

Veterans Health Administration (VHA): Mental Health Services Overview

June 2016



VA Defining
HEALTH CARE **EXCELLENCE**
in the 21st Century



Uniform Mental Health Services

VHA is committed to provide a **uniform package of mental health services** that is Veteran-centered, recovery-oriented, and evidence-based and that supports personalized, proactive, patient-centered care, including:

- Integration into Primary Care
- Inpatient Care
- Residential Care
- General Outpatient Care
- Specialty Outpatient Care
- 24 hours, 7 days a week Care
- Gender-sensitive Care
- Care Transitions
- Evidence-based psychotherapies
- Suicide Prevention Coordinators
- Telemental Health
- Evidence-based Treatments
- Rehabilitation and Recovery Services
- Therapeutic and Supported Employment Services
- Disaster Preparedness
- Collaboration with Homeless Programs and Services for Justice Involved Veterans





Overview of VA Mental Health Services

- Over the last several years, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has been transforming toward an **integrated mental health delivery system** – both during the transition from Servicemember to Veterans status, and by broadening VA’s continuum of care.
- VA has **many entry points for care** including 151 medical centers, 820 community based outpatient clinics, 300 Vet centers, the Veterans Crisis Line, VA staff on university campuses and other outreach efforts.
- VA has **expanded clinical programs** to provide proactive screening for depression, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), problem use of alcohol, military sexual trauma and delivery of mental health treatment in primary care and other medical and rehabilitation settings.
- VA provides **evidence-based specialty mental health care** in inpatient, residential and outpatient settings with subspecialty care for PTSD, substance abuse and serious mental illness, as well as general mental health and vocational services.





VA Mental Health Service Delivery

- Medical Centers & **Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC)**
 - Direct VA staffing
 - **Telemental health** between facilities, into CBOCs, and into Veterans' homes
- **Non-VA care** (fee basis and contract care)
- **Veterans Crisis Line** and other call centers
- Web resources and mobile apps
- MH providers on college campuses



Readjustment Counseling Services



- **Vet Centers**
 - Provide readjustment counseling
 - Located in community settings
 - Mobile Vet Centers to take care to rural areas



Mental Health Services in VA: Integration with Physical Health



- **Primary care/Mental Health integration**
 - Co-located, collaborative care within Patient Aligned Care Teams
 - Care management and support
 - Provides access and promotes engagement and adherence
 - Improved outcomes
- **Home Based Primary Care**
- **Women's Health Clinics**
- **Long-term care and end-of-life care**
 - Hospice and Palliative Care
 - Community Living Centers
- **Physical Rehabilitation**
 - Polytrauma units
 - Spinal Cord Injury units
 - Blindness Rehabilitation Centers
- Interdisciplinary medical specialty clinics, such as:
 - Pain clinics, Oncology, Endocrinology



Mental Health Services in VA: General Mental Health Clinics



- Implementation of at least one **Behavioral Health Interdisciplinary Program (BHIP)** team at every Medical Center
 - Interdisciplinary teams will provide the majority of mental health care necessary for a panel of assigned Veterans and thus open access to mental health care for all eligible Veterans.
 - Teams leverage the expertise of individual members to provide recovery-oriented, evidence-based treatments for all mental health issues presented by Veterans.
- BHIP principles include:
 - Patient centered
 - Team based
 - Data driven
 - Prevention/ population health
 - Providing value
 - Continuous improvement





Mental Health Services in VA: Outpatient Sub-Specialty Care Services

- **PTSD care teams:** Substance Use Disorder (SUD) specialist on, or accessible to, every team.
- **Mental Health Intensive Care Management (MHICM):** Interdisciplinary teams who provide community-based mental health care for Veterans with serious mental illness who have intensive needs.
- **RANGE/ E-RANGE:** Teams that extend MHICM services to rural areas.
- **Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Centers:** Outpatient transitional learning centers with curriculum-based programming designed to support recovery and integration into meaningful self-determined community roles for Veterans with serious mental illness and severe functional impairment.
- **Substance Use Disorder (SUD) care:** Mental Health professionals and peer supports
 - Detox (often in medical units)
 - Outpatient clinics for SUD
 - Intensive Outpatient services for SUD
 - Evidence-based psychopharmacology treatments



Mental Health Services in VA: Acute Inpatient and Residential services



- Inpatient mental health care
 - Available to Veterans who are at risk to themselves or others
 - Interdisciplinary team care (including medical care)
 - Recovery oriented and patient-centered services
 - Required follow-up after discharge to outpatient services
- Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Programs
 - Population with extensive comorbid diagnoses across mental health problems, SUD problems, homelessness, etc.
 - Interdisciplinary staffing and services to address a wide range of comorbid disorders



Integration across Specialty Mental Health Settings



- **Psychosocial Rehabilitation** model with a Recovery orientation
 - Local Recovery Coordinators empowered to work across settings to ensure continuity of care within a Recovery framework
- **Mental Health Treatment Coordinator** for every Veteran receiving mental health care (usually one of their providers)
- Requirement for outpatient follow-up after inpatient and residential mental health stays
- Provision of specialty mental health services via telemental health when appropriate



