

# Deployment Health Assessments

U.S. Armed Forces

November 2016

(Data through October 2016)

Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch

# Update: Deployment Health Assessments, U.S. Armed Forces, November 2016

Since January 2003, pronounced fluctuations in the monthly numbers of pre- and post-deployment health assessment forms transmitted to the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch generally have corresponded to times of departure and return of large numbers of service members who deployed. Between April 2006 and October 2016, the number of post-deployment health reassessment (PDHRA) forms per month ranged from 5,536 to 36,863 (Figure 1). The rolling one-year averages for monthly numbers of pre-deployment assessments for the most recent 12-month period (November 2015–October 2016) were the 12 lowest averages since January 2004 (data not shown). For the purposes of this report about service members' responses to the assessment questions, it is important to note that the denominator is the total number of service members who completed deployment-related assessments, not the total number of service members eligible for the assessments.

During the past 12 months, the percentages of total returned deployers who rated their health as either "fair" or "poor" ranged from 6.0%–7.6% on post-deployment health assessment questionnaires and 6.5%–8.9% on PDHRA questionnaires (Figure 2). The percentages of total service members who rated their health as either "fair" or "poor" on the pre-deployment questionnaires during this period varied between 3.1% and 4.3%.

In general, the percentages of reserve component members reporting "health concerns" and "exposure concerns" on post-deployment assessments and reassessments have been higher than among active component members (Table 2, Figure 3). Compared to their respective counterparts, service members in the active component of the Marine Corps and reserve component of the Army were more likely to report exposure concerns 3–6 months after deployment than at the time of return from deployment (Table 2).

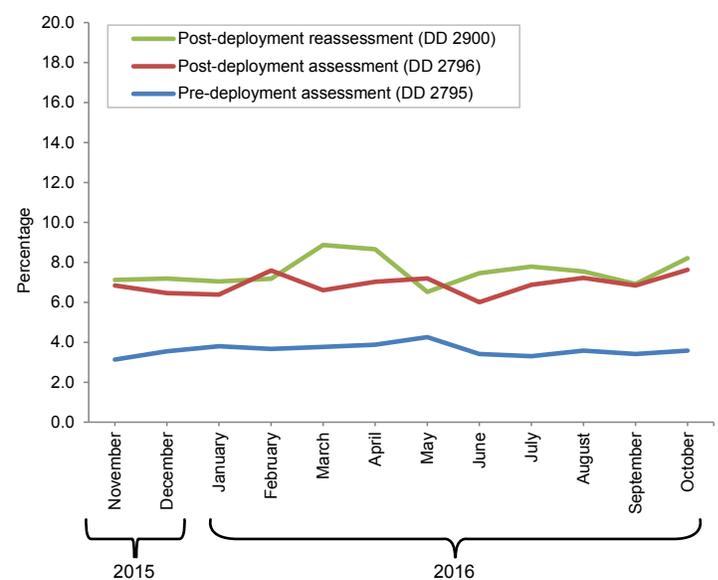
At the time of return from deployment, 16.3% of active component and 14.8% of reserve component service members reported any depression symptoms. Service members in the active and reserve components were about five and thirteen times as likely, respectively, to receive a mental health referral at the time of the PDHRA compared to the time of return from deployment. Moreover, at the time of the PDHRA (3–6 months after return), reservists were more than twice as likely to receive a mental health referral as members of the active component (Table 2).

**Table 1.** Number of deployment-related health assessment forms, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, November 2015–October 2016

