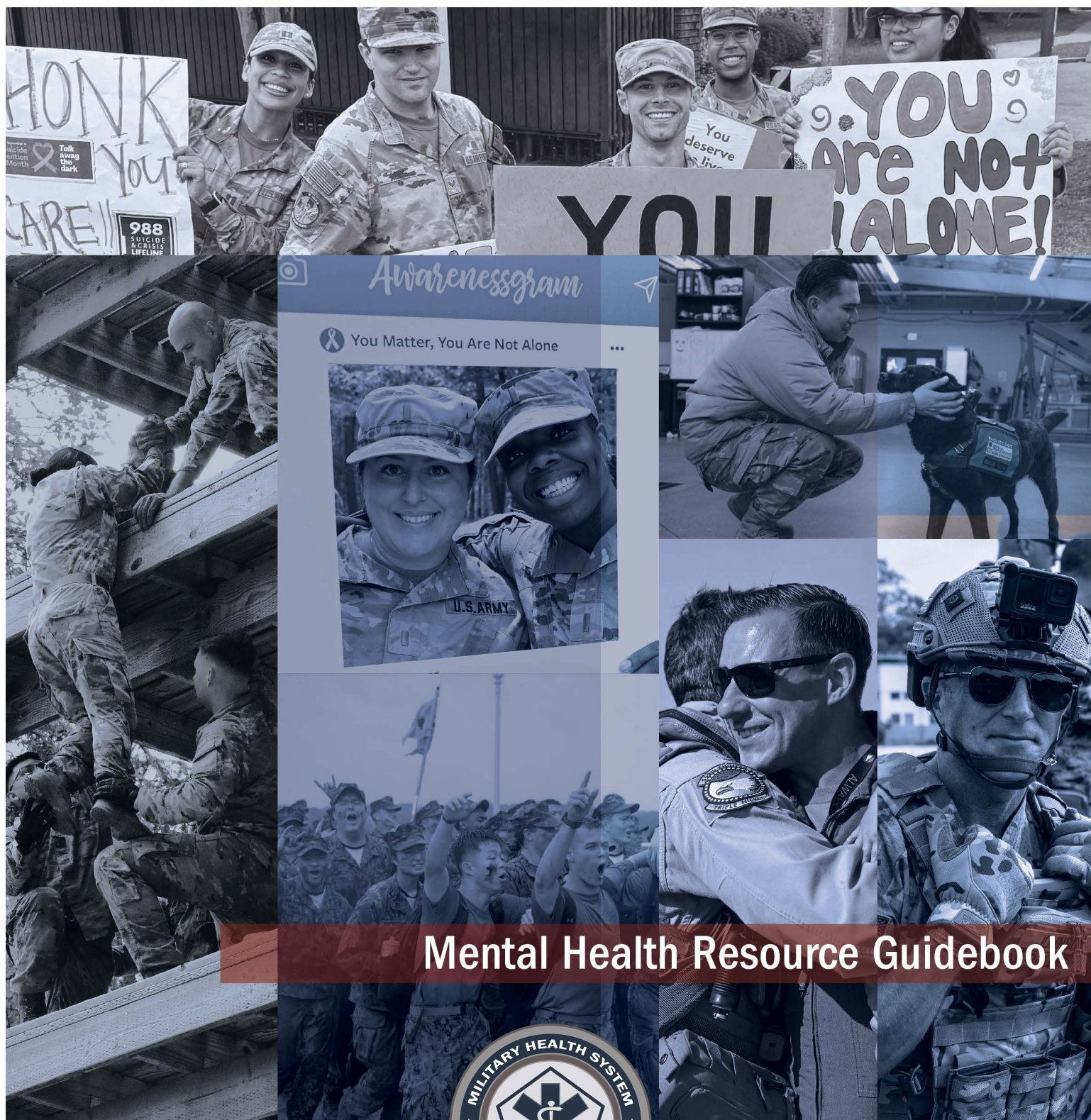
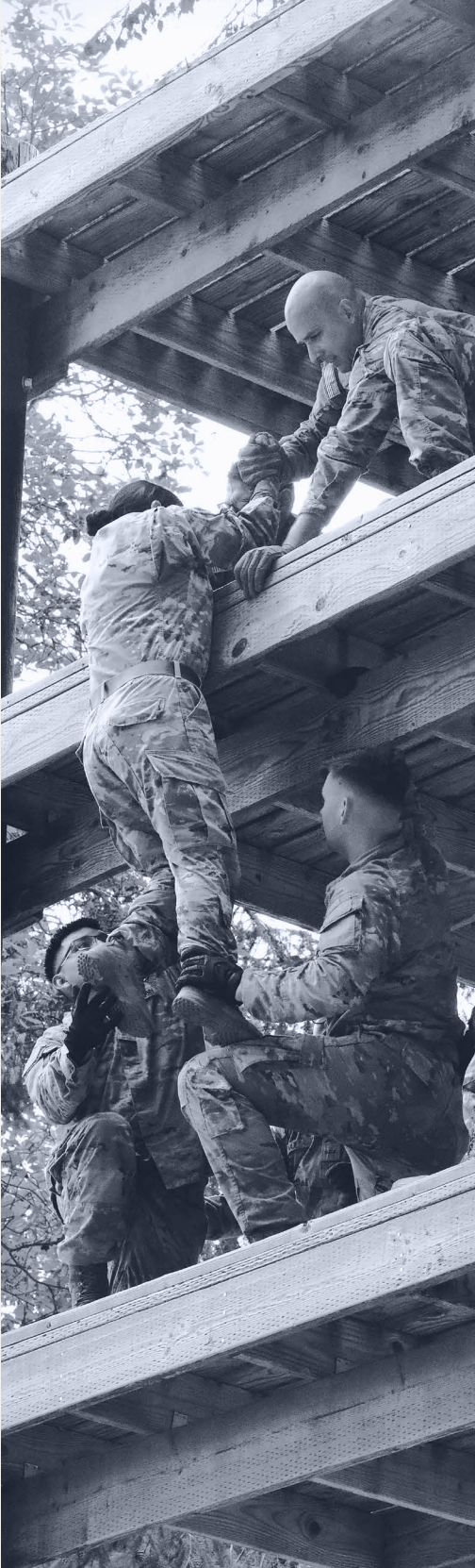


