It is a distinct pleasure to welcome you to Naval Medical Center Portsmouth (NMCP), which has continued to provide professional medical care for more than 170 years. The hospital began operations in 1830 serving military personnel and their dependents from across the local area, and those sick and injured sent here from around the world.

**Hospital History**

The original hospital structure, Building One, was built as part of a Congressional push to set up hospitals specifically built to treat Navy patients. Construction was started in 1826 and included using over half-a-million bricks from the revolutionary-era Fort Nelson that existed to guard the harbor from what is now called Hospital Point.

The hospital’s first major medical evolution was not for its intended beneficiaries but for the Norfolk-Portsmouth civilian population. In 1855, the hospital's primary focus was to treat those suffering from the yellow fever epidemic, which killed over 10 percent of the area’s population.

Over the years, the hospital has served the medical needs of not only the U.S. Navy but the rest of the U.S. and foreign military communities during times of war and major conflicts around the globe and at home.

The national cemetery grounds, previously known as Portsmouth Naval Hospital Confederate Cemetery and United States Navy Hospital Cemetery, is now called Captain Ted Conaway Memorial Naval Cemetery, and is located on the Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads-Portsmouth Annex (NSAHR-PA) compound. The cemetery provides a glimpse into events that helped shape the long and distinguished hospital’s history. One hundred and thirteen gravesites bear tombstones of soldiers, Sailors and Marines from the U.S, Brazil, France, Germany, Japan, Russia and Spain who died in the area and who are interred here.

Whether the mission was caring for patients from a major world war or from action in Korea or Vietnam, via the hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH-20), or during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, or operation of the NMC platform, Fleet Hospital Five, in Zagreb, Croatia, the hospital has taken care of the sick and wounded throughout the years.

**The Medical Center Today**

Today, three main medical buildings are located on the NSAHR-PA. The original structure is now known as Building One which has undergone several major renovations including the addition of the fifth floor rotunda in 1910 to accommodate more updated surgical facilities and a change to the command's administrative headquarters in 2002. It was registered in 1966 as a Virginia Historical Landmark.

In April 1960, the 15-story building is now known as Building Three, and it was constructed and began accommodating the ever-increasing demands of the medical center by centralizing the medical department that was scattered around the base. The building is known as Tidewater’s first sky scraper.

Building Two, which was constructed between the two existing buildings, was dedicated in 1999 as the Charette Health Care Center in honor of Master Chief Hospital Corpsman William Charette, a Medal of Honor recipient and Korean War veteran. This section is a 320-bed tertiary
care facility. Serving a beneficiary population of more than 430,000 active duty personnel, retirees and their dependents from all Hampton Roads areas, it is the most modern naval medical center in the country providing care in over 125 clinical specialties.

NMCP serves a daily inpatient population of 238 patients with more than one and one half million visits per year. This figure equals approximately 606,000 visits to seven Branch Health Clinics and three TRICARE Prime sites.

The medical center has a dedicated and professional staff of over 4,000 doctors, dentists, nurses and enlisted hospital corpsmen, along with allied medical service corps officers and other professional military, civil service, civilian and contract support personnel.

Training

Since its construction, the hospital/medical center has served as a center for learning medical care. At the dawn of the 20th Century, medical care learning became a formal practice at NMCP. On June 17, 1898, President William McKinley signed a bill establishing the Navy Hospital Corps. The first Navy Corps School graduation took place at Portsmouth Naval Hospital in December 1902 when 28 students completed the course.

Today, as only one of three U.S. Navy medical teaching locations, NMCP continues to provide Graduate Medical Education in numerous medical, surgical, dental, psychology and pastoral care programs to ensure trained professionals are available to provide care for future warfighters, retirees and their families.

Future

As medicine evolves in the 21st Century, NMCP stands ready to provide the necessary healthcare to our active duty components to maintain the highest state of readiness; in addition, to provide care to the military person’s family is as important to help maintain this readiness.