

TOOLIK FIELD STATION

2021 SAFETY



MEDICAL SUPPORT

- 2 alternating EMTs provided 24/7 medical support between 4/15/21 - 9/7/21
 - Coverage dates correlate with Spring and Fall construction campaigns
 - Dual role as medical provider and workplace Health & Safety support
- Winter EMT staffing depending on project parameters
 - A minimum of one Wilderness First Responder present year-round
- Physician Sponsor: Dr. Susan Dietz (Providence Medical Center)

NEW MEDICAL FACILITY

- The TFS Clinic was delivered and partially installed in Spring 2021
- Completion of utility installation in the Fall allowed the clinic to treat patients
- 4 rooms:
 - EMT Quarters
 - Holding Room
 - Bathroom (with plumbing!)
 - Main Clinic



NEW MEDICAL FACILITY

- Clinic is now fully stocked and ready to see patients
- Access to running water and non-porous surfaces better for patients and caregivers alike
- ADA compliant access ramp
- Residential categorization still pending

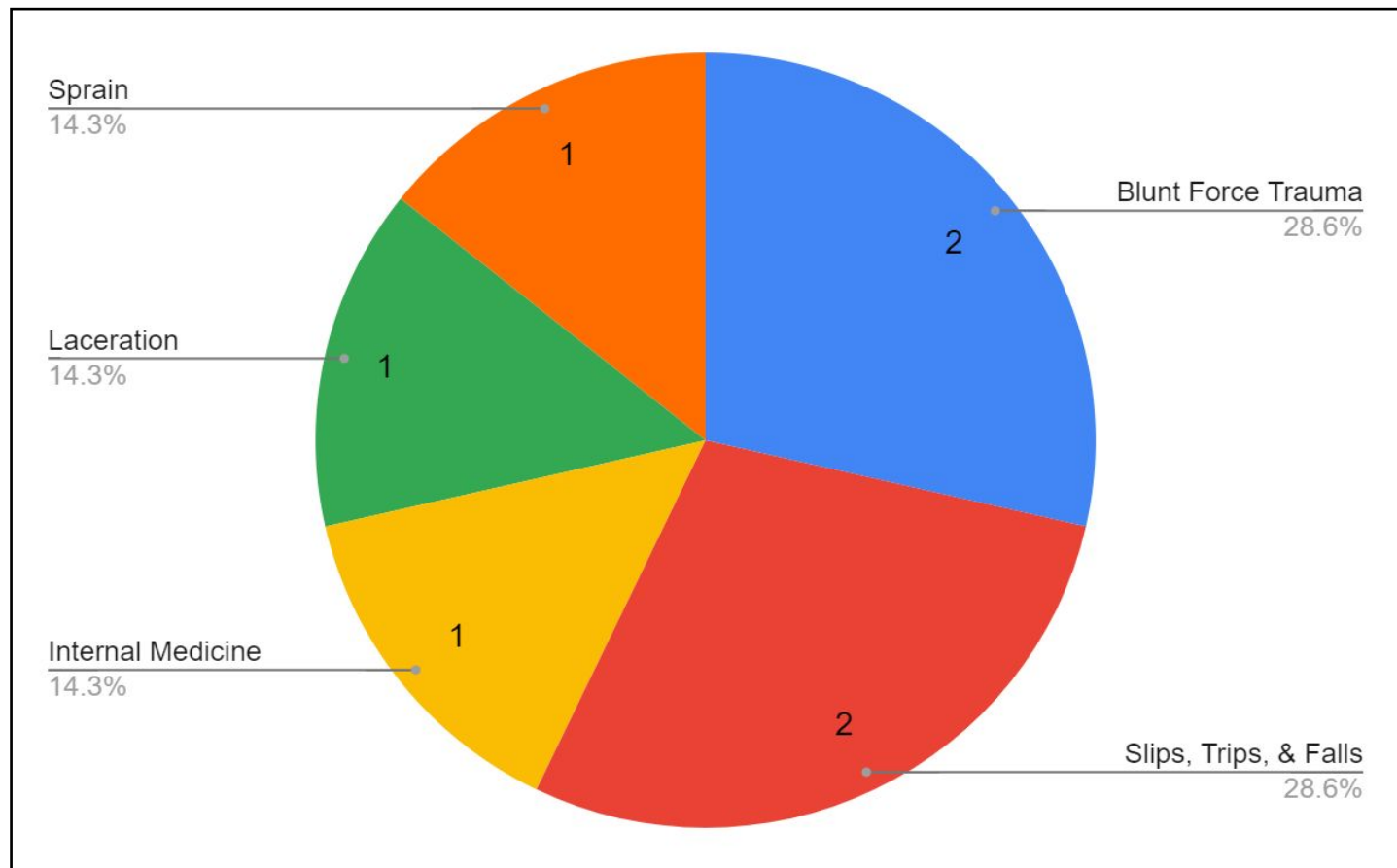
MEDICAL RESPONSE

- The majority of injuries reported by staff.
- Users demanded the most in terms of day-to-day medical support.
 - Minor injuries from fieldwork and recreational activities
- Most medical issues at TFS can be self-treated using our common-use medical supply containing over-the-counter medications and supplies.

MEDICAL RESPONSE

- TFS EMTs responded to 7 incidents during 2021
 - “Incidents” require more than simple self-treatment by a patient
- 2 incidents required medivac from camp to obtain a higher level of care
 - One ground medevac
 - One air medevac
- No serious injuries

2021 INJURIES BY MECHANISM



COVID-19

- **No suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases in TFS during 2021**
- Reduction to 10-day quarantine model on 6/28/21
 - 2 PCR tests targeting days 5 & 6
- Tests and quarantines for NSF-funded projects were coordinated locally by Battelle ARO
- TFS oversaw staff testing and quarantines for non-Battelle ARO supported projects

COVID-19

- Testing services were contracted with Beacon Occupational Health & Safety
 - Online telecollection allowed TFS travelers to undergo COVID testing without a breach of quarantine
- Battelle ARO and TFS staff delivered and mailed test kits for individuals in quarantine
- “Quarantine hotels” established at the Wedgewood Hotel and Sophie’s Station in Fairbanks, which allowed for consolidation of travelers to simplify logistical demands.
- ~500 tests were processed between October 2020 to 2021

COVID-19

- TFS obtained an exemption from the UAF mask mandate early in the summer season. Masks no longer required to be worn inside buildings.
