

Deployment Health Assessments

U.S. Armed Forces

September 2018

(Data through August 2018)

Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch

Update: Deployment Health Assessments, U.S. Armed Forces, September 2018

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 (AFHSB) generally have corresponded to times of departure and return of large numbers of service members who deployed. Between April 2006 and August 2018, the number of post-deployment health reassessment (PDHRA) forms per month ranged from 5,722 to 36,863 (Figure 1). For the most recent 12-month period (September 2017–August 2018), the average monthly number of PDHRA forms (8,115) was the lowest 1-year average since July 2006 (Table 1, 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 8.8% on PDHA questionnaires and from 6.1% to 9.0% 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 3.1% and 4.8%.

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). Service members in the active component of the Marine Corps were 1.6 times as likely to report two or more PTSD symptoms 3–6 months after deployment, compared to the time of their return from deployment. Reserve component Marine Corps members were more than twice as likely to report two or more PTSD symptoms at the time of the PDHRA compared to the time of the PDHA (Table 2).

At the time of return from deployment, 17.3% of active component and 14.3% of reserve component service members reported any depression symptoms. Service members in the active and reserve components were more than four and 11 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, 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–August 2018

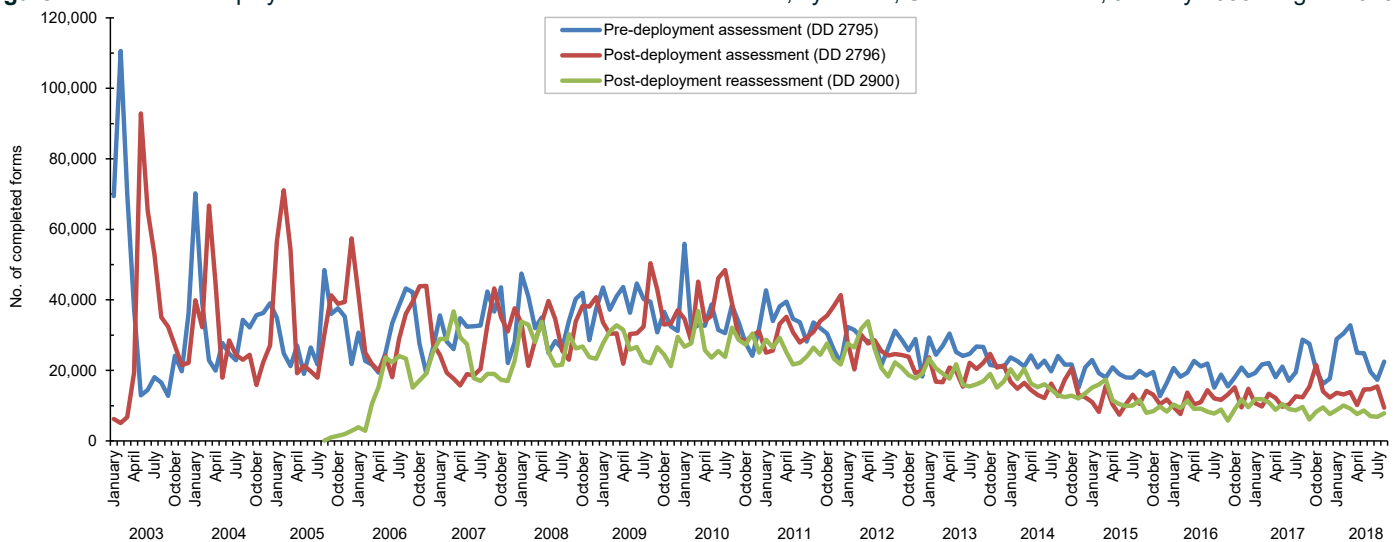


Table 1. Number of deployment-related health assessment forms, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, September 2017–August 2018

	Pre-deployment assessment DD 2795		Post-deployment assessment DD 2796		Post-deployment reassessment DD 2900	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	282,956	100.0	168,200	100.0	97,382	100.0
Average	23,580	.	14,017	.	8,115	.
2017						
September	27,577	9.7	15,372	9.1	6,053	6.2
October	20,046	7.1	21,548	12.8	8,315	8.5
November	16,167	5.7	14,074	8.4	9,499	9.8
December	17,683	6.2	12,286	7.3	7,597	7.8
2018						
January	28,905	10.2	13,636	8.1	8,749	9.0
February	30,480	10.8	13,174	7.8	10,065	10.3
March	32,788	11.6	13,853	8.2	9,148	9.4
April	24,977	8.8	10,143	6.0	7,651	7.9
May	24,902	8.8	14,588	8.7	8,662	8.9
June	19,609	6.9	14,683	8.7	7,000	7.2
July	17,306	6.1	15,437	9.2	6,834	7.0
August	22,516	8.0	9,406	5.6	7,809	8.0

Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System (DMSS) as of 07-SEP-2018
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, September 2017–August 2018

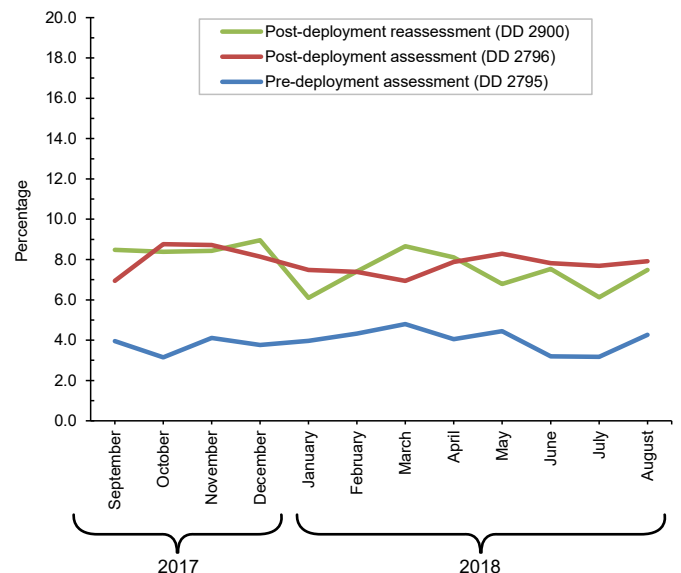


Table 2. Percentage of service members who endorsed selected questions or received referrals on health assessment forms, U.S. Armed Forces, September 2017–August 2018