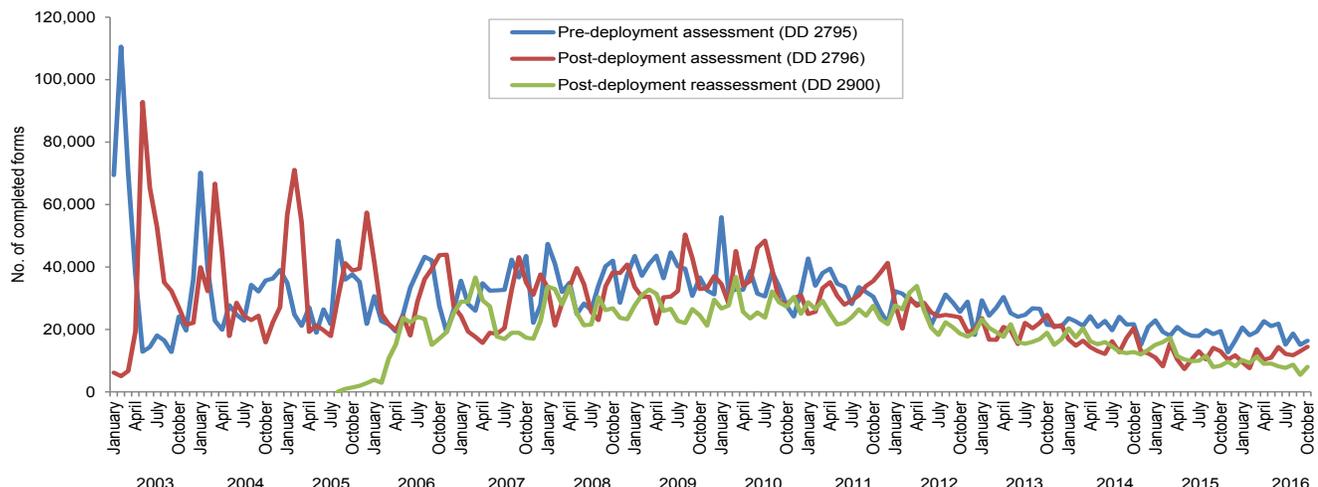
	Pre-deployment assessment DD 2795		Post-deployment assessment DD 2796		Post-deployment reassessment DD 2900	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	218,284	100	140,033	100	105,208	100
Average	18,190	.	11,669	.	8,767	.
<b>2015</b>						
November	12,678	5.8	10,322	7.4	9,727	9.2
December	16,438	7.5	11,783	8.4	8,249	7.8
<b>2016</b>						
January	20,661	9.5	9,553	6.8	10,292	9.8
February	18,149	8.3	7,611	5.4	9,312	8.9
March	19,300	8.8	13,698	9.8	11,304	10.7
April	22,668	10.4	10,352	7.4	9,030	8.6
May	21,096	9.7	10,965	7.8	9,080	8.6
June	21,899	10.0	14,358	10.3	8,196	7.8
July	15,195	7.0	12,154	8.7	7,695	7.3
August	18,725	8.6	11,723	8.4	8,731	8.3
September	15,096	6.9	13,058	9.3	5,536	5.3
October	16,379	7.5	14,456	10.3	8,056	7.7

Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System (DMSS) as of 07-NOV-2016  
Prepared by Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch (AFHSB)

**Figure 2.** Percentages of deployment health assessment forms with self-assessed health status rated as "fair" or "poor", by month, U.S. Armed Forces, November 2015–October 2016



**Figure 1.** Numbers of deployment health assessment and reassessment forms, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, January 2003–October 2016



Data Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System

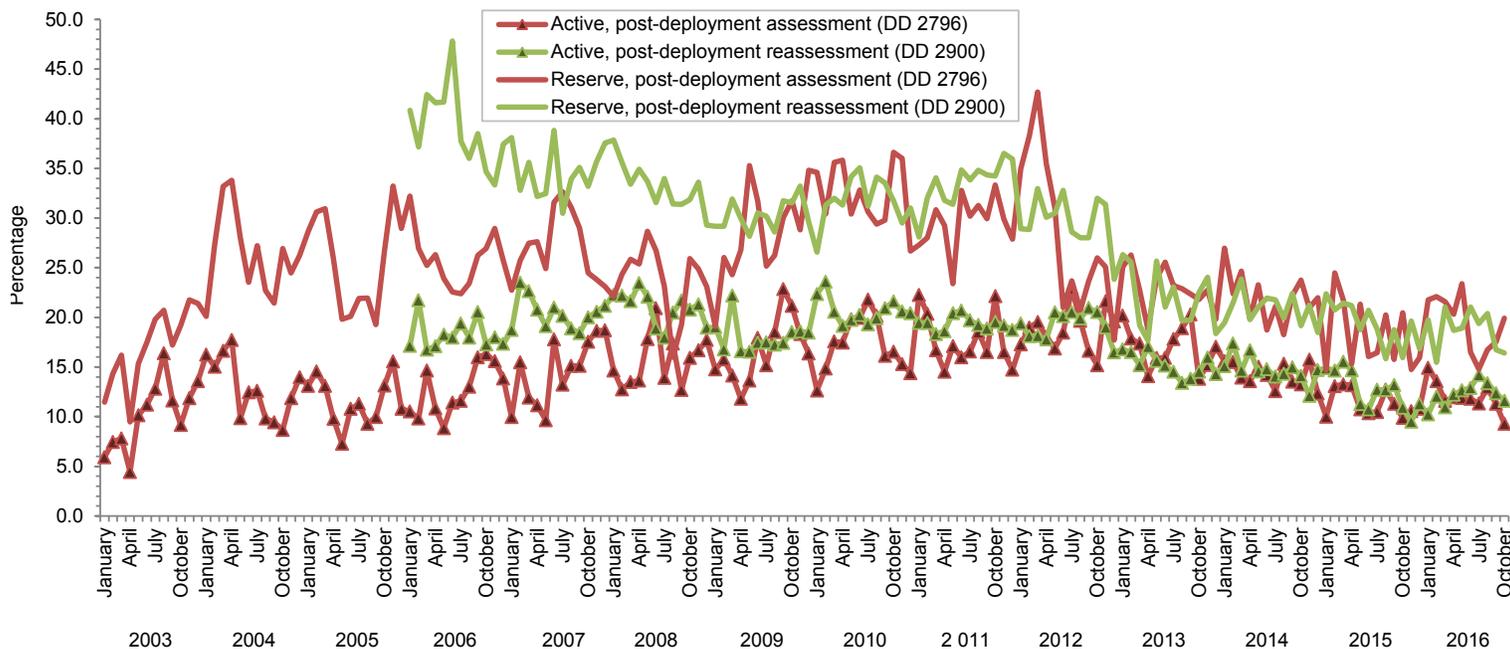
**Table 2.** Percentage of service members who endorsed selected questions or received referrals on health assessment forms, U.S. Armed Forces, November 2015–October 2016