# Military Health System



## Mental Health Resource Guidebook





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## OVERVIEW

Protecting, optimizing, and defending mental health needs is vital to the well-being and readiness of our military force. The Military Health System is committed to preserving the health and wellness of those who serve, from the moment they step into training, throughout their careers in uniform, and beyond.

Every service member should know that help is always available. Mental health support services are here for you and your loved ones 24/7 – whether through a military hospital or clinic, your preferred health provider, chaplains, or the confidential 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (dial 988 then press 1 for the Military Crisis Line). Additionally, through the Brandon Act, service members can initiate a referral process for a mental health evaluation through a commanding officer or supervisor who is above grade E-5 on any basis, at any time, and in any environment.

The MHS is a key partner for embarking on a mental health journey, and this guidebook provides an easy reference to the variety of mental health services and resources available to those who serve and their families. No one has to walk this journey alone. Together, we can continue efforts to break down stigma, encourage open conversations, and ensure that every member of our team knows how important they are to themselves, their friends, families, teammates, and our Nation.



[Military Health System Mental Health Hub](#)



## THE BRANDON ACT

The Brandon Act enables service members to initiate a referral process for a mental health evaluation through a commanding officer or supervisor who is in a grade above E-5. The Brandon Act was introduced into legislation following the death of U.S. Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Brandon Caserta, who died by suicide in 2018.

### Key Features

- The Brandon Act empowers service members to request the help they need confidentially.
- Service members can request help for any reason, at any time, and in any environment.

### Benefits

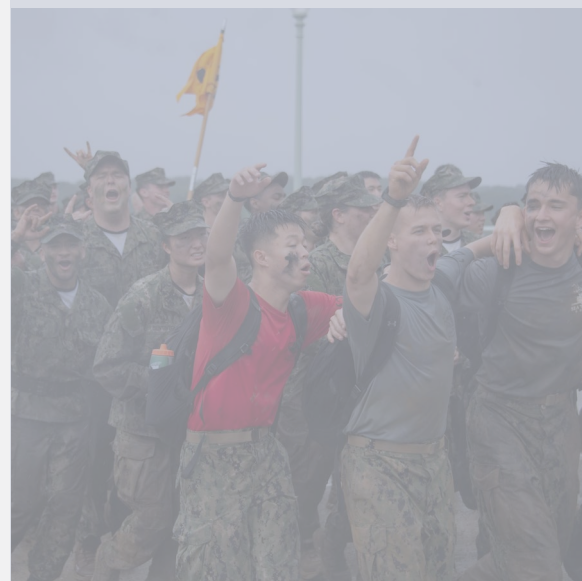
- The Brandon Act provides another means to seek confidential support for mental health concerns.
- In addition to the Brandon Act, service members continue to have the option to contact a mental health provider directly, without the involvement of their unit.
- The Brandon Act seeks to reduce the stigma associated with seeking mental health support.

