Operation Health: Resources for Veterans and Their Families

Today’s Topics
- Defining the users
- Statistics
- Injuries and Conditions
- Unique issues for veteran subgroups
- Health resources
- Finding services

User Snapshot
- Who are these library users?
  - Veterans
  - Military families
  - Caregivers of veterans
  - Active duty service members

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A Few Statistics

Injuries and Conditions

- Different conflicts, different outcomes
  - Exposures: environmental, substances
  - Physical injuries
  - Mental health issues
  - Social issues

Military Exposures

http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/
Physical Injuries

Traumatic Brain Injury
“...TBI has become the “signature injury” of current warfare”.
Sharon Shively and Daniel Perl
Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation,
Vol 27, No. 3, pp 234-239

Brainline Military

http://www.brainlinemilitary.org/

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Mental Health Issues

- PTSD
- Depression
- Sleep disorders
- Anger
- Suicide

http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/

National Center for PTSD

http://www.ptsd.va.gov/

June is PTSD Awareness Month


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Navigating the VA.gov Site: Mini Practice

- We'll take about two minutes for this exercise. Go to http://va.gov/
- Click on Veterans Services
- Note the topics under Health and Well-Being
- Click on Mental Health and scan the page; go back later explore more
- In the Chat box: Reactions? Anything notable?

Navigating the VA.gov Site

http://www.drugabuse.gov/patients-families
http://www.easyread.drugabuse.gov/

Substance Abuse

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Homelessness

http://www.nchv.org/veterans.cfm

Helpful Tools from NCHV

Special Issues for Women Veterans

• Family Issues
• Military Sexual Trauma
• Homelessness
• Suicide

http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/
http://www.womenshealth.va.gov/

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California’s Women Veterans

- California has both the greatest number - more than 167,000 - and the greatest proportion of female veterans in the country (9.5 percent).

California’s Women Veterans
Response to the 2011 Survey: Preliminary Report
http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/12/FINAL_REPORT.pdf

Older Vets

Support Services

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Make the Connection

*MakeTheConnection.net* is a one-stop resource where Veterans and their families and friends can explore information about physical and mental health symptoms, challenging life events, and mental health conditions.

Highly recommended for any vet, family member or friend seeking support and information

[http://maketheconnection.net/](http://maketheconnection.net/)

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**Make the Connection**

- Customizable
- Allows user to drill down to relevant info

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**Make the Connection: Signs and Symptoms**

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Military Families and Friends

http://maketheconnection.net/family-friends

Hotlines Worth Noting

- Veterans Crisis Line 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- National Call Center for Homeless Veterans 1.877.4AID.VET (424.3838)
- VA Caregiver Support Line 1.855.260.3274
- Wounded Warrior Resource Center 1.800.342.9647

Veterans Crisis Line

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Support For Caregivers

http://www.caregiver.va.gov/

For Stroke Caregivers

http://www.rorc.research.va.gov/rescue/

Online Health Resources

- So many excellent sites; where to start?

http://medlineplus.gov

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Mini Practice

- We'll take about 3 minutes here.
- Go to http://MedlinePlus.gov
- Search for the key word veterans, then limit your results to Health Topics only
- Scroll the results; click on any one of the Health Topics of interest
- In the Chat box, add any comments!

Searching MedlinePlus

Vets in the Digital Age

Mobile Apps
- PTSD Coach
- T2 Mood Tracker
- Breath2Relax and Tactical Breather

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Mobile Apps and Sites

- PTSD Coach
- Easy-to-use
- [http://t2health.org/apps](http://t2health.org/apps)

T2 Mood Tracker

[http://t2health.org/apps/t2-mood-tracker](http://t2health.org/apps/t2-mood-tracker)

Online Support Groups

After Deployment

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- Veterans Forum
- Homeless Forum
- Living with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

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Support in Online Community

Military Kids Connect

- MKC is an online community of military children (ages 6-17 years old) is a safe site that provides access to age-appropriate resources to support children from pre-deployment, through a parent's or caregiver's return.
- https://www.militarykidsconnect.org/
Operation Health: Resources for Veterans and Their Families

The VA Health System

- Complex!
- Where to turn first?
- Helps to know how it’s organized

Snapshot of the System - Services and Facilities

- Veterans Administration
- Veterans Health Administration
- Veterans Integrated Service Networks
- State Veterans Services
- County offices
- Vet Centers
- Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs)
- MyHealth
eVet

Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs)

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Vet Centers

http://www2.va.gov/directory/guide/vetcenter_flsh.asp

State and Local Resources

- State Departments of Veteran Affairs
  - Essential resource for veterans
  - Each state has one
  - Additional benefits vary from state to state
  - http://www.va.gov/statedva.htm
- County Veteran Service Organizations
  - www.cacvso.org
- Search for all facilities based on your criteria:
  - http://www2.va.gov/directory/guide/rpt_fac_list.cfm

CalVet: the California Department of Veteran Affairs

http://www.calvet.ca.gov/
CalVet App

CA Dept. of Veteran Affairs and the CA State Library
- Pilot outreach project to veterans and their families
- Three geographic areas identified
  - Shasta Public Libraries
  - Fresno County Library
  - San Diego County Library
- Veteran ‘resource stations’ in each library
  - Print resources, designated laptop for veterans’ use, trained volunteers and more!

MyHealtheVet

- My HealtheVet is a Personal Health Record and information portal for vets and their caregivers
- Refill VA prescription medicines
- Access links to Federal and VA benefits
- Take on-line courses to improve physical and mental health
- Create personal health records
- Track changes in health

http://www.myhealth.va.gov

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More Ways to Find Services and Benefits

National Resource Directory
- Connecting wounded warriors, service members, veterans, their families, and caregivers with those who support them

VALNET - VA Libraries
- Librarians are able to help vets (and public librarians) find health information
- Located at some VA hospitals
- Check out the consumer resources (some more up-to-date than others)
  

A Few Recommended Titles

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A Few More

Finding Organizations: Mini Practice

Final Words

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Thank You!

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