Public Health Model of Veteran Mental Health Care



- VA has traditionally served only those enrolled for care.
- Many Veterans choose to obtain mental health care outside VA, or in a combination of VA and non-VA sites.
- VA recognizes the crucial role of **community partners** in caring for Veterans and their families. Priorities include:
 - Educating community providers on military and Veteran issues
 - Partnering to ensure care for family members for services VA cannot provide
 - Partnering in outreach and anti-stigma efforts



Mental Health Services in VA: Suicide Prevention



- Suicide prevention requires ready access to high quality mental health (and other health care) services.
- Services are supplemented by programs designed to:
 - help individuals & families engage in care
 - address suicide prevention in high risk patients






Suicide Prevention Initiatives

- Hubs of expertise
 - Center of Excellence
 - Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center
- National programs for education and awareness
 - Operation S.A.V.E (Know the Signs, Ask the question, Validate the feelings, Expedite help)
 - Suicide Risk Management Training for Clinicians
 - Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Suicide
 - Women Veterans and Suicide
 - Older Veterans and Suicide
 - Primary Care Provider
- Veterans Crisis Line
 - 1-800-273-TALK (8255) Press “1” for Veterans
 - Veterans Chat
www.veteranscrisisline.net
 - Veterans Text: **838255**
- Suicide Prevention Coordinators
- Federal partnerships



Veterans Crisis Line

www.veteranscrisisline.net



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Veterans Crisis Line website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for "Get Help", "Materials", "Get Involved", "Crisis Centers", "Newsroom", and "About". Below this is a header section with the "Veterans Crisis Line" logo and contact information: "Dial 1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1", "Text to 838255", and "Confidential Veterans Chat". A blue banner below the header contains the text "Confidential Help for Veterans and Their Families" and navigation links for "Signs of Crisis", "Resources", "Get Help", and "About". The main content area features a testimonial from Tremeshia Ellis, a U.S. Army veteran from 2003-2007, with the quote: "I AM A VETERAN. Get the help you need to get your life back on track. It starts with a phone call." To the right of the testimonial is a "Welcome to the Veterans Crisis Line Website" section, which explains that the line connects veterans in crisis with qualified responders through a toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Below this is a section titled "Are You a Veteran or Concerned About One?" with two columns of options: "Act Now" (Dial 1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1 to talk to someone NOW) and "Learn Now" (Identify the Warning Signs, Concerned About a Veteran? You Can Help, and Suicide and Crisis Resources).



Enhanced Care Package for Patients at High Risk for Suicide



- High Risk Patients
 - Chart notification system – “flag”
 - Safety Plan
 - Treatment Plan modifications
 - Means restriction
 - Family / friend involvement
 - Follow-up for missed appointments





Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- In FY 2015, over 568,000 Veterans (over 178,000 Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND)) received treatment for PTSD in VAMCs and clinics, up from over 500,00 Veterans (over 100,000 OEF/OIF/OND) in FY 2011.
- State-of-the-art treatments are available for Veterans with PTSD:
 - More than 5,200 VA mental health staff have received training in **Prolonged Exposure** and/or **Cognitive Processing Therapy**, the most effective known therapies for PTSD.
 - Medication treatments also are offered and may be especially helpful for specific symptoms of PTSD.
 - VA operates a **National Center for PTSD (NCPTSD)**, which guides a national PTSD Mentoring program, which works with every specialty PTSD program across the country to improve care.
- The NCPTSD's award winning PTSD Web site www.ptsd.va.gov contains research based educational materials for Veterans and families, as well as for providers.
- The NCPTSD offers a Consultation Program available to any VA provider who treats Veterans with PTSD, helping with questions about assessment and treatment services.





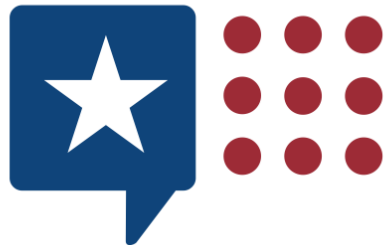
National Campaigns and Community Facing Programs



Campaign Messaging for the Veterans Crisis Line



Veterans Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1



"I AM A VETERAN.

Calling the confidential Veterans Crisis Line can help. I know."



National Outreach Campaign: www.maketheconnection.net



Make the Connection is VA's public awareness and outreach campaign that connects Veterans and their friends and family members with information, resources, and solutions related to issues affecting their health, well-being, and relationships.

