

# Deployment Health Assessments

## U.S. Armed Forces

### August 2017

(Data through July 2017)

Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch

# Update: Deployment Health Assessments, U.S. Armed Forces, August 2017

Since January 2003, pronounced fluctuations in the monthly numbers of pre- and post-deployment health assessment (PDHA) 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 July 2017, the number of post-deployment health reassessment (PDHRA) forms per month ranged from 5,695 to 36,863 (Figure 1). During the past 12 months (August 2016–July 2017), numbers of PDHA and PDHRA forms per month have been relatively stable (Figure 1, Table 1). The rolling 1-year averages of monthly numbers of PDHRA forms for the most recent 13-month period were the 13 lowest averages since July 2006 (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 6.9% to 8.7% on PDHA questionnaires and from 6.9% to 9.6% on PDHRA questionnaires (Figure 2). The percentages of total service members who rated their health as either "fair" or "poor" on pre-deployment questionnaires during this period varied between 3.3% and 4.0%.

In general, the percentages of "health concerns" and "exposure concerns" self-reported on PDHA and PDHRA forms were higher among reserve component members than among active component members (Table 2, Figure 3). Unlike their counterparts in the other services, service members in the active component of the Marine Corps were nearly twice as likely to report exposure concerns 3–6 months after deployment, compared to the time of their return from deployment (Table 2).

At the time of return from deployment, 16.6% of active component and 15.5% of reserve component service members reported any depression symptoms. Service members in the active and reserve components were almost five and 13 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).

Figure 1. Numbers of deployment health assessment and reassessment forms, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, January 2003–July 2017

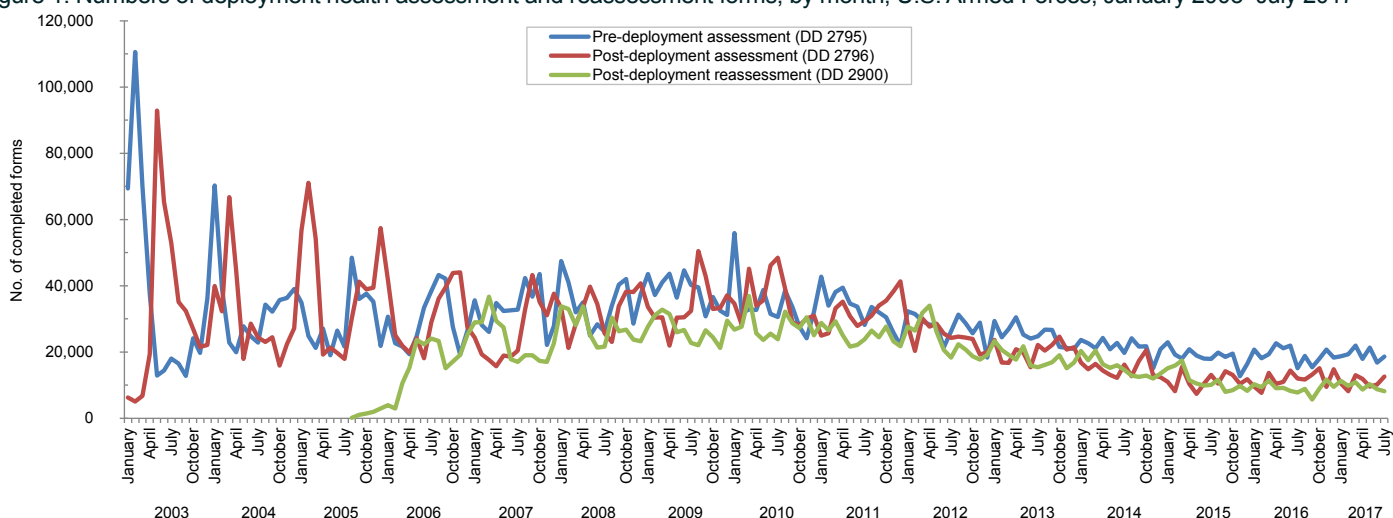
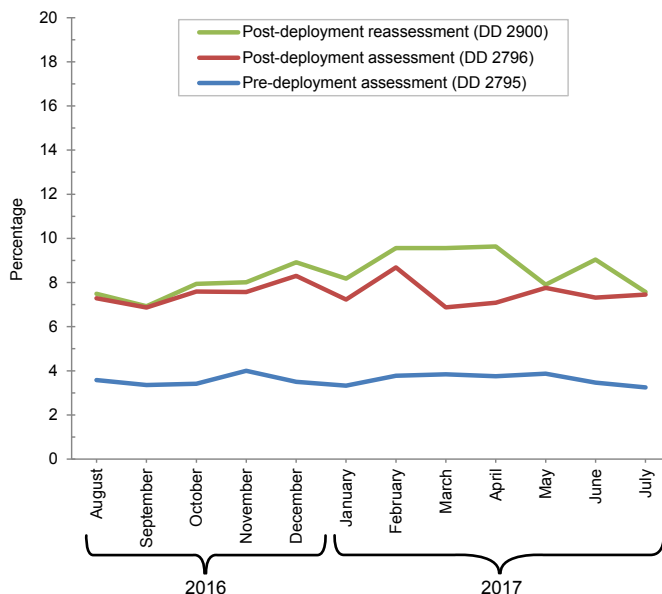


