



Army 1st Lt. Craig Dolhi, a platoon leader with 5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, reads over information during the Army's Ask, Care and Escort suicide intervention training Oct. 2-4, 2013. (Photo by Capt. Patrick Bracken)

NCOs Get Training on Ask, Care and Escort Suicide Prevention

By Army Staff Sgt. Mylinda Dourousseau

1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division

FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA — ACE can be a card in a game of poker, a word used to describe a pilot, or the name of a hardware store, but for soldiers it is a way to help prevent suicide.

Army 1st Lt. Craig Dolhi, an armor officer with 5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, reads over information during the Army's Ask, Care and Escort suicide intervention training Oct. 2-4, 2013. The program, which has been redesigned this year, teaches ways to identify risk factors for suicide and warning signs, as well as to help understand and deal with stigmas often associated with suicide. Soldiers from 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division attended the Army's new

Ask, Care and Escort suicide intervention training Oct. 2-4 in an effort to give them the tools to assist in the prevention of suicide among their fellow soldiers.

The program, which has been redesigned this year, teaches ways to identify risk factors for suicide and warning signs, as well as to help understand and deal with stigmas often associated with suicide, said Joe O'Connor, an ACE-SI facilitator.

"It taught you how to ask [in case] you were not familiar with asking a soldier if they were thinking about suicide," said Sgt. Kimberly Pass, with the 1-25 SBCT's chaplain's office. "It gave you different avenues of approach. It also taught you that if you are having thoughts of suicide it is OK to seek help."

Recent changes to the training include reading scenarios and discussing how to respond as well as role-playing to help soldiers understand a variety of situations they may face and how to intervene and possibly prevent a suicide. The information covered was also updated to include new mobile phone applications that offer tools for suicide prevention.

“It is good for the average soldier,” Pass said. “We’ve learned since basic training to help your buddy out, this is just another part of being that listening ear or helping hand that everyone needs.”

Sgt. 1st Class Stefan Falls, 1-25 SBCT tactical assault command platoon sergeant, attended previous versions of

the training and has also been to the Army’s Master Resilience Training, but said that he gained new information from this course as well.

“All soldiers should be made aware of any options open to them in regards to suicide prevention,” Falls said.

The six-hour training program went beyond the annual suicide-prevention training all soldiers are required to attend, and taught them how to take the knowledge back to their unit and teach it to others. Many of those in attendance were chaplains and their assistants, but the training was also offered to junior leaders and first-line supervisors. ■



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