- Goal to reduce the stigma many Veterans and their families associate with seeking mental health support
- Highlights the particular strengths of Veterans that have sought support and are living a richer life today as a result: resilience, courage, perseverance, leadership, mission-focus
- More than 200 Veterans and their family members have contributed personal, candid testimonials about seeking treatment for challenges ranging from TBI and PTSD to depression to flashbacks

**MAKE THE
CONNECTION**

Community Provider Toolkit

www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders



 **COMMUNITY PROVIDER TOOLKIT**
WORKING TOGETHER TO SERVE VETERANS

Feedback | About Us

SCREENING FOR MILITARY SERVICE



Military background is not always assessed by clinicians or spontaneously shared by Veteran clients. Asking if the individual in your office has served in the military is simple, quick, and can have important implications for available benefits and care.

[Home /](#)
Has your client served in the military?

It is important to remember that:

- Assessing Veteran status is not something that is commonly included in traditional behavioral health screenings.
- Veterans and Service Members may not self-identify as such to the clinician.

Screening for military service will:

- Ensure that each Veteran will have the opportunity to access the network of healthcare and support services for which he or she may be eligible.
- Inform treatment planning.
- Increase awareness of the extraordinary strengths that Veterans often possess and unique challenges that they may face.



[How To Screen »](#)

" Armed with a deeper understanding of their experience and the right tools to help, we can ensure that Veterans receive the best possible care. "

- Released end of September, 2012
- Designed to assist all community mental health providers understand and provide Veteran specific mental health care
- Will grow and develop throughout the rest of the calendar year



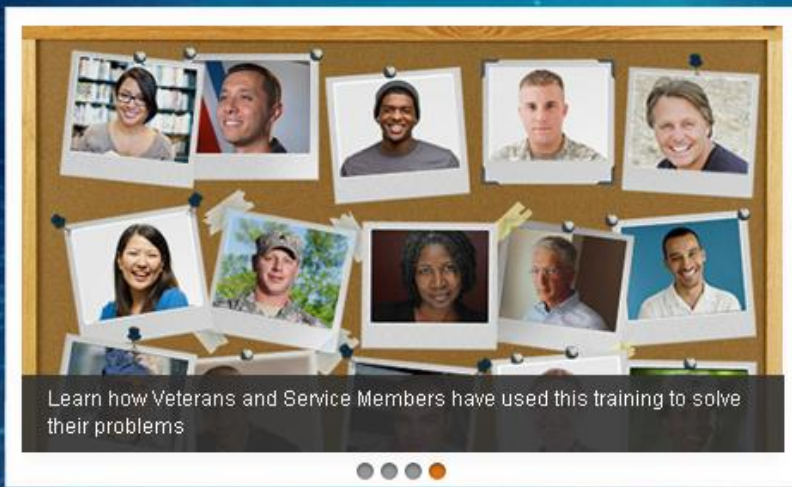
Start Moving Forward
www.startmovingforward.org



MOVING FORWARD

OVERCOMING LIFE'S CHALLENGES

Resources Feedback FAQs Get the Word Out



Learn how Veterans and Service Members have used this training to solve their problems

What is Moving Forward?

Moving Forward is a free, on-line educational and life coaching program that teaches Problem Solving skills to help you to better handle life's challenges. It is designed to be especially helpful for Veterans, Military Service Members and their families. However, Moving Forward teaches skills that can be useful to anyone with stressful problems. Are you ready to Move Forward? Select the button below to take the Moving Forward Training.



Start The Training

[\(Flash Player Required\)](#)



Interested in checking out Moving Forward? The links below will take you into various pages with videos or activities in the course. If you want to return to this page, just close the course window.



VA
HEALTH
CARE | Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

AboutFace

www.ptsd.va.gov/aboutface



A screenshot of the AboutFace website interface. The top navigation bar includes links for HOME, HOW THE SITE WORKS, WHO'S ON THE SITE, PTSD PROFILES, ABOUT PTSD, GET HELP, and CONTACT US. The main content area features a large background image of a woman's face. On the left, there is a sidebar with the "ABOUTFACE" logo and a list of categories: VETERANS, CLINICIANS, and FAMILY. Below this, a list of topics is provided: Who I am, How I knew I had PTSD, How PTSD affects the people you love, Why I didn't ask for help right away, When I knew I needed help, What treatment was like for me, How treatment helps me, and My advice to you. In the center, there is a grid of nine video thumbnails showing various individuals. Below the grid is a pagination control showing "1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6 / ... / 8". At the bottom right, there is a logo for the Department of Veterans Affairs PTSD Rehabilitation Center and the text "LAST UPDATED: 2014-07-23".

