

Veteran News And Notes

Veteran Mental Health

(NAPSA)—While the appreciation and respect for our military is a year-round sentiment, this month marks a time to reflect and not only thank military service members and veterans for their service, but to make sure we are supporting them physically and emotionally as they transition from active duty.

Every day, 20 veterans commit suicide, according to a recent study from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone regardless of age, gender or background. Yet, veterans are at much higher risk; in 2014, veterans accounted for 18 percent of all deaths by suicide in the U.S.

Extra attention should be devoted to promoting resources around and awareness of the issues of suicide prevention, and connecting individuals with suicidal ideation to treatment services.

Warning Signs

The risk for suicide is 21 percent higher among veterans when compared to U.S. civilian adults, according to the VA's study—the need for more mental health resources is evident.

Some of the factors affecting veterans are presence of serious health conditions; ongoing stress or single major stressors such as job loss; exposure to someone else's suicide; or a family history of suicide.

While it takes a trained professional to evaluate someone for suicidality, the public can be aware of the above risk factors and can help to identify warning signs that indicate someone they know might be suicidal. Like risk factors, it is often the combination of suicide warning signs that are more important than one single sign.

A Positive Approach

The call to address veteran suicides is a national issue that reached the White House last year when President Obama signed the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention Bill. It made information on suicide prevention more easily accessible to veterans. It instituted a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning service members, opened up incentives to encourage more people to work at the VA and



Educational opportunities can help veterans readjust to civilian life.

established an annual evaluation of VA mental health and suicide-prevention programs.

While this is certainly a positive step toward improving mental health services for veterans, the solution will not come from one law, organization or individual. It takes a comprehensive commitment of support from the community as a whole.

As one of the largest providers of education to veterans, University of Phoenix recognizes that as it prepares veterans for the next step in their life, the adjustment back to civilian life is not just about getting a quality education. University of Phoenix wants to be able to help our veterans in their transition to civilian life.

Not only has University of Phoenix always been proud to serve our service members and prepare them for future success, but it also works hard to earn the trust of our men and women in the military, and their families. University of Phoenix is proud that so many trust it to continue their personal and professional journeys upon returning to civilian life. It believes our soldiers deserve strong help in getting a head start, and is always working to make sure it provides them just that.

Learn More

For more information on suicide prevention and the Veterans' Crisis Line, visit:

www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/

www.veteranscrisisline.net/ or (800) 273-8255

www.giveanhour.org/.

For more information about University of Phoenix, visit www.phoenix.edu.