

Career Profile

Raymond McLane, M.D.

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Great strides in medical discoveries are made during every war, and Vietnam was no exception. For the last several years, formal residency training for emergency department physicians has been available. However, there are established emergency medicine physicians whose preparation is difficult to rival even the best of these residencies. Such is the case with Dr. Raymond McLane, Director of the emergency department at Bayfront Medical Center in St. Petersburg and an Associate Medical Director for the Pinellas County EMS system.

McLane's interest in medicine began as a young boy while watching a physician suture his thumb. His inspiration came in high school, listening to a lecture at Notre Dame University by Dr. Tom Dooley, a missionary physician who established hospitals to serve the thousands of Vietnamese refugees fleeing to Laos in the 1950s.

In 1957, McLane attended Notre Dame as an undergraduate, followed by medical school at Indiana University at Indianapolis and internship at Mound Park Hospital in St. Petersburg.

Following internship, he was formally inducted into the U.S. Army. His first assignment was the training of medical corpsmen. McLane was then transferred to Vietnam, where he assumed command of a medical company, composed of ninety medics and nine physicians in a sixty bed facility, fifty miles south of the demilitarized zone. Many of his patients were villagers, treated prior to transfer to a Vietnamese hospital. Their primary mission, however, was treatment of American G.I.'s brought directly from the battlefield by helicopter - the early prototype of today's civilian trauma system goals. His experience in Vietnam gave him the opportunity to become skilled at all the things he altruistically "hopes never to have to do again - mass casualties, triage, blast injuries."

In 1969, McLane returned to the emergency department

of Bayfront Medical Center, formerly called Mound Park Hospital, where he had interned. Partly due to Vietnam, changes in emergency medicine had begun. Instead of interns, career physicians staffed the emergency room. A formal training program for a new allied health career, emergency medical technician, was being introduced. Dr. McLane participated in the training of firefighters from St. Petersburg

in the new emergency medical technician program. When paramedic level training was later implemented, McLane became the Medical Director for the St. Petersburg Fire Rescue Division, and wrote their original standing orders. In the years following, Dr. McLane has remained responsible for St. Petersburg Fire Rescue as an Associate Medical Director in the Pinellas county EMS system.

McLane is a member of the American College of Emergency Physicians, Pinellas County Medical Society, and the American Medical Association. In 1984, he was the recipient of the President's Award from the Pinellas County Medical Society.

McLane feels that liability is the biggest problem facing EMS now and in the future. "Unless there is a general tort

reform, EMS is the next 'deep pocket' malpractice attorneys will go after."

On the positive side, McLane feels that the Basic Trauma Life Support (BTLS) course has also resulted in a more standardized, efficient level of trauma care. Patients are arriving quicker and more packaged than before. McLane's "LBJ Trauma Fellowship" (sic) in 1967 convinced him that the initiatives promoted in BTLS courses must inevitably reduce morbidity and mortality from trauma. He has worked to bring this method of medicine from the battlefields of a country at war onto the streets and into the hospitals of the United States.