- National Center for PTSD award-winning educational campaign
 - online video gallery of Veterans telling their stories of how PTSD treatment has turned their lives around
 - Goal: to help Veterans recognize their PTSD and encourage them to seek treatment
- Currently contains
 - Veteran, Clinician, & Family Interviews
 - Longer PTSD Profiles
- Coming Soon
 - PTSD Previews
 - Veteran journey through PE
 - Veteran journey through CPT



Mobile Applications



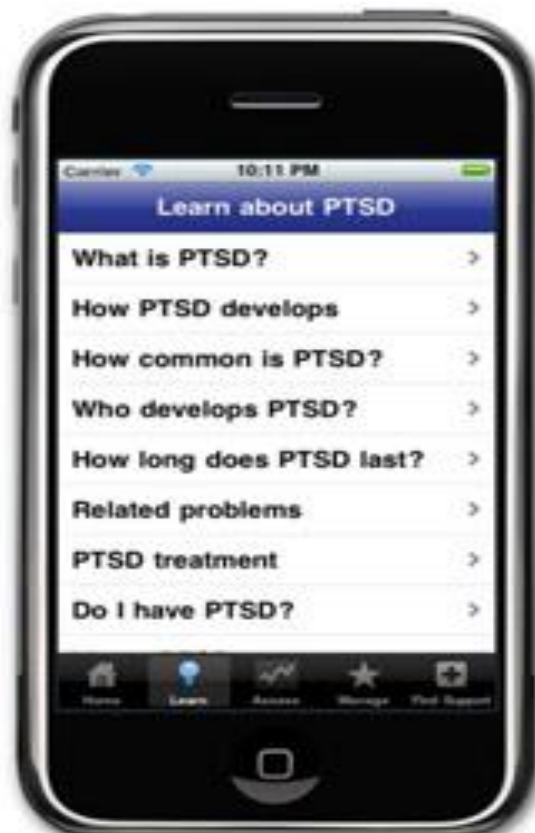
Mobile Apps for Mental Health: PTSD Coach



- In April 2011, the first in a suite of VA/Department of Defense (DoD) mobile apps was launched – the PTSD Coach.
- PTSD Coach helps users track their PTSD symptoms, links them with public and personalized sources of support, provides accurate information about PTSD, and teaches helpful strategies for managing PTSD symptoms.
- The app can be downloaded free from iTunes and the Droid Marketplace and is available in multiple languages.
- The app has received very positive feedback from Veterans, their family members, and staff.



Mobile Apps for Mental Health: PTSD Coach



Mobile Apps for Mental Health: Stay Quit Coach



- Creates a tailored plan based on personal reasons for quitting.
- Provides information about smoking and quitting.
- Interactive tools to help users cope with urges to smoke.
- Motivational messages and support contacts to help users stay smoke-free.
- Based on evidence-based clinical practices, and has been shown to double quit rates for Veterans with PTSD.
- Meant to be used in conjunction with *Integrated Care for Smoking Cessation*.
- However, it provides instruction and information for those using it as a standalone tool.





Mobile Apps for Mental Health: CBT-i Coach

- Designed for use by Veterans and others who are having difficulty sleeping and for use in conjunction with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-i) treatment guided by a healthcare professional.
- The features of CBT-i Coach include:
 - An interactive sleep diary for convenient daily logging of sleep habits
 - Automatic calculation of the sleep prescription, with options for the therapist to adjust based on clinical judgment and patient progress
 - An assessment of insomnia severity
 - Comprehensive educational materials about sleep, healthy sleep habits, barriers to sleep, and CBT-i therapy
 - Dynamic tools to improve sleep, including relaxation exercises
 - Customizable reminders to alert the user when to prepare for bed, when to go to sleep, when to get out of bed, to record sleep habits, and to take sleep assessments



Overview of Presentation

- Overview of Women's Mental Health
- Overview of Military Sexual Trauma
- Family Services
 - Federal Law and Family Services
 - Continuum of VA Family Services
 - Family Education
 - Veteran Centered Brief Family Consultation
 - Marriage and Family Counseling in VA
 - Other Initiatives
 - Partnership Opportunities

Women Veterans Mental Health: Overview

- Women Veterans are the fastest growing segment of eligible VHA users, however they continue to be a minority of VA users as compared to male Veterans
- As such, they may face unique challenges to VA services
- VA offers a full continuum of mental health services:
 - Outpatient: assessment, evaluation, psychiatry, individual, group and family therapy
 - Specialty services: posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance use disorders, depression, homelessness
 - Evidence-based therapies available at all VA medical centers
 - Inpatient and residential treatment options (mixed-gender and women-only)

Gender Sensitive Mental Health Care

Gender-sensitive mental health care refers to services that attend to gender differences as well as the influence of biological, social and cultural factors on mental health.

The key components include:

- **Comprehensiveness** includes a full continuum of service availability for women in general mental health, specialty mental health, and residential/inpatient programming in a range of treatment settings
- **Choice** of treatment modality (e.g., mixed-gender or women-only service options)
- **Competency** to address women's unique treatment needs
- **Innovation** creative options and settings for subgroups of women, especially when caseloads of women are small

Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

- MST is the term used by VA to refer to sexual assault or repeated, threatening sexual harassment experienced during military service
- When screened as part of VHA's universal screening program, about 1 in 4 women and 1 in 100 men tell their VHA health care provider that they experienced sexual trauma in the military
- MST is an experience, not a diagnosis or a condition in and of itself
 - Not every MST survivor will experience long-term difficulties after the experience
 - Yet for some, experiences of MST may continue to affect their mental and physical health, work, relationships, and everyday life, even many years later
 - MST is associated with a range of psychological disorders, such as: PTSD, depression, anxiety, substance use disorders, as well as physical health difficulties