### Facts:

- The legislation was signed into law Dec. 27, 2021, as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2022.
- The three military departments officially implemented phase one of the Brandon Act in 2023.
- The Brandon Act covers service members serving on active duty and members of the Selected Reserve in a duty status.



[Brandon Act](#)



**TARGETED CARE**

Targeted Care is a workflow process for military mental health clinics that helps streamline the process for individuals seeking mental health services. After an initial screening by a trained mental health professional, patients are referred to the mental health resource that best suits their needs.

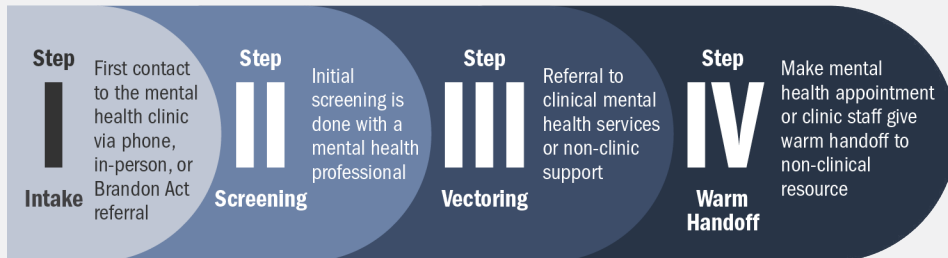
**Key Features**

- After an initial screening, patients get a referral to the right resource, whether that’s clinical or non-clinical support.
- This workflow allows for more efficient use of clinical resources, decreases appointment wait time, and improves patient and provider satisfaction.
- Patients don’t leave the clinic without an appointment or guidance on next steps. Clinic staff ensure they have something in hand or make the first connection themselves.

**Benefits**

- Targeted Care improves access to care by maximizing use of both clinical and non-clinical installation resources.
- For patients, it reduces the wait times for both initial and follow-up mental health appointments.
- It allows providers time and resources to focus on patients in need of specialty mental health services.
- Individuals are referred to the clinical or non-clinical support service that best meets their needs.
- It contributes to resilience and readiness by helping service members access support services to stay in the fight.

**Targeted Care Workflow**



**Facts:**

- Non-clinical resources include chaplains, financial counselors, substance use programs, and military and family life counselors.
- Following a 2023 pilot, the Defense Health Agency continues to deploy Targeted Care at all mental health clinics system-wide.
- About 104 mental health clinics across DHA are currently using Targeted Care.
- Improves the average wait time for patients to get support.



[Targeted Care Website](#)



**BRAVE**

The Behavioral Health Resources and Virtual Experience, or BRAVE, is a telemental health program that supplements care at some military hospitals and clinics. It is a frontline option for those facing barriers to in-person care. The Defense Health Agency Virtual Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, administers BRAVE.

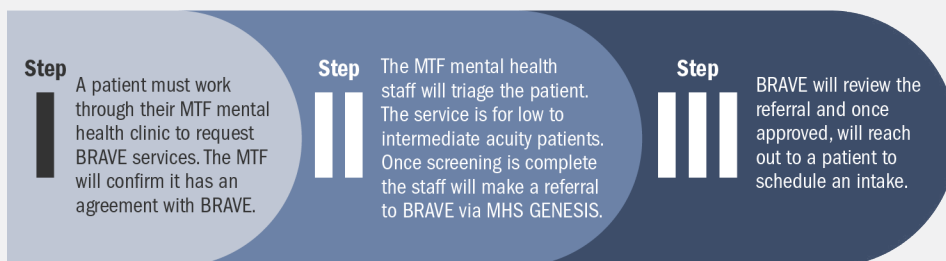
**Key Features**

- Helps patients around the world get quicker access to mental health resources.
- BRAVE offers brief interventions, medication management, individual psychotherapy for low to intermediate acuity patients, and mental health evaluations.
- Primarily serves patients who need less intensive care and monitoring.
- All providers are trained in evidence-based approaches.

**Benefits**

- BRAVE supplements mental health services in remote and isolated military units so local providers can focus on patients with more acute needs.
- Virtual appointments give patients more flexibility.
- Delivers care quickly by shortening wait times, lowers costs, and offers privacy to reduce stigma to seeking care.