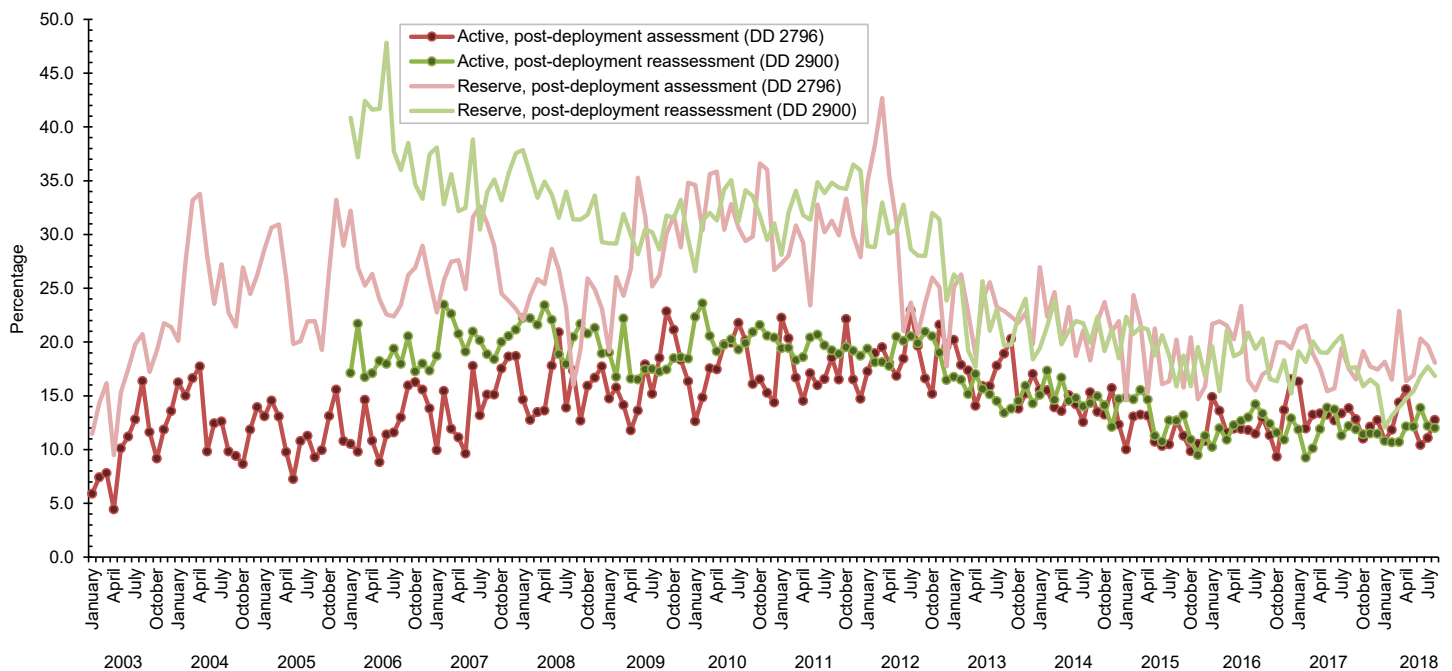
	Army			Navy			Air Force			Marine Corps			All active component service members		
	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900
Active component	n= 119,153 %	n= 62,440 %	n= 30,306 %	n= 5,195 %	n= 4,639 %	n= 5,221 %	n= 38,279 %	n= 33,913 %	n= 29,626 %	n= 17,582 %	n= 11,944 %	n= 9,646 %	n= 180,209 %	n= 112,936 %	n= 74,799 %
General health "fair" or "poor"	6.0	9.9	10.8	1.7	6.5	8.3	1.4	3.5	3.5	2.5	6.2	8.4	4.6	7.5	7.4
Health concerns, not wound or injury	6.4	17.3	13.1	4.9	13.8	11.8	3.2	9.6	7.4	3.7	10.4	8.6	5.4	14.1	10.2
Health worse now than before deployed	na	73.0	75.1	na	70.9	75.1	na	63.4	70.5	na	69.3	76.8	na	69.6	73.5
Exposure concerns	na	11.8	12.7	na	20.0	21.5	na	13.0	8.4	na	11.5	13.1	na	12.5	11.7
PTSD symptoms (two or more)	na	5.8	7.8	na	7.2	9.9	na	2.1	2.7	na	3.1	4.9	na	4.5	5.5
Depression symptoms (any)	na	21.6	21.9	na	20.2	22.5	na	9.2	9.0	na	17.1	18.8	na	17.3	16.4
Referral indicated by provider (any)	5.8	17.6	13.0	8.4	30.8	22.5	7.0	13.9	9.6	4.5	18.9	16.5	6.0	17.2	12.8
Mental health referral indicated ^a	1.9	2.9	11.0	1.1	6.1	18.7	1.1	1.7	8.4	0.6	2.2	14.4	1.5	2.6	11.0
Medical visit following referral ^b	93.0	96.0	92.3	86.5	85.0	84.3	96.8	97.9	97.7	89.9	91.4	88.4	93.4	94.9	91.9
Reserve component	n= 44,236 %	n= 24,893 %	n= 8,260 %	n= 2,821 %	n= 2,500 %	n= 2,349 %	n= 16,438 %	n= 14,474 %	n= 10,738 %	n= 2,083 %	n= 719 %	n= 513 %	n= 65,578 %	n= 42,586 %	n= 21,860 %
General health "fair" or "poor"	2.5	10.1	13.1	0.4	10.5	9.7	1.0	4.3	4.0	1.6	7.8	7.2	2.0	8.1	8.1
Health concerns, not wound or injury	3.8	20.1	19.2	1.8	34.1	11.7	1.8	9.3	4.7	3.2	16.4	8.2	3.2	17.2	11.0
Health worse now than before deployed	na	70.9	77.0	na	71.2	75.2	na	68.0	71.9	na	76.4	75.4	na	70.0	74.3
Exposure concerns	na	18.2	19.5	na	36.8	35.1	na	15.2	8.4	na	22.9	18.7	na	18.4	15.7
PTSD symptoms (two or more)	na	6.1	10.2	na	6.7	8.9	na	1.7	1.9	na	4.5	9.9	na	4.6	6.0
Depression symptoms (any)	na	17.6	20.3	na	18.8	21.5	na	7.6	6.9	na	19.1	17.3	na	14.3	13.7
Referral indicated by provider (any)	4.0	23.0	35.7	4.7	33.0	36.5	4.0	14.1	17.8	7.0	39.2	29.0	4.2	20.8	26.8
Mental health referral indicated ^a	1.0	2.8	34.0	0.6	3.1	36.0	0.6	1.2	17.3	1.7	3.1	27.9	0.9	2.3	25.9
Medical visit following referral ^b	73.7	97.8	46.4	98.2	95.7	60.2	79.3	79.9	73.0	80.6	80.4	52.6	76.6	92.9	54.6

PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder

^aIncludes behavioral health, combat stress and substance abuse referrals.

^bRecord 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–August 2018



Data Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System