VA's Commitment to Addressing MST

- VA is committed to ensuring that MST Survivors have access to a full range of services that can facilitate recovery, and engages in outreach to ensure Veterans are aware of services available
- National policy specifies that all VA Healthcare Systems must:
 - Screen all Veterans for experiences of MST
 - Provide free treatment for mental and physical health conditions related to MST
 - Have a designated MST Coordinator to serve as a point person for MST issues
 - Ensure staff receive training on issues related to MST
- Vet Centers also offer MST counseling and services
- VA's Mental Health Services has funded a national MST Support Team to perform national monitoring, to coordinate MST-related education and training, and to promote best practices in the field

Federal Law and Family Services

38 USC § 1782. Counseling, Training, and Mental Health Services for Immediate Family Members and Caregivers

Services provided include:

- Training/Education, Consultation, Marriage and Family Counseling as are necessary *in connection with that treatment*

Eligible individuals who may be provided services:

- Members of immediate family or legal guardian of a Veteran
- Family caregiver of eligible Veteran or a caregiver of a covered Veteran (those terms are defined in PL 111-163)
- Individual in whose household such Veteran certifies an intention to live

Continuum of VA Family Services

- Consistent with a recovery philosophy a graduated continuum of services is necessary to meet the varied needs of our Veterans.
- The full continuum ranges from:
 - Family Education / Training
 - Brief Problem-Focused Consultations
 - More Intensive Marriage and Family Counseling and Family Psychoeducation

Continuum of VA Services for Families

Education

NAMI Family to Family

NAMI Homefront

Support and Family
Education
(SAFE)

Operation Enduring Families

Consultation

Veteran Centered Brief
Family Consultation

Family

Psychoeducation/Marital and Family Counseling

Integrative Behavioral Couples Therapy
*with attention to Interpersonal
Violence, Parenting, and Same Sex
Couples*

Behavioral Couples Therapy for
Substance Use *with attention to
Interpersonal Violence, Parenting and
Same Sex Couples*

Cognitive-behavioral Couples Therapy
for PTSD with attention to Interpersonal
Violence, Parenting and Same Sex
Couples

Behavioral Family Therapy for Serious
Psychiatric Disorders

Family Education/Training

- **Family Education: A set of techniques that provide families with the information necessary to partner with the treatment team and support Veterans' recovery**
- **Topics include: Symptoms, Prognosis, Treatments, Identifying & managing sources of stress and Factors associated with good outcomes**
- **May be offered via written and video materials, one-day workshops, and/or regularly scheduled meetings conducted by professionals (e.g., the SAFE program or the NAMI Family to Family program.)**
 - **Veterans may or may not be present for these trainings**

The Support And Family Education (SAFE) Program

- 18 session workshop for families of Veterans living with PTSD and /or serious mental illness
 - Information about the Disorders
 - Skills for Family Members
 - The Experience of Caring about Someone Living with SMI/PTSD
 - Dealing with Family, Friends and Professionals
- Families attend as many sessions as needed – each session can stand alone

Operation Enduring Families

A five-session family education and support program for Veterans who have recently returned from a combat theatre and their family members

- Session topics
 - Family Relationships
 - Communication and Intimacy
 - Anger
 - Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
 - Depression

VHA-NAMI Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

- First two MOUs (2008 – 2010 and 2010 – 2013) focused on offering NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program (FFEP) in designated VA facilities
- Collaborative effort between the VA and NAMI on national, state and local levels
- Third MOU (2016 – 2019):
 - Will add NAMI Homefront
 - Include all VAMCs unless there is an issue with NAMI affiliate resources
 - Different metrics to obtain compliance with MOU
 - Requirement for a revised revocable license with waived indemnification and insurance

Family Consultation

Veteran-Centered Brief Family Consultation (VCBFC)

- Family meets with mental health professional as needed to resolve specific issues related to the Veteran's treatment and recovery
- Intervention is brief; typically 1 – 5 sessions for each consultation
- Provided on as needed or intermittent basis
- If more intensive ongoing effort is required, family can be referred to Marriage and Family Counseling

Overview of Marriage and Family Counseling Program Roll-Out

- Program funded and supported by Mental Health Services at VA Central Office
- Part of effort to increase availability of EBPs to Veterans
- Provides training, support, consultation to VA clinicians working with Veterans with relationship distress
- Includes:
 - Integrative Behavioral Couples Therapy (IBCT),
 - Behavioral Couples Therapy for Substance Abuse Disorders (BCT)
 - Cognitive Behavioral Conjoint Therapy for PTSD (CBCT)
 - Behavioral Family Therapy (BFT) for Serious Psychiatric Disorders

Parenting Issues Instruction

- Three hour presentation added to couples therapy training
- Goal is to assist VA clinicians, who may not have expertise in parenting issues, to become knowledgeable as a resource to Veterans parenting children
- Topics Covered:
 - Common parenting issues
 - Assessment, engaging parents, and red flags
 - Parenting fundamentals and child development
 - Resources and referral

