

# Deployment Health Assessments

U.S. Armed Forces

March 2019

(Data through February 2019)

Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch

# Update: Deployment Health Assessments, U.S. Armed Forces, March 2019

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 February 2019, the number of post-deployment health reassessment (PDHRA) forms per month ranged from 5,715 to 36,863 (Figure 1). The average monthly number of PDHRA forms (7,838) for the most recent 12 months (March 2018–February 2019) was the single 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 10.3% on PDHA questionnaires and from 6.0% to 8.6% 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 3.2% and 4.8%.

In general, the percentages of "exposure concerns" self-reported on PDHA and PDHRA forms were higher among reserve component members than among active component members; a similar pattern is apparent for the percentages of "health concerns" self-reported on PDHA forms. (Table 2, Figure 3). Service members in the active component of the Marine Corps and the Navy, respectively, were 1.6 times and 1.5 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 1.9 times 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, 17.6% of active component and 15.7% of reserve component service members reported any depression symptoms. Service members in the active and reserve components were more than 4 and 6 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 1.7 times 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–February 2019

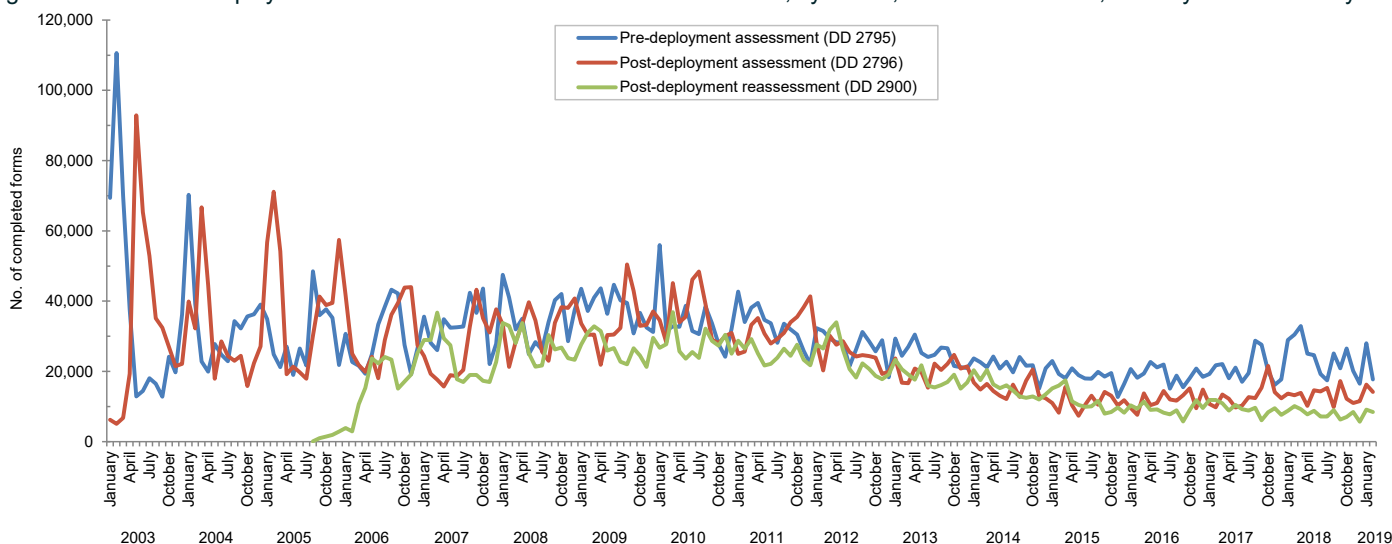
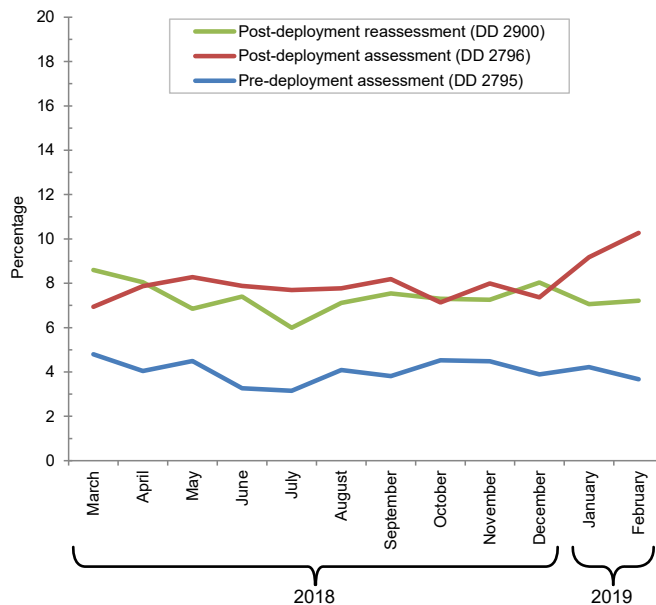


