The USAF Dental Evaluation & Consultation Service (DECS) was established as the Dental Investigation Service (DIS) on 1 October 1976 by Air Force Regulation 162-7 and was charged to provide investigative guidance and assistance for all USAF dental personnel. DECS today provides clinical, laboratory, and consultative services for dental equipment, dental materials, dental facilities, infection control, occupational safety and health for dental personnel and patient safety. DECS and its $6 million laboratory are located within the Battlefield Health and Trauma Institute of Surgical Research at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, TX. DECS moved to Fort Sam Houston as part of the Base Realignment and Closure initiative of 2005 and is co-located with the Naval Medical Research Unit San Antonio and the US Army Dental and Trauma Research Detachment. In October 2014, DECS went from being a detachment of the USAF School of Aerospace Medicine under the 711th Human Performance Wing and realigned under the 59th Medical Wing as a part of the 59th Dental Group.

DECS is charged with seven priorities:

1. Provide a responsive consultative service for the Air Force Dental Corps
2. Test, evaluate and provide consultation on equipment and materials of interest
3. Provide CE for military members and a responsive website with information on new products, literature reviews, announcements/alerts, and infection control
4. Review dental facility remodel and construction projects and equipment requests
5. Support Master’s Degree level research for Tri-service residency programs
6. Collaborate with ADA and ISO on international dental standards
7. Provide education support in material science to federal dental residencies

DECS is staffed with materials scientists, fellowship graduates, as well as laboratory technicians, dental assistants and a biomedical equipment repair technician. The product evaluation of DECS is shared between the personnel assigned to the Fort Sam Houston facility and clinical users throughout the Air Force. We can't do it alone. DECS collects information from surveys and questionnaires sent to the field as a basis for future studies. Feedback is always welcome and we are looking at ways to be more responsive to dental staff in military clinics, and other product evaluation centers, so the end users, and ultimately our patients, gain the best possible benefit. Additionally, our staff works closely with AFMOA Patient Safety and Quality divisions to insure the highest reliability in the safe delivery of dental care to our beneficiaries, be they in-garrison or expeditionary.
A quick scan of the website will show that DECS has a busy schedule. In addition to our in-depth product evaluations, DECS is also involved with reviewing all the medical equipment and material alerts from US Army-Ft. Detrick-MEDCOM; we review equipment requests and TIGERS forms as a consultation resource; we review current literature and work to keep dentists aware of the latest science based evidence for materials and clinical practice. We coordinate the DECS Dental Continuing Education program and have teamed up with SWANK and the USAF Post Graduate Dental School to provide world-class education presentations for CE credit that is accredited by the American Dental Association (ADA CERP) and is accepted by the Academy of General Dentistry for Fellow and Master qualification.

DECS personnel are dedicated to serve dentistry. They are:

- **Dental Materials**
  - Dental Materials (e.g., curing lights, resin composites, bonding agents, glass ionomers, cements, impression materials)
  - DSN 389-2982/7036
  - Comm (210) 539-2982/7036

- **Equipment Evaluation; BMET**
  - Dental Equipment (e.g., handpieces, dental chairs & units, operatory lights, air abrasion units, amalgamators, radiographic units & developers, table top steam sterilizers, instrument sharpeners)
  - DSN 389-2982/7036/7156
  - Comm (210) 539-2982/7036/7156

- **Patient Safety and Infection Control**
  - Infection Control & Safety
  - DSN 389-8239/6103/2982/8224
  - Comm (210) 539-8239/6103/2982/8224

- **Dental Laboratory Evaluations**
  - Dental Laboratory Equipment/Materials (e.g., porcelain ovens, porcelain systems, dental stones)
  - DSN 389-7036/7121
  - Comm (210) 539-7036/7121

- **DECS Administration and Continuing Education**
  - Application, Database & Development, CE
  - DSN 389-8239/8224/3327/2982
  - Comm (210) 539-8239/8224/3327/2982

- **Facility Design and Review**
  - Review of Facility Construction and Modification Plans
  - DSN 389-7011/4115
  - Comm (210) 539-7011/4115

DECS is forging a path to the future with technology. There are two DECS websites, one exclusively for military personnel and the other for the public. Their content is similar involving product evaluations, materials information, infection control and patient safety items. DECS knows there is a plethora of information available to the clinician and the clinic staff. We hope to take that information and provide a road map to safe and effective clinical practice for the federal dental services. We welcome feedback on products to evaluate or issues that need our attention. Please feel free to contact anyone of the staff and we will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you for checking out our website.

Very respectfully,
Col Daniel Savett