Instruction on Addressing Intimate Personal Violence (IPV)

- Veteran rates of IPV increase with co-occurring PTSD, SUD, and combat exposure
- Three hour training addresses IPV

Topics Covered in Training

- Types, prevalence , and implications for treatment
- Assessment of IPV and determining appropriateness of couples therapy when a couple reports recent IPV
- Use of safety planning strategies, appropriate referral sources, and documentation


Instruction on working with LGBT Couples and Families

- Three hour presentation added to couples therapy training
- Goal is to assist VA clinicians, who may not have expertise in working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender, or LGBT, Veterans, in conjoint therapy to gain knowledge and skills they need to meet the unique treatment needs of LGBT Veterans. Topics Covered:
- Clinicians are provided important information on LGBT families and couples and clinical considerations for working with the LGBT couple

Coaching Into Care

- Provides concerned family and friends with a place to call and get information about how to help loved ones
 - Targets Veterans reluctant to seek help, through their concerned family members
 - Goal is engagement in care which is often facilitated by family members
 - Optimize family involvement in getting Veteran into care by helping family members support Veteran in a positive way
 - Coordinates with other VA telephone care lines

Coaching Into Care



**Need a hand helping
your Veteran get into care?
Reach out to us.**



1-888-823-7458
www.va.gov/coachingintocare



Parenting for Service Members and Veterans – Online Course

- Free online course provides parents with tools that strengthen parenting skills and helps them reconnect with their children. The course:
- Helps parents deal with both everyday problems and family issues that are unique to the military lifestyle.
- Features stories from actual Veteran/military families, interactive activities, and practical parenting tips.
- Is anonymous and registration is not required. No personal information is ever requested or stored by the website.
- www.veterantraining.va.gov

VA – NAMI Partnership Opportunities

Besides the VA-NAMI MOU, could partner around:

- Other NAMI offerings like NAMI Basics
- NAMI Support Groups
- Membership on VA Mental Health /Consumer Councils
- Membership on NAMI Affiliate Medical Advisory Board
- Invited presentations

#NAMIcon16

The Power of Partnership: How Collaboration between NAMI and the VA Strengthens Families and Saves Lives



A Peer Education Approach

The lived experience of the
instructors and facilitators is
the  of NAMI programs.





Included in SAMHSA's
National Registry of
Evidence-based
Programs and Practices



A History of Success

- 1997 – NAMI Affiliates in Ohio and Maryland partner with local VA leadership to teach NAMI Family-to-Family classes at VA facilities.
- 2008 & 2010 – Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between NAMI and the VA to offer NAMI Family-to-Family in VA facilities across the country.
- 2016 – A new 3-year MOU was signed promoting the provision of both the NAMI Homefront and NAMI Family-to-Family courses in partnership with the VA.



Sustaining Positive Outcomes

- The NAMI Family-to-Family program conveyed significant lasting (at least 6 months) reductions in family member distress, and improvements in family problems solving, coping, knowledge and empowerment in family members of adults with mental illnesses.
- Greater attendance was associated with greater increases in empowerment and reductions in displeasure with ill relative and depression.
- Peer-led and created information and support programs can offer sustained benefits to individuals seeking information, support and skill-building in coping with stressful and challenging life situations.

(Lucksted, et al., 2013)



NAMI Family-to-Family at the VA

We are still friends with everyone that was in the class. There's always an open ear and an open heart and a shoulder to cry on if you need it.

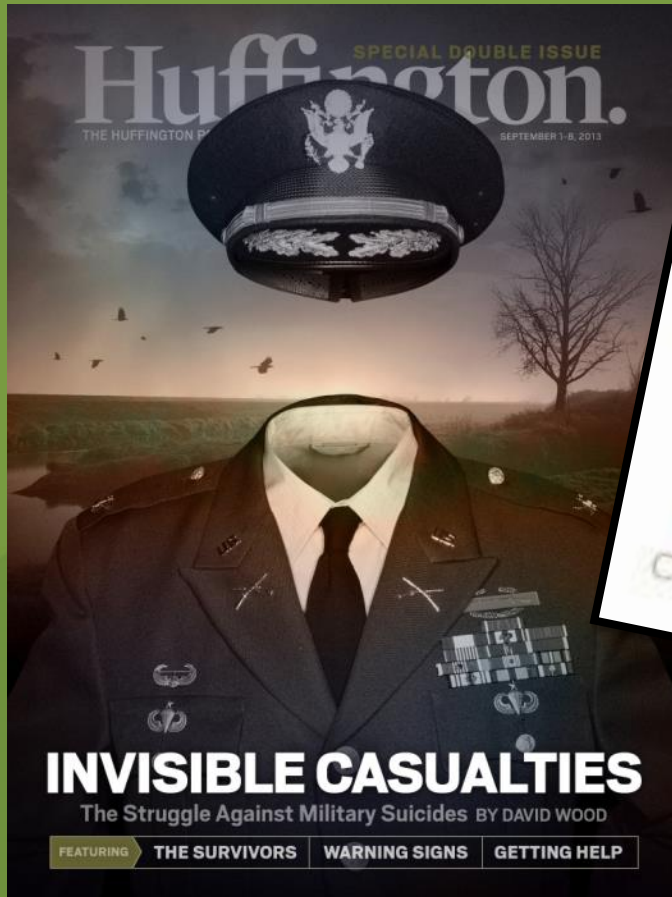
Father of a Veteran

You realize that he will never be the same having been through war. I learned how to treat him more as an adult than as a hurt child.

