

Special Medical Emergency Evacuation Device

U.S. Army Institute Of Surgical Research (USAISR)

A device invented by Army staff sergeant Eric Smeed during a mass casualty exercise is now patented, licensed and in production for military medicine. SGT Smeed volunteered to help the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research's burn team during a mass casualty exercise in March 2000. Approached by LTC Lee Cancio, the Special Medical Augmentation Response Team leader in San Antonio, Smeed was asked to find a way the team could avoid strapping medical equipment to a patient, which is uncomfortable to the victim and can injure the patients and the equipment. A few days later SGT Smeed developed a cardboard version of the critical care platform (stretcher) and presented his idea to LTC Cancio. After developing a \$1500 prototype with the Air Force machine shop at Brooks Air Force Base in Texas he then created three additional versions. The SMEED (Special Medical Emergency Evacuation Device) is an aluminum and stainless steel platform that adjusts to three heights. It mounts anywhere on a standard NATO litter and with two pins and special brackets can hold portable medical equipment, including a ventilator, suction, monitor, infusion pump, power supply and steel and carbon-fiber oxygen cylinders. The sergeant's platform speeds up patient transfer as the injured soldier moves from the battlefield to the battalion aid station and on to higher echelons of care. The platform was initially designed solely for the ISR burn flight team's use, but when the team displayed it at a Special Operations Conference, it created a buzz. The SMEED was then developed for use in other areas of the Army, not just the burn unit. The critical care platform was licensed in 2002 to the New Jersey company Impact Instrumentation, Inc., and the military has purchased hundreds of the SMEEDs (and continue to purchase them). The new and improved critical care platform is utilized by the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps because it's lighter, more adaptable and simply easy to use in emergency evacuation situations. They have been employed in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Afghanistan. There is no doubt about it – the SMEED is saving lives.

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