

Title: Medical Considerations for Agile Combat Employment in the Future Battle Space

Congress Theme: Medical Selection and Leadership

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Summary

The United States Air Force projects combat air power and secures air superiority for joint service military operations. Yet, reductions in force size have impacted the global footprint. In order to maintain operational reach, the future battle space will integrate agile combat employment (ACE). The USAF describes ACE as a proactive and reactive operational scheme of maneuver executed within threat timelines to increase survivability while generating combat power through the integrated deterrence continuum. ACE enablers include expeditionary and multi-capable Airmen as well as tailorable force packages. Medical support to ACE will need to posture ready forces, utilize technology to further integrate health expertise, deliver novel aeromedical evacuation and train multi-capable Airmen to sustain care in place. The USAF supports these developments through multiple avenues. The Lifestyle and Performance Medicine Working Group optimizes service member health for readiness through the six pillars of wellness. The U.S. Space Force is expanding this focus on wellness by using wearable technology and teams of embedded professionals. They measure, monitor and test Guardian health to support integrated resilience. Telehealth, artificial intelligence, and machine learning offer new opportunities and improved resources through strategic public-private partnerships, including USAF Spark Tank initiatives. Finally, multi-capable Airmen can expand surge capacity by training to deliver specific medical skills and augmenting manpower to enable prolonged care in place. The future battle space continues to evolve and the USAF is preparing to meet the medical needs of tomorrow's warfighter.