Table 1. Number of deployment-related health assessment forms, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, August 2016–July 2017

	Pre-deployment assessment DD 2795		Post-deployment assessment DD 2796		Post-deployment reassessment DD 2900	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	225,909	100.0	140,087	100.0	112,628	100.0
Average	18,826		11,674		9,386	
<b>2016</b>						
August	18,788	8.3	11,641	8.3	8,874	7.9
September	15,428	6.8	13,166	9.4	5,695	5.1
October	18,005	8.0	15,153	10.8	8,927	7.9
November	20,766	9.2	9,501	6.8	11,682	10.4
December	18,334	8.1	14,756	10.5	9,512	8.4
<b>2017</b>						
January	18,688	8.3	10,452	7.5	11,269	10.0
February	19,279	8.5	8,175	5.8	9,828	8.7
March	21,961	9.7	13,022	9.3	10,851	9.6
April	17,959	7.9	11,910	8.5	8,702	7.7
May	21,321	9.4	9,550	6.8	10,321	9.2
June	16,808	7.4	10,218	7.3	8,787	7.8
July	18,572	8.2	12,543	9.0	8,180	7.3

Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System (DMSS) as of 09-AUG-2017  
Prepared by Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch (AFHSB)

Figure 2. Percentages of deployment health assessment forms with self-assessed health status rated as either "fair" or "poor," by month, U.S. Armed Forces, August 2016–July 2017