Table 1. Number of deployment-related health assessment forms, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, March 2018–February 2019

	Pre-deployment assessment DD 2795		Post-deployment assessment DD 2796		Post-deployment reassessment DD 2900	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	274,243	100.0	160,500	100.0	94,055	100.0
Average	22,854	.	13,375	.	7,838	.
<b>2018</b>						
March	32,930	12.0	13,871	8.6	9,238	9.8
April	25,010	9.1	10,174	6.3	7,740	8.2
May	24,658	9.0	14,626	9.1	8,806	9.4
June	19,259	7.0	14,293	8.9	7,172	7.6
July	17,477	6.4	15,303	9.5	7,160	7.6
August	25,113	9.2	9,853	6.1	8,958	9.5
September	20,891	7.6	17,255	10.8	6,274	6.7
October	26,545	9.7	12,205	7.6	7,017	7.5
November	20,133	7.3	10,992	6.8	8,417	8.9
December	16,513	6.0	11,547	7.2	5,715	6.1
<b>2019</b>						
January	27,967	10.2	16,245	10.1	9,107	9.7
February	17,747	6.5	14,136	8.8	8,451	9.0

Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System (DMSS) as of 08-MAR-2019  
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, March 2018–February 2019



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, March 2018–February 2019

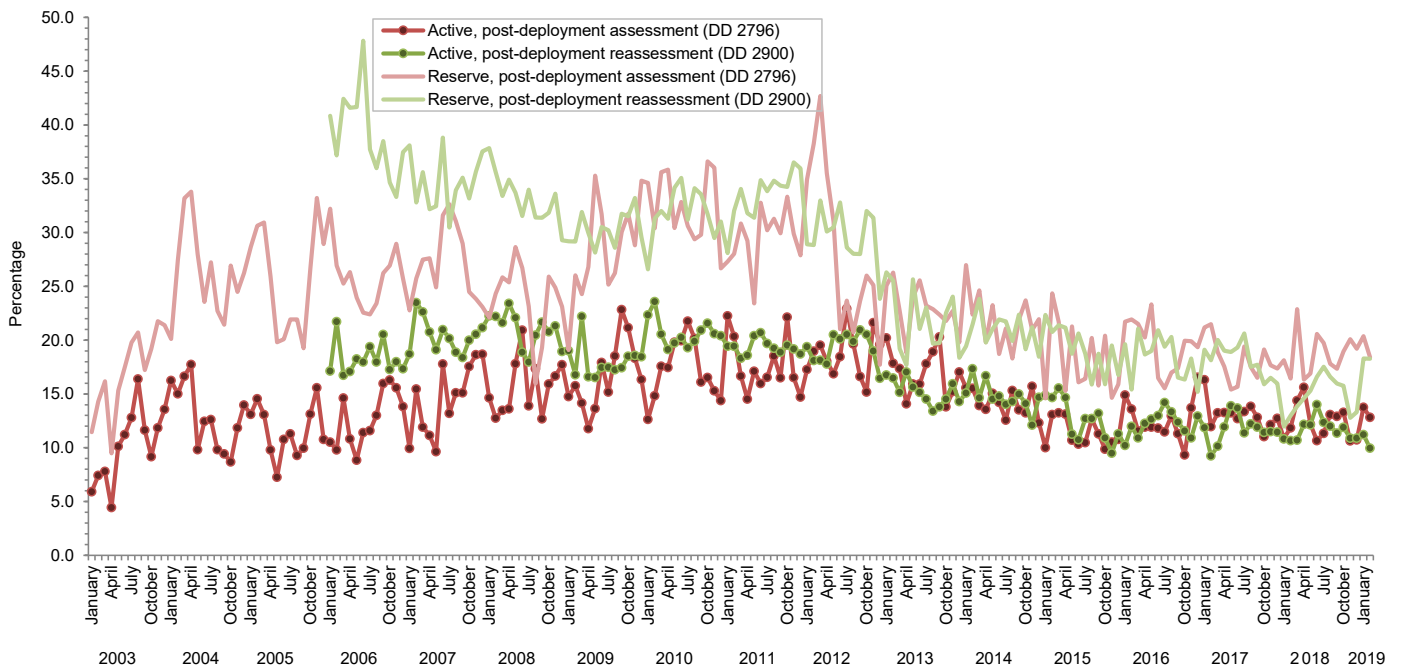
	Army			Navy			Air Force			Marine Corps			All active component service members		
	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900
<b>Active component</b>	n= 115,800 %	n= 60,602 %	n= 30,772 %	n= 5,998 %	n= 4,302 %	n= 3,628 %	n= 36,404 %	n= 32,864 %	n= 29,436 %	n= 20,414 %	n= 10,767 %	n= 8,430 %	n= 178,616 %	n= 108,535 %	n= 72,266 %
General health "fair" or "poor"	6.2	10.1	10.9	2.1	5.6	5.6	1.4	3.6	3.8	2.9	7.1	8.5	4.7	7.7	7.5
Health concerns, not wound or injury	6.3	17.5	12.5	5.4	14.4	10.8	3.1	10.2	7.6	4.1	12.0	9.2	5.4	14.6	10.1
Health worse now than before deployed	na	72.6	74.7	na	69.5	73.5	na	62.7	70.6	na	71.9	77.3	na	69.4	73.3
