



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

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VA Mental Health Treatment

Regional Military Culture and Suicide Prevention
Summits 2019

Mental Health Treatment Programs at VA Medical Centers

- Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI)
- Mental Health Outpatient Clinic
- Mental Health Inpatient Unit
- PTSD (Combat and non-combat trauma, MST)
- Substance Abuse Treatment Program
- Health Care for Homeless Veterans
- Vet Center



Primary Care-Mental Health Integration

- Mental Health Providers are located in Primary Care Clinics
- Primary Care Providers provide a “warm hand-off” to MH providers for urgent needs, for referral to groups, or short term counseling
- Primary Care Providers can refer Veterans to the Behavioral Health Lab, for telephone monitoring and assessment
- Primary Care Providers can consult with psychiatry for medication management



Mental Health Outpatient Clinics and Inpatient Unit

- Mental Health Clinic has outpatient psychiatry (medication management), and counseling services
- All Veterans new to MHC or who have not been engaged for several years, will have an intake and assessment, to better understand presenting needs and relevant history of present symptoms
- The Inpatient Unit is for stabilization of severe mental health symptoms
 - Veterans on the inpatient unit have a therapeutic milieu inclusive of daily rounds with a psychiatry team, 24/7 nursing, and a host of daily treatment activities, including groups from psychologists, peer support specialists, recreation therapists, and pharmacists.
 - The Inpatient Unit is for short-term stabilization (generally length of stay is about 7 days)
 - There are resources for longer-term programs at other centers that Veterans can be referred to, when outpatient treatment is not enough



PTSD Clinic

- The PTSD Clinic is a specialty service within the Mental Health Clinic
- PTSD has specialized, evidence-based therapies with psychologists and clinical social workers to address the common problems related to posttraumatic stress.
- PTSD clinic works with Veterans experiencing posttraumatic stress related to military combat, warzone and mortuary affairs service.
- Many of the treatment options in the PTSD clinic involves small groups that focus on how to cope and manage the current trauma related problems that interfere in life. War stories and details about the trauma are not disclosed in those group settings.
- Some locations offer residential PTSD treatment; Veterans can be referred to treatment programs at other VAMC's.



Military Sexual Trauma Treatment Program

Military Sexual Trauma (MST) is sexual assault or harassment that occurred during military service.

- Veterans from all types of backgrounds experiences MST:
 - All genders and ages, all ranks, branches, and eras of services
 - All racial and ethnic backgrounds
 - All sexual orientations
 - All religious backgrounds
 - all physical sizes and strengths
- MST Can occur at any time or place during your military services, such as while you're on or off duty, on or off base. The perpetrator(s) may or may not be someone you know and may be fellow services members or civilians.
- Both group and individual therapy treatment is available.
- MST treatment is provided by both Mental Health Clinics at VAMC's and at Vet Centers



Substance Abuse Treatment Program

- SATP is comprised of mental health staff to support recovery from alcohol and drug use
- Veterans enroll in SATP by attending an orientation and intake
- Treatment options may include (varies by medical center):
 - weekly recovery groups
 - 3 day per week intensive outpatient programs
 - 28 day residential treatment program
 - Aftercare services
 - Sub Oxone and methadone maintenance program
 - Domiciliary
 - Dual-diagnosis program



Health Care for Homeless Veterans

- HCHV serves as a gateway to Veterans determined to be homeless to VA and community based homeless services
- Outreach
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD)
- Housing and Urban Development- Veteran Affairs Supported Housing (HUD-VASH)
- Grant Per Diem (GPD)
- Health Care for Re-Entry Veterans (HCRV)
- Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO)



How to request mental health services

- There is no “wrong way” to seek help for a mental health concern
- Veterans can request mental health services:
 - Through their primary care providers or any other VA provider
 - By calling the MH Clinic
 - Via a referral through the Veterans Crisis Line, when a Veteran is having suicidal thoughts
 - As a walk-in to Primary Care or the Mental Health clinic for urgent needs or concerns
 - Referral by any provider in any clinic or inpatient treatment area at VAMC
 - Though a community provider referral



Contacting Your Local VA Medical Center Mental Health Clinic

- Mountain Home VA Health Care System 423-926-1171 Ext. 7709
- Salem VA Medical Center 540-982-2463 Ext. 2611
888-982-2463 Ext. 2515
- Martinsburg VA Medical Center 304-263-0811
800-817-3807
- Washington DC VA Medical Center 202-745-8267
- Hampton VA Medical Center 757-722-9961 Ext. 3584
- Richmond VA Medical Center 804-675-5411

- Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention: <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/>

- Military/Veterans Crisis Line 800-273-8255, press 1; VeteransCrisisLine.net; text 838255
- VCL Resource Locator <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/local-resources>



Resources



Rocky Mountain MIRECC for Suicide Prevention Firearm Safety Webpage. This webpage provides additional information to Veterans and their families about firearm safety for suicide prevention, and the ability to request additional firearm safety cable locks for free. Safe Storage Matters. www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/lethalmeanssafety/



Veterans/Military Crisis Line. If you or someone you know is in crisis, call **1-800-273-8255** (press **1** for Military or Veterans) to be connected with qualified, caring responders 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Many counselors are Veterans themselves, providing confidential support on the toll-free hotline, online chat, and text-messaging service. Text to **838255** or chat online at www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat



American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. AFSP encourages suicide prevention education and the use of safe firearm storage options. <https://afsp.org/about-suicide/firearms-suicide-prevention/>



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Suicide Prevention Lifeline. When you dial **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**, you are calling the crisis center in the Lifeline network closest to your location. You will be helped by a skilled, trained crisis worker who will listen to your problems and will tell you about mental health services in your area. Your call is confidential and free.



Prevencion del Suicidio. Una persona capacitada le escuchará y hablará con usted. Si es necesario, podrá darle información sobre recursos o servicios existentes en su comunidad que podrán prestarle ayuda después de la llamada. Siempre puede usted volver a llamar al número **1-888-628-9454** si lo necesita o lo desea.



Make the Connection. Connect with Veterans and find information, support and inspiration to overcome challenges. www.maketheconnection.net



Suicide Prevention Coordinator. Contact your local VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator for additional information and firearm safety materials. www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/ResourceLocator



Means Matter.

The Harvard Injury Control Research Center Means Matter campaign is dedicated to activities that promote safety and prevent firearm injury by reducing a suicidal person's access to lethal means. www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/



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