perfect opportunity to start the process of stopping tobacco use.

"But making a resolution to quit tobacco is just the beginning," Buckler said. "Developing a strategic plan to overcome obstacles and stay on course is the ultimate key to successful quitting. The DoD has developed a comprehensive set of tools and a support system to help individuals prepare to follow through on their resolution."

Buckler referred to several TRICARE resources, including "Quit Tobacco -- Make Everyone Proud," The DoD tobacco cessation campaign. TRICARE is the DoD managed health care system.

The campaign's website, www.ucanquit2.org, features Train2Quit, an online support system that uses interactive quit tools, self-assessment questionnaires, quizzes and other activities. The support system shows service members how to create a customizable quit plan with a calendar to track progress and learn how to beat cravings, overcome weight gain and cope with the effects of nicotine withdrawal.

The site also offers live help with links to personal quit coaches, available seven days a week, 24 hours a day to get answers to questions about quitting tobacco use and how to stay tobacco-free.

The website also features a New Year's resolutions page, where individuals can post their resolution to quit using tobacco. Individuals can send e-cards of their resolution to quit using tobacco, and family and friends also can send e-cards of encouragement to those trying to quit.

New Year's smoking cessation materials are available free-of-charge for health professionals and other installation leaders to order or download to help promote events.

Users of the website can sign up to receive quit tips via text messages or personal widget downloads. The site also provides medication information, news articles, podcasts, RSS feeds, special monthly features and much more.

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Image courtesy of www.ucanquit2.org

All non-Medicare eligible beneficiaries can receive assistance with smoking cessation through TRICARE's toll-free smoking help line. Toll-free telephone lines are available in each TRICARE region, offering around-the-clock support.

"We are committed to helping all members and former members of our armed services and anyone close to them start the journey to a healthier lifestyle in the coming new year," Buckler said.