

## The Monrovia Medical Unit: Caring for Ebola Health Care Workers in Liberia

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An advanced Ebola treatment facility supported by the US Government in Margibi County, Liberia, opened its doors in November 2014. The only Ebola treatment unit (ETU) of its kind in West Africa at the time of its opening, the Monrovia Medical Unit (MMU) was deployed and constructed by US Department of Defense units under the auspices of the US Department of State and the US Agency for International Development, facilitated in-country by the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance's Disaster Assistance Response Team. The design for modifications to the facility, doctrinally intended as a military combat surgical support hospital, was effected by the US Public Health Service (USPHS) in partnership with numerous governmental and civilian experts. The Commissioned Corps of the USPHS has continued to operationally manage the mission of the MMU, and its officers stand watch to provide direct clinical care for international and Liberian health care workers suspected of falling ill with Ebola.

Since November 2014, the MMU has admitted and cared for over 36 health care workers from 9 different nations with confirmed or suspected cases of Ebola virus disease. Over 200 officers of the USPHS Commissioned Corps of the US Department of Health and Human Services have deployed and staffed the ETU, which continues operations 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Comments from numerous international stakeholders, including the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER), indicate that the presence of the MMU and its demonstrated capabilities continue to inspire and sustain confidence among the international community of responders, contributing greatly to the overall capacity of regional and global response efforts.

The photographs on the cover of this special issue depict the MMU, the USPHS Commissioned Corps officers who serve in its midst, and some of the health care workers who themselves have been cared for within the facility and have survived the Ebola epidemic. The selflessness that these health care workers have shown, in exiting the MMU and continuing to care for those impacted by the disease, defines the altruism that will ultimately lead to the resolution of this crisis. They also honor health care workers around the world who have lost their lives while providing care to others.

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Cover Images: courtesy of CAPT Paul Reed, MD



Teams of USPHS officers muster to formally change command of the MMU.



The first MMU patient is admitted to the facility.



Early stage of MMU development from the Air Force EMEDS system.



One of the first Ebola survivors to leave the MMU adds his handprint to the wall honoring survivors outside the facility.