Mother of a Veteran



Why Develop a New Program?



Family Stress & Sacrifice



In the United States Today:

- 1.5 million U.S. Veterans age 17 or older (6.6 % of this population) had a substance use disorder in the past year
2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, SAMHSA CBHSQ Report (5/7/15)
- Approximately 18.5% of service members returning from Iraq or Afghanistan have posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or depression, and 19.5% report experiencing a traumatic brain injury (TBI) during deployment.
SAMHSA Webpage Topics: Veterans and Military Families (retrieved 5/26/15)



In the United States Today:

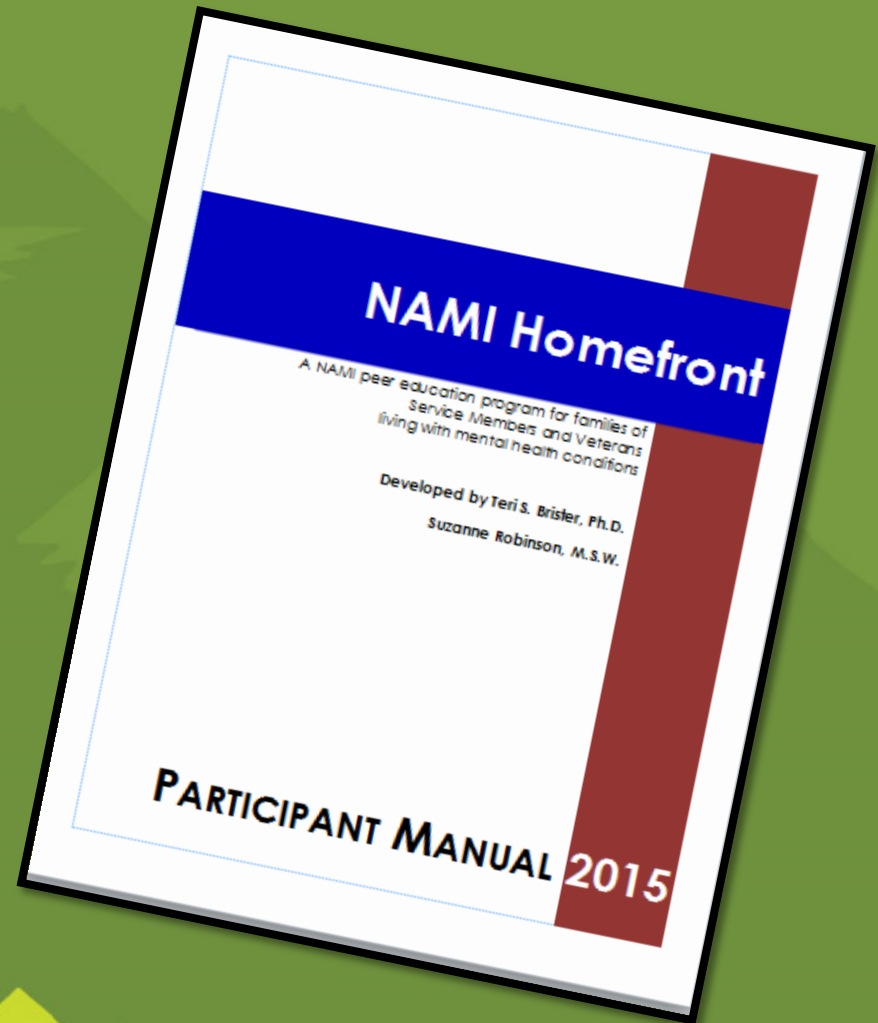
- There are an estimated 5.5 million military caregivers
- Nearly 20% (1.1 million) are caring for someone who served after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001
- Post-9/11 military caregivers are:
 - Younger (40% are between ages 18 and 30)
 - Caring for an individual with a mental health or substance use condition
 - Nonwhite
 - A Veteran of military service
 - Employed
 - Not connected to a support network

Hidden Heroes: America's Military Caregivers, RAND Corporation (2014)



What is NAMI Homefront?

A six session adaptation of NAMI Family-to-Family that is culturally sensitive to the needs and issues of families addressing mental health conditions (including PTSD and TBI) in a Veteran or Military Service Member.