- No other major changes to 2021 camp operations with regards to COVID-19 policy.



HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- Full chemical inventory of all facilities completed in Fall
- Hazardous waste disposal conducted in September
 - Removed 2 years worth of waste accumulation
 - 6,500 L of liquid waste; 4.5 kg of solid waste
- Chemical storage in laboratories continues to present a challenge
 - Materials are left between seasons
 - Chemicals that are abandoned by non-returning projects become waste that is difficult to dispose.



HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- Radioactive material transport is performed in conjunction with the responsible project(s) and Tracey Martinson at UAF Environmental Health, Safety, & Risk Management (EHSRM)
- UAF EHSRM conducted an on-site inspection of all above-ground fuel tanks present on TFS property in September 2021
- TFS Spill Prevention, Control, & Countermeasure Plan updated in November 2021
- No reportable spills occurred between October 2020 - October 2021

ASBESTOS REMOVAL

- Presence of asbestos confirmed in EDC trailer during Winter 2021
- Additional testing ruled out the presence of asbestos in other “asbestos-era” buildings around TFS
- UAF abatement team successfully remediated the EDC trailer in May 2021

ROAD AND BOAT SAFETY

- Dalton Highway travel continues to present the most danger for serious injury of any activity at TFS
- North and southbound trucks receive a road safety orientation by either TFS Logistics or Safety
- All vehicles are equipped with GPS tracking as well as sat phones for emergency communications
- Updated roadside emergency kits for winter breakdowns

ROAD AND BOAT SAFETY

- All TFS residents who plan to venture onto Toolik Lake undergo a water safety orientation that covers general boat safety and Toolik Lake topographical features
- No road or water safety incidents during 2021



MENTAL HEALTH

- Continues to be a major discussion item for users and staff
- TFS Safety can refer to emergency services but does not have the capacity to provide long-term maintenance care
- COVID-19 has amplified an already major issue at remote field camps
 - Small group sizes means that the few who can travel up to TFS have to spend a larger amount of time performing more work → Faster, more severe burnout
- Ultimately, groups must factor the mental health of their researchers into their project plan before they make reservations
 - Avoid long shifts
 - Spread work over more people. Can't send more people? Adjust workload.
 - Identify resources your home institution can provide

SEE YOU IN 2022!

