



# Serving Together: Strengthening linkages between military families, clinical providers, and community resources

**Sally Koblinsky, PhD & Suzanne Randolph, PhD**  
**University of Maryland, College Park**

**Stefanie Moreno, MS & Jessica Fuchs, MS**  
**Mental Health Association of Montgomery County, MD**



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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



# Need

- President Obama and DOD: Veterans and military families are top priority
- More than 2.6 million American service members deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq
- Approximately 1.6 million of these troops are veterans
- Increasing demand for civilian professionals and communities to serve veterans and their families





# *Serving Together.* Mission

A collaborative partnership to coordinate and strengthen community-based health/mental health, education, employment, and other support services for service members, veterans, and families in Montgomery County, Maryland.





# Montgomery County, MD

- 50,000: Total Veterans
- 8,000: OEF/OIF/OND
- 500: Wounded Warriors
- Walter Reed National Military Medical Center
- National Intrepid Center of Excellence
- Within 1 hour: Ft. Meade, Ft. Detrick, Andrews Air Force Base, Coast Guard Yard, Baltimore





# Needs Assessment

- Goal: Determine capacity of Maryland health providers to treat service members, veterans and their families
- Partner: Maryland Veterans Resilience Initiative
- Online state needs assessment survey (n=3,050)
  - 562 in Montgomery County
  - Mental Health (n=347)
  - Primary Care (n=215)





# Mental Health Providers (n=347)

Professional Specialty*	
Social Workers	50%
Psychologists	29%
Professional Counselors	18%
Marriage and Family Therapists	12%
Psychiatrists	4%

Professional Setting	
Private Practice	37%
Family Services/Mental Health Clinic	18%
Hospital	9%
Education	5%
Social Services (e.g., housing, employment)	7%
Criminal Justice	2%
Other	17%

\*Participants could check more than one specialty



# Screening and Referral

- 70% treat veterans, service members and families
- 42% regularly screen for military status, 37% never do
- 26% participate in TRICARE insurance program
- 36% sometimes refer to VA, 53% never do

Factors that Prevent VA Referral	
Lack of knowledge about eligibility requirements	16%
Concerns about wait time for appointments	16%
Lack of knowledge about how to refer	15%
Concerns about quality of care	10%





# Prior Military Training/Experience

- <5% veterans
- 16% family members of veterans
- 17% had trained in a VA/DOD facility
- 15% had ever worked in a VA/military setting





# High Knowledge of Treatments

Topic	%	Topic	%
Anger	27%	Military Sexual Trauma	17%
Anxiety	35%	Pain Management	11%
Caregiver Stress	32%	Posttraumatic Stress	34%
Depression	36%	Sleep Disorders	17%
Family Stress/Relationship Problems	38%	Substance Abuse/Dependence	23%
Family Violence/Abuse	29%	Suicide	34%
Grief/Bereavement	32%	Traumatic Brain Injury	13%



# High Confidence to Treat

Topic	%	Topic	%
Anger	26%	Military Sexual Trauma	19%
Anxiety	37%	Pain Management	10%
Caregiver Stress	40%	Posttraumatic Stress	29%
Depression	38%	Sleep Disorders	14%
Family Stress/Relationship Problems	38%	Substance Abuse/Dependence	21%
Family Violence/Abuse	27%	Suicide	29%
Grief/Bereavement	33%	Traumatic Brain Injury	10%



# Interest in Training

Topic	%	Topic	%
Anger	90%	Military Sexual Trauma	79%
Anxiety	89%	Pain Management	75%
Caregiver Stress	87%	Posttraumatic Stress	89%
Depression	87%	Sleep Disorders	80%
Family Stress/Relationship Problems	91%	Substance Abuse/Dependence	73%
Family Violence/Abuse	85%	Suicide	86%
Grief/Bereavement	86%	Traumatic Brain Injury	79%



# Implications for Practice

- Provider screening
- Behavioral health trainings
- TRICARE enrollment and VA referrals
- Project website
- Peer Navigation system
- Circle of Champions policy forum



# Non-profit Military Screening Project

- 8 local non-profit agencies in pilot
- Expanded outreach to non-profit service providers to ask the following questions at intake:
  - Have you or an immediate family member ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces, National Guard, or Reserves?
  - If yes, indicate current status as Veteran, Active Duty, National Guard/Reserve, Family Member
- Identification of service gaps





# Behavioral Health Trainings

- Understanding Warzone Deployment and Homecoming
  - Military culture and operations
  - Homecoming challenges:
    - Family stressors
    - PTSD symptoms and treatments
    - Traumatic Brain Injury
    - Suicide Ideation/Prevention
- Substance Abuse and Behavioral Health Issues





# Behavioral Health Trainings

- Prolonged Exposure Therapy for PTSD (partnered)
- Mental Health First Aid Trainings
- Gains in knowledge and readiness to treat
- TRICARE and VA Referral Resources







Website: [www.servingtogetherproject.org](http://www.servingtogetherproject.org)

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**American Freedom Foundation**

Veterans Career Hiring Event – NOV 10 @ the Patriot Center, Fairfax, VA

**Announcements**  
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**OPERATION HOMEFRONT**

Operation Homefront's Military Child of the Year – Nominations Open

**Announcements**  
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# Mental Health Services

This is a comprehensive list of Mental Health related service providers. Included are: support groups, behavioral health issues, mental health crisis, and others. To help narrow your search, use the advanced search feature. **IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS CALL 1-800-273-8255 AND PRESS 1.**

Find a Service  **SEARCH**  
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## A Taste of Home

Category: [Counseling](#), [Mental Health Services](#), [Support Services](#)

A Taste of Home, Inc., has embarked on the mission to supplement the costs of private counseling services to Maryland National Guard members and their families. A taste of Home, Inc., prepays a portion of appointment costs up front. This

8850 Stanford Blvd, Suite 3300  
Columbia, MD 21045  
[atasteofhome.org](http://atasteofhome.org)



## Adventist Behavioral Health

Category: [Behavioral Health](#), [Mental Health Services](#)

Adventist Behavioral Health provides a wide-ranging spectrum of services and treatment options for children, adolescents, adults and seniors. Services are provided in a variety of settings including hospital-based programs,

14901 Broschart Road  
Rockville, MD 20850  
[www.adventistbehavioralhealth.com](http://www.adventistbehavioralhealth.com)

## SERVICES

- Academic Support
- Benefits Assistance
- Child Care
- Employment
- Faith-Based Services
- Family Services
- Finances
- Food Assistance
- Health Care
- Higher Education
- Homelessness
- Housing
- K-12
- Legal Assistance
- Mental Health Services
- Recreation
- Transition Support

**Beyond Serving Together**  
Find more county resources



# Peer Navigation System

- Assists veterans, service members and families of all war eras
- Referral and follow-up vs. duplicated case management
- Strengthens partnerships with community agencies
- Identifies gaps in service for Circle of Champions Policymakers Forum





# Lessons Learned

- Needs assessments reveal civilian providers' capacity to address mental health needs of service members, veterans and their families.
- Mental health providers need and desire training on veterans' conditions.
- Some military/veteran clients need help navigating and garnering community health services.
- Communities that employ needs assessment, screening, training, and peer navigation can develop policies and programs that mitigate problems before they become more chronic, costly, and severe.





# Thank you!



Contact: Sally Koblinsky [koblinsk@umd.edu](mailto:koblinsk@umd.edu)  
Jessica Fuchs [jfuchs@mhamc.org](mailto:jfuchs@mhamc.org)