History of NAMI Homefront

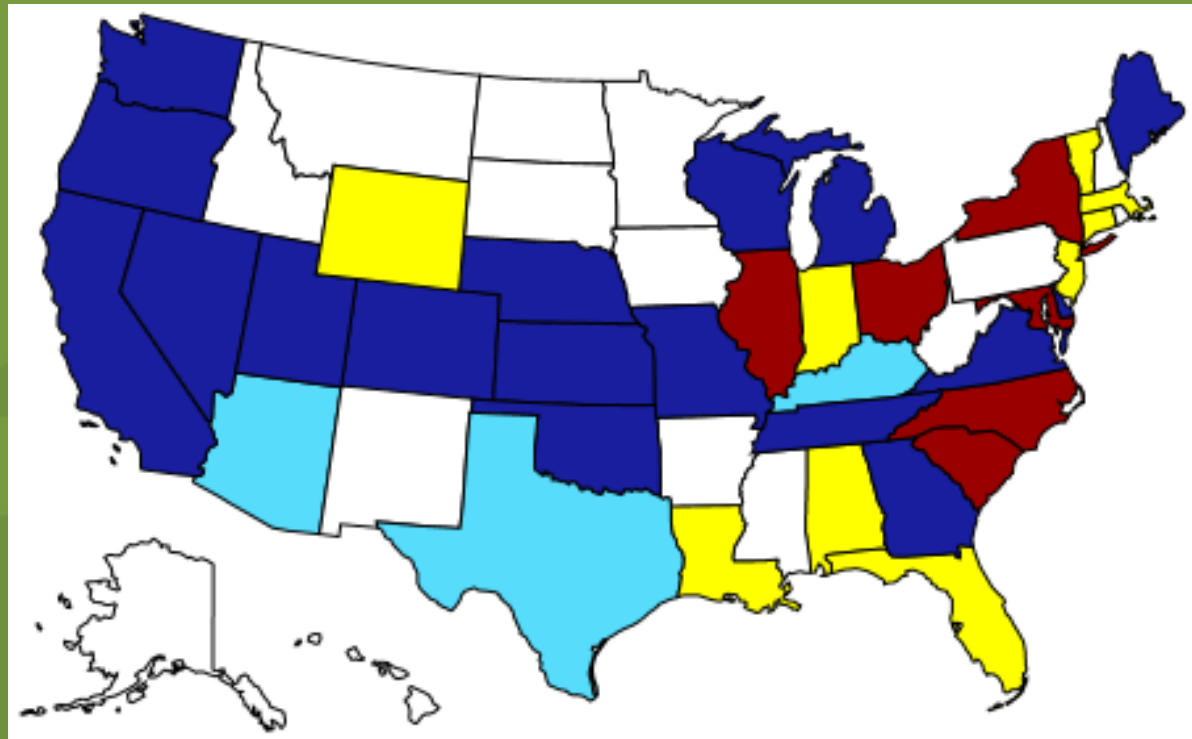
An Expert Advisory Group (EAG) met on 9/11/13. The EAG continues to advise NAMI as do other content experts.







Course Content

- **Class 1:** Introduction to NAMI Family Education
- **Class 2:** Biology of Mental Illness & Getting a Diagnosis
- **Class 3:** Understanding Trauma, Overview of Diagnoses
- **Class 4:** Treatment Services & Crisis Management
- **Class 5:** Crisis Preparation & Communication Skills
- **Class 6:** Family Roles, Recovery & Self-Care
- **General Resources**
- **References**
- **Glossary**





	NAMI Homefront pilot states
	States added after pilot phase
	States in planning phase
	States with interest

As of June 22, 2016



NAMI Homefront Accomplishments

- 234 teachers trained in 22 states as of early June
- 300+ graduates of 35+ classes

Four NAMI Homefront courses taught online since April of 2015.



NAMI Homefront Is Offered:

- At VA Medical Centers and CBOCs
- On Military Bases
 - Fort Leonard Wood in MO
 - Fort Bragg in NC (Pope AFB)
- In Civilian settings



Graduates of the first NAMI Homefront course taught in the U.S.

Pendleton, SC on 6/28/14



Feedback from Graduates

“Can’t tell you how personally helpful I found the Homefront program. So much so that it has helped me reach back to my ex and provide support in a way that I don’t think I could have done before Homefront.”

Ex-partner of active duty military

“I am at a point now that being able to stop and look back at exactly how far we’ve come and being reminded of the painful past but positive changes was very empowering. Sometimes when we get stuck in the routine of moving on we lose sight of how far we’ve come.”

Wounded Veteran and wife of Active Duty Airman

“It’s the first step I have taken to get more involved personally with the VA.”

Mother of a Veteran



Evaluating Our Success

In addition to satisfaction surveys collected during the course, evaluation and research for NAMI Homefront is being conducted by:

Lisa Dixon, MD, MPH

Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Department of Psychiatry, Columbia University

Director, Center for Practice Innovations

New York State Psychiatric Institute



#NAMIcon16



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