**BRAVE Workflow**



**Facts:**

- Patients don't have to be at the clinic to use BRAVE. 85% of BRAVE appointments occur with patients outside the clinic, which makes access easier, and can put patients at ease.
- Since BRAVE launched on Nov. 5, 2022, the program has facilitated about 112,000 virtual therapy sessions.
- BRAVE began with 16 military hospitals and clinics and has since expanded to 110 locations in the U.S., Europe, and Indo-Pacific, with plans to add more.



[BRAVE-Virtual Mental Health Helps All Service Members Get Therapy article](#)



**inTRANSITION**

The inTransition program, a free, confidential program, offers specialized coaching and assistance to active duty service members, National Guard members, reservists, veterans and retirees seeking mental health care or assistance during transitions in their military career.

**When does inTransition help?**

Transferring service members with mental health conditions or concerns and those who are currently receiving mental health and/or moderate to severe Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) care are eligible for assistance, which may include service members who are:

- Relocating to another assignment
- Returning from deployment
- Going from active duty to reserve component, or the reverse
- Preparing to leave military service
- Seeking a new mental health provider or care for the first time

**Key Features**

- Telephonic coaching sessions use motivational interviewing techniques, empowering service members to determine their own paths to continue care and improve their well-being.
- The program answers service members' questions about mental health care, treatment methods and techniques, provider types, outcomes measurement, etc.
- The program provides information about military support services, community resources, and support groups.
- inTransition does not replace case management of medical conditions or referral services that are already being provided.

**Benefits**

- inTransition coaches share extensive knowledge of U.S. military, VA, and community health care resources.
- Coaches have the experience needed to make a solid connection with service members and veterans.
- The program offers hands-on guidance to people switching to a new health provider or looking to establish care.
- With the help of an inTransition coach, service members and veterans can avoid common barriers to care and quickly access needed services.
- inTransition coaches can help individuals develop an action plan, teach adapting strategies, and set goals to acclimate to their new circumstances.



**Facts:**

The inTransition program is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year via toll-free phone number, email, or online chat:

**FAQ**



[FAQs](#)

**Website:**



[inTransition website](#)

**Live Chat:**



[inTransition Live Chat](#)

**Phone:** In the US: 800-424-7877

(in Australia, Germany, Italy, Japan, and South Korea: 800-748-8111)

## REAL WARRIORS CAMPAIGN

The Real Warriors Campaign, or RWC, is a public health campaign targeted to active duty service members, veterans, and their families. RWC is designed to decrease stigma, increase psychological health literacy, and open doors to care by encouraging psychological health help seeking in the military community.

### Campaign Facts

- The RWC's mission is to:
  - Reduce the stigma associated with mental health.
  - Amplify suicide prevention efforts.
  - Support military community psychological health and readiness.
- RWC prioritizes early help seeking in the military community, encourages access to mental health care, destigmatizes mental health, and increases knowledge of mental health information.
- In 2023, the program expanded into a joint collaboration between the Defense Health Agency Psychological Health Center of Excellence and the Defense Suicide Prevention Office.
- RWC materials address a variety of mental health concerns, from difficulties with the stress of military life or problems with relationships, to symptoms of depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, alcohol misuse, or posttraumatic stress disorder.

### RWC Resources

- RWC's [Digital Content Toolkit](#) is intended for use by our partners and the public and offers “ready to use” material for social media, websites, and other digital outreach materials.
- The campaign has articles, materials, and videos on a [whole host of concerns](#) such as grief & loss, suicide, stress & anxiety, depression, family & relationships, and finances.



[Real Warriors Campaign](#)



**TRICARE**

The various TRICARE health plans cover a wide array of mental health services for MHS beneficiaries. These services are available through provider networks managed by TRICARE’s contractors across the U.S. and overseas. Active duty service members should primarily receive care at a military hospital or clinic.

**Covered Services**

- TRICARE covers most types of outpatient care without the need for referral or pre-authorization.
- TRICARE.mil has details on [covered mental health services](#), including:
  - Office-based and intensive outpatient programs.
  - Partial hospitalization programs.
  - Inpatient treatment.
  - Psychiatric residential treatment centers (for children and adolescents).