	Army			Navy			Air Force			Marine Corps			All service members		
	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900
<b>Active component</b>	n= 87,339 %	n= 49,613 %	n= 31,667 %	n= 6,627 %	n= 5,719 %	n= 6,638 %	n= 36,150 %	n= 33,194 %	n= 31,882 %	n= 18,303 %	n= 12,787 %	n= 10,591 %	n= 148,419 %	n= 101,313 %	n= 80,778 %
General health "fair" or "poor"	5.5	9.3	11.2	1.9	5.1	5.1	1.2	2.9	3.1	2.8	5.0	8.0	4.0	6.4	7.1
Health concerns, not wound or injury	6.8	19.2	15.9	3.1	11.9	7.2	3.2	8.0	7.0	3.4	7.8	7.7	5.3	13.7	10.6
Health worse now than before deployed	na	72.1	77.2	na	69.8	75.5	na	61.6	71.0	na	69.1	78.2	na	68.2	74.7
Exposure concerns	na	11.7	12.8	na	15.8	14.1	na	12.4	8.2	na	7.5	18.5	na	11.6	11.8
PTSD symptoms (2 or more)	na	6.0	8.0	na	4.1	5.1	na	2.1	2.9	na	2.7	6.3	na	4.2	5.5
Depression symptoms (any)	na	21.9	22.3	na	15.7	15.6	na	8.6	8.8	na	14.9	18.2	na	16.3	15.9
Referral indicated by provider (any)	6.7	17.1	15.5	7.3	23.9	13.0	6.0	14.1	12.7	4.8	16.3	14.1	6.3	16.4	14.0
Mental health referral indicated <sup>a</sup>	1.9	2.9	13.1	0.9	4.3	10.3	0.8	1.7	10.7	0.7	1.9	12.0	1.5	2.5	11.8
Medical visit following referral <sup>b</sup>	99.3	99.6	98.9	91.6	86.6	89.0	99.2	99.4	99.7	89.6	90.3	94.0	97.8	97.0	97.8
<b>Reserve component</b>	n= 22,756 %	n= 18,241 %	n= 11,447 %	n= 2,408 %	n= 1,812 %	n= 2,059 %	n= 13,342 %	n= 11,828 %	n= 9,315 %	n= 626 %	n= 403 %	n= 550 %	n= 39,132 %	n= 32,284 %	n= 23,371 %
General health "fair" or "poor"	1.5	10.1	12.6	0.4	9.2	8.8	0.9	4.5	4.5	0.6	7.7	8.4	1.2	7.9	8.9
Health concerns, not wound or injury	2.9	22.8	19.4	1.3	35.3	12.1	1.7	9.8	5.8	1.9	21.6	8.4	2.4	18.7	13.1
Health worse now than before deployed	na	70.7	77.0	na	74.6	77.3	na	64.9	72.6	na	75.7	78.5	na	68.9	75.3
Exposure concerns	na	17.6	21.5	na	40.6	35.2	na	16.2	11.6	na	27.5	23.1	na	18.5	18.8
PTSD symptoms (2 or more)	na	6.7	11.8	na	5.8	9.7	na	1.8	2.4	na	6.9	13.8	na	4.9	7.9
Depression symptoms (any)	na	18.6	21.3	na	16.1	22.0	na	8.7	7.4	na	18.6	22.4	na	14.8	15.8
Referral indicated by provider (any)	3.4	22.7	41.8	5.9	42.1	38.1	3.1	17.9	20.4	5.1	34.5	32.7	3.5	22.2	32.7
Mental health referral indicated <sup>a</sup>	0.8	2.9	41.3	0.3	3.2	37.7	0.3	1.6	20.1	1.6	2.0	31.8	0.6	2.4	32.3
Medical visit following referral <sup>b</sup>	75.4	99.5	45.9	95.3	99.7	61.7	71.2	79.5	58.3	77.3	69.8	36.6	75.4	93.9	49.9

<sup>a</sup>Includes behavioral health, combat stress and substance abuse referrals.

<sup>b</sup>Record of inpatient or outpatient visit within 6 months after referral.

**Figure 3.** Percentages of service members who completed assessments and endorsed exposure concerns on post-deployment health assessments or reassessments, by component, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, January 2003–October 2016



Data Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System