



**PRESS RELEASE  
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By Tech. Sgt. Alicia Halla

**Alaska Air Guard medical group changes leadership, stays busy course**

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** — The newest 176th Medical Group commander in one of the Air National Guard’s busiest wings officially took charge at a ceremony here Dec. 4.

The out-going commander, Col. Sharolyn Lange, relinquished command of the medical group to Lt. Col. Richard Rymerson during the ceremony.

As the commander, Rymerson leads a group responsible for the medical readiness of more than 1,400 Air Guardsmen in a wing that deploys its members regularly – a group that had zero medical delays for more than 1,000 deployers last year.

“I am tremendously honored to have been chosen for the position and humbled at the same time,” Rymerson said. “And I’m ready to continue on the trajectory we are on, which is up.”

Lange, who held the drill-status guardsman command position for four years, guided and nurtured the 176th MDG as a full-time commitment on part-time days. She plans to retire early next year after a 28-year Air Force career.

“It’s been worth it, but it’s time,” Lange said. “He’s ready to take over.”

As Lange exits stage right, Rymerson, a prior-enlisted officer with more than 20 years in the Air Force, prepares to take the group through new challenges on the horizon of restricted budgets and mounting demands as a DSG himself.

“Rymerson is a leader who has stepped forward,” said Col. Steven deMilliano, the 176th Wing commander and presiding officer of the ceremony. “He has prepared himself for the challenges ahead.”

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**PHOTOS:**

1. Attached pdf includes story and a small selection of low-resolution photos for viewing on screen.
2. DVIDS link includes story and selected full-resolution, free downloadable images. (Primarily for media, DVIDS is accessible from .mil computers.)

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Command Chief Master Sgt. David Garganta, senior enlisted leader of the 176th Wing, Alaska Air National Guard, holds the unit guidon while Col. Blake Gettys and Col. Steven deMilliano sit during a change-of-command ceremony on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, July 12. Gettys, who served as the 176th Wing's commander since 2014, relinquished control of the wing to deMilliano during the ceremony. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton/released)

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Col. Steven deMilliano gives a speech during a change-of-command ceremony on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, July 12. Col. Blake Gettys, who served as the 176th Wing's commander since 2014, relinquished control of the wing to deMilliano during the ceremony. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Edward Egerton/released)