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, August 2016–July 2017

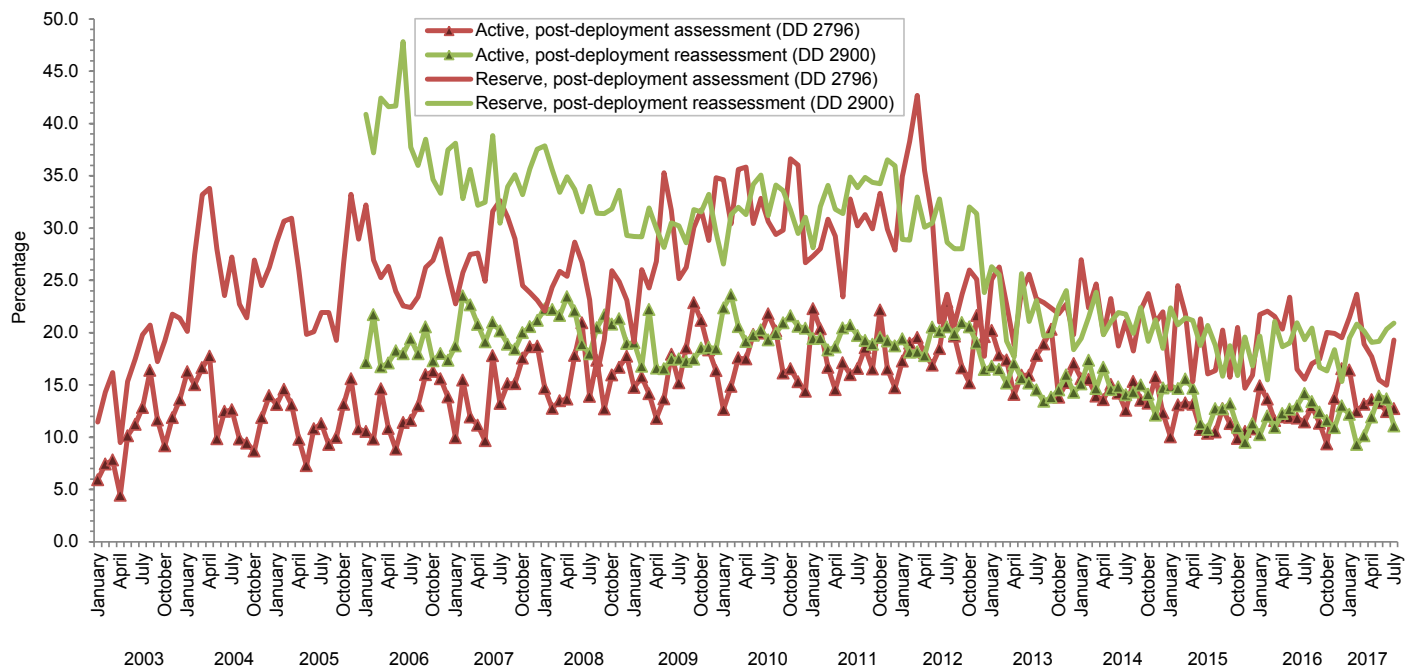
	Army			Navy			Air Force			Marine Corps			All active component service members		
	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900
<b>Active component</b>	n= 97,330 %	n= 47,096 %	n= 40,282 %	n= 6,082 %	n= 6,048 %	n= 6,084 %	n= 33,701 %	n= 31,703 %	n= 27,902 %	n= 18,875 %	n= 12,257 %	n= 9,896 %	n= 155,988 %	n= 97,104 %	n= 84,164 %
General health "fair" or "poor"	5.3	9.7	11.9	1.9	6.9	6.0	1.3	3.4	3.5	2.7	5.7	7.8	4.0	7.0	8.2
Health concerns, not wound or injury	6.4	19.8	15.1	3.8	13.6	8.8	3.1	8.9	7.3	3.4	9.6	8.1	5.2	14.6	11.3
Health worse now than before deployed	na	72.9	76.9	na	70.8	75.0	na	61.8	71.1	na	68.9	77.3	na	68.7	74.9
Exposure concerns	na	13.8	12.8	na	16.3	17.1	na	12.6	8.8	na	8.6	13.8	na	12.9	11.9
PTSD symptoms (two or more)	na	6.4	8.0	na	7.5	6.2	na	2.3	2.8	na	2.8	5.4	na	4.7	5.8
Depression symptoms (any)	na	20.9	22.6	na	21.4	18.8	na	9.1	9.2	na	17.1	18.9	na	16.6	17.4
Referral indicated by provider (any)	5.6	17.8	14.7	9.2	26.6	17.0	6.0	14.5	12.0	4.3	21.3	13.6	5.6	17.7	13.8
Mental health referral indicated <sup>a</sup>	1.6	2.9	12.5	1.0	5.4	13.8	0.9	1.8	10.1	0.6	1.9	11.6	1.3	2.6	11.7
Medical visit following referral <sup>b</sup>	99.1	99.5	99.1	77.9	91.0	86.7	99.9	99.7	99.8	85.6	90.7	93.0	96.7	97.5	97.5
<b>Reserve component</b>	n= 25,493 %	n= 21,253 %	n= 14,412 %	n= 2,653 %	n= 2,176 %	n= 2,294 %	n= 12,841 %	n= 11,634 %	n= 10,203 %	n= 846 %	n= 656 %	n= 465 %	n= 41,833 %	n= 35,719 %	n= 27,374 %
General health "fair" or "poor"	1.3	10.3	12.2	0.7	9.7	8.1	1.0	4.6	4.7	0.8	8.5	8.6	1.2	8.4	9.0
Health concerns, not wound or injury	2.4	23.5	17.6	1.4	32.9	10.9	1.8	10.2	5.4	3.1	23.3	5.2	2.1	19.7	12.3
Health worse now than before deployed	na	71.1	77.0	na	70.6	75.2	na	65.4	71.8	na	78.0	78.3	na	69.3	74.9
Exposure concerns	na	18.5	22.7	na	36.7	33.9	na	14.8	9.9	na	24.4	24.5	na	18.5	18.9
PTSD symptoms (two or more)	na	6.8	10.6	na	5.3	8.8	na	1.6	2.3	na	7.2	11.6	na	5.0	7.4
Depression symptoms (any)	na	18.8	20.6	na	18.2	20.4	na	8.7	7.4	na	20.9	20.6	na	15.5	15.7
Referral indicated by provider (any)	3.4	22.0	39.4	4.6	39.1	31.6	3.6	18.0	19.9	4.5	38.3	26.5	3.5	22.0	31.2
Mental health referral indicated <sup>a</sup>	0.7	2.8	38.7	0.6	3.4	31.2	0.5	1.6	19.6	1.1	2.9	26.2	0.7	2.4	30.8
Medical visit following referral <sup>b</sup>	83.3	99.7	50.4	95.2	99.0	64.7	71.7	75.3	67.1	85.0	85.6	49.0	80.6	91.6	55.8

PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder

<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 with completed assessments who endorsed exposure concerns on post-deployment health assessments or reassessments, by component, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, January 2003–July 2017



Data Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System