Exposure concerns	na	11.6	12.0	na	22.0	23.1	na	13.9	8.9	na	11.5	14.8	na	12.7	11.6
PTSD symptoms (two or more)	na	6.2	7.5	na	4.7	6.8	na	2.3	2.7	na	3.1	5.0	na	4.7	5.2
Depression symptoms (any)	na	22.1	21.8	na	17.3	19.7	na	9.2	9.2	na	17.6	18.4	na	17.6	16.2
Referral indicated by provider (any)	6.5	15.9	12.6	6.3	29.5	20.6	7.3	14.5	9.4	4.9	21.8	17.5	6.5	16.6	12.2
Mental health referral indicated <sup>a</sup>	1.9	2.8	10.5	1.2	4.4	17.0	1.0	1.9	8.3	0.8	2.4	15.6	1.6	2.5	10.5
Medical visit following referral <sup>b</sup>	96.3	99.0	94.5	91.6	92.6	91.7	95.1	97.8	97.4	95.6	86.6	91.0	95.8	97.1	94.5
<b>Reserve component</b>	n= 40,969 %	n= 26,062 %	n= 5,981 %	n= 2,673 %	n= 2,528 %	n= 2,440 %	n= 14,955 %	n= 13,769 %	n= 12,205 %	n= 2,189 %	n= 1,009 %	n= 429 %	n= 60,786 %	n= 43,368 %	n= 21,055 %
General health "fair" or "poor"	2.4	10.7	11.0	0.3	9.8	8.9	1.0	4.9	3.9	1.6	7.7	8.2	1.9	8.8	6.6
Health concerns, not wound or injury	3.8	19.9	12.3	2.0	35.2	10.8	1.8	10.6	4.5	2.8	16.7	9.3	3.2	17.8	7.6
Health worse now than before deployed	na	70.6	75.0	na	70.5	75.2	na	66.8	71.6	na	74.6	80.9	na	69.5	73.2
Exposure concerns	na	18.4	21.0	na	39.6	34.5	na	16.8	9.3	na	14.1	22.1	na	19.0	15.8
PTSD symptoms (two or more)	na	6.7	8.9	na	5.4	8.9	na	2.0	2.0	na	4.9	9.3	na	5.1	4.9
Depression symptoms (any)	na	19.2	19.1	na	19.7	22.0	na	8.3	6.9	na	18.2	18.4	na	15.7	12.4
Referral indicated by provider (any)	4.2	23.8	18.4	4.1	25.7	32.6	4.3	15.4	17.3	8.9	40.9	29.8	4.4	21.7	19.6
Mental health referral indicated <sup>a</sup>	1.0	3.4	13.3	0.3	2.5	32.1	0.6	1.6	16.8	1.5	2.9	28.4	0.9	2.7	17.8
Medical visit following referral <sup>b</sup>	78.0	99.0	60.3	96.8	98.3	56.9	77.3	80.9	76.7	98.1	94.1	61.4	80.3	94.7	68.1

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–February 2019



Data Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System