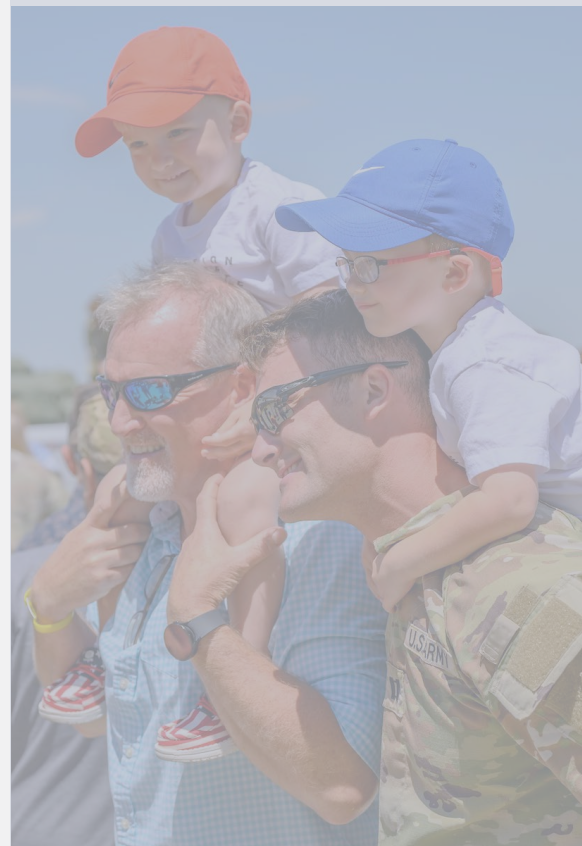
**Virtual Mental Health Options**

- [Telemental health services](#) through TRICARE regional contractors.
- Services allow patients to connect with mental health support from their home through secure video or phone options.
- In some cases, patients can connect with an online provider within a few days.
- TRICARE regional contractors also partner with more than 30 third-party companies to offer telemental health services.

Patient Type	How to Access Care
Active duty service member or activated Guard or Reserve	Must get all mental health care at a <a href="#">military hospital or clinic</a> , if possible. Referral and pre-authorization from primary care provider required for care at the civilian network.
Other TRICARE plan enrollees	Can access most outpatient mental health services in-network without referral or pre-authorization. Inpatient care requires referral and contractor pre-authorization. Costs and providers vary by plan.



[Covered Mental Health Services](#)



**PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH RESOURCE CENTER**

The Psychological Health Resource Center, or PHRC, is a confidential resource center that provides information and resources for mental health concerns. Staffed by trained health resource personnel, the PHRC provides the military community access to reliable information and connection to appropriate care or support services. The Defense Health Agency operates the PHRC.

**Key Features**

- Confidential support by phone, email, or live chat.
- Health resource personnel can answer questions on a wide range of mental health topics.
- Resource navigation to connect individuals with both military and community-based support options.
- Comprehensive, no-cost support for all service members, veterans, family members, clinicians, commanders, or anyone with a question about military mental health.
- Available worldwide, regardless of duty location.

**Benefits**

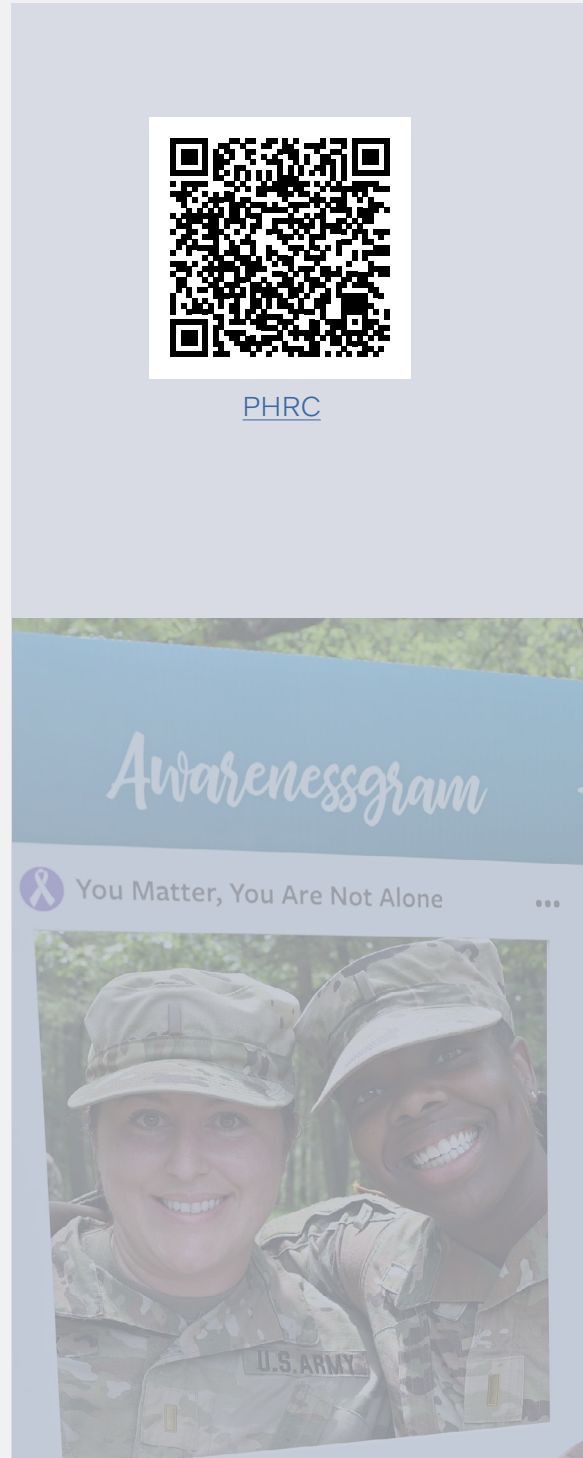
- Immediate access to trusted mental health resources without stigma.
- Supports commanders and providers with evidence-based tools to guide and assist their teams.

**Health Resource Personnel will:**

- Listen to the individual’s concerns.
- Provide information tailored to their needs.
- Provide suggestions for the most appropriate clinical or non-clinical resources, such as Military OneSource, chaplains, VA services, or military medical treatment facilities.



[PHRC](#)



## WARRIOR CARE RECOVERY COORDINATION PROGRAM

The Warrior Care Recovery Coordination Program, or RCP, provides support to wounded, ill, and injured service members, ensuring they get the non-medical support they need to create the life they want. Recovery Care Coordinators work closely with service members, families, and recovery teams to develop a Comprehensive Recovery Plan that identifies the service members' and families' goals and the resources they need to achieve them.

### Key Features

- RCCs are available at military hospitals and clinics and installations across the country.
- RCCs work within the military departments' wounded, ill, and injured programs, like the Army Recovery Care Program, Navy Wounded Warrior Safe Harbor, and the Air Force Wounded Warrior Program.
- The RCP includes a pathway to benefits that include assistive technology, education, employment, or housing.
- RCCs use a dedicated case management system to provide effective, coordinated support for wounded, ill, and injured service members and their families.

### Online Resources

- The [National Resource Directory](#) connects service members, veterans, family members, and caregivers to vetted resources that support their recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration or transition.
- The [Wounded, Ill, and/or Injured Compensation and Benefits Handbook](#) is a reference guide for service members and their support networks on compensation and benefits.
- RCP also manages employment assistance programs like the [Education and Employment Initiative](#) that helps match wounded, ill, and injured service members with education and career opportunities to help transition to civilian life.
- [Operation Warfighter](#) matches wounded, ill, and injured service members with federal internships to gain valuable work experience during their recovery and rehabilitation.



[Warrior Care Recovery Coordination Program](#)



## OTHER MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Clinical services are critical to helping prevent and treat mental health needs. Non-clinical services, like military and family life counselors, chaplains, financial counseling, and substance use programs, are all essential to maintaining military quality of life.

### Military OneSource

- [Military OneSource](#) provides no-cost services to advance the well-being of the military community, enabling service members and military families to overcome challenges, reach goals, and thrive.
- Military OneSource Offers:
  - A 24-hour call center and [live chat](#) to answer questions and provide resources and referrals.
  - [Confidential Counseling](#) for short-term, non-medical concerns like parenting, relationships or stress.
  - [Military & Family Life Counseling](#) for short-term, confidential, counseling, education, and support services for service members and their families on or off the installation.
  - [Building Healthy Relationships Specialty Consultations](#) for free education-based consultations strengthening relationships with family, friends and others.
  - [Health & Wellness Coaches](#) for help with managing fitness, weight, and stress.
  - A wealth of other information and resources and services, including [financial counseling](#) and [peer-to-peer support](#).

### Service Guidebooks:

Mental health is a top priority for each of the military departments, who've developed valuable guidebooks on building and maintaining resiliency and accessing care for their service members and community.



[Navy Mental Health Playbook](#)



[Air Force Mental Health Overview](#)



[Army Holistic Health and Fitness  
Mental Domain](#)



