

Deployment Health Assessments

U.S. Armed Forces

October 2019

(Data through September 2019)

Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch

Update: Deployment Health Assessments, U.S. Armed Forces, October 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. From October 2014 through September 2019, monthly counts of pre-deployment health assessments showed the greatest variation compared to the other deployment health assessment forms (Figure 1). Since June 2017, monthly counts of post deployment health reassessment (PDHRA) forms have been consistently lower than the monthly PDHA counts.

During the most recent 12 months (October 2018–September 2019), the number of PDHRA forms per month ranged from 4,554 to 9,630 (Table 1). The average monthly number of PDHRA forms (7,575) during this period 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 7.1% to 10.1% on PDHA questionnaires and from 7.0% to 7.9% 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 3.5% 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). Active and reserve component Marine Corps members were 1.9 and 1.7 times as likely, respectively, to report 2 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, 17.1% of active component and 17.3% of reserve component service members reported any depression symptoms. Service members in the active and reserve components were 4.2 and 6.3 times as likely, respectively, to receive a mental health referral 3-6 months after deployment, compared to the time of their return from deployment. Moreover, at the time of the PDHRA, reservists were 1.8 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–September 2019

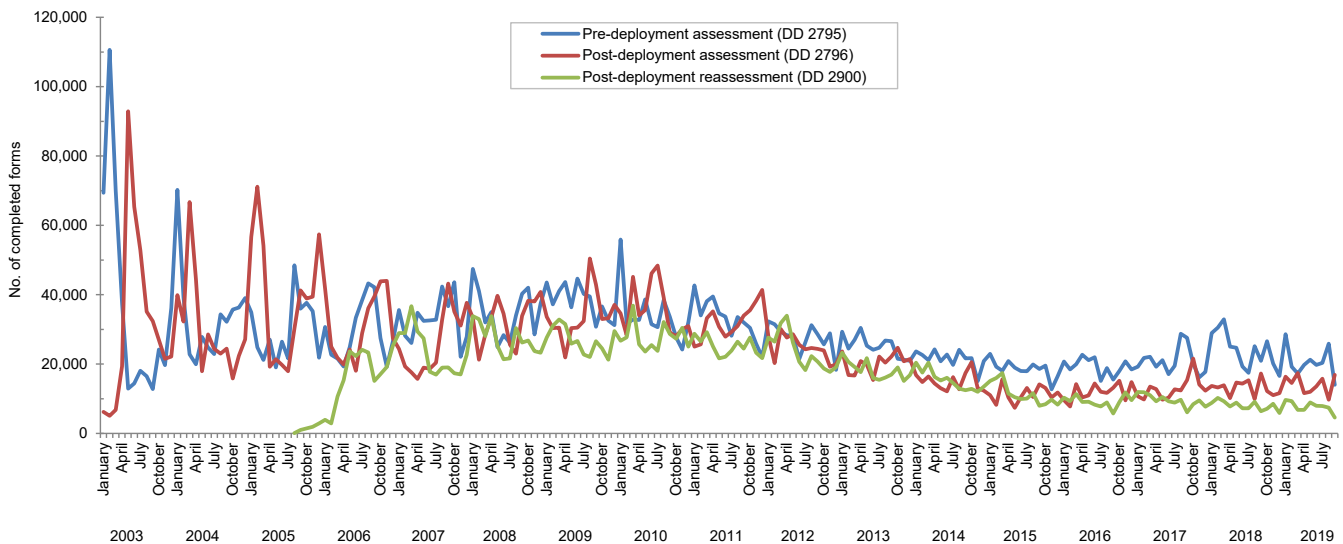


Table 1. Number of deployment-related health assessment forms, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, October 2018–September 2019

	Pre-deployment assessment DD 2795		Post-deployment assessment DD 2796		Post-deployment reassessment DD 2900	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	249,376	100.0	162,771	100.0	90,899	100.0
Average	20,781	.	13,564	.	7,575	.
2018						
October	26,584	10.7	12,231	7.5	7,115	7.8
November	20,176	8.1	11,016	6.8	8,563	9.4
December	16,550	6.6	11,610	7.1	5,882	6.5
2019						
January	28,601	11.5	16,346	10.0	9,630	10.6
February	19,210	7.7	14,531	8.9	9,302	10.2
March	17,276	6.9	17,401	10.7	6,772	7.5
April	19,777	7.9	11,633	7.1	6,812	7.5
May	21,229	8.5	12,002	7.4	8,975	9.9
June	19,727	7.9	13,567	8.3	7,947	8.7
July	20,339	8.2	15,810	9.7	7,893	8.7
August	25,878	10.4	9,713	6.0	7,454	8.2
September	14,029	5.6	16,911	10.4	4,554	5.0

Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System (DMSS) as of 07 OCT 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, October 2018–September 2019

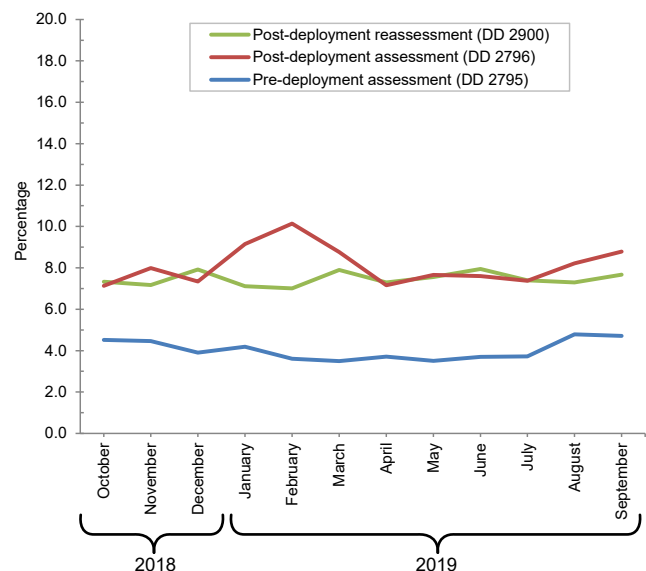


Table 2. Percentage of service members who endorsed selected questions or received referrals on health assessment forms, U.S. Armed Forces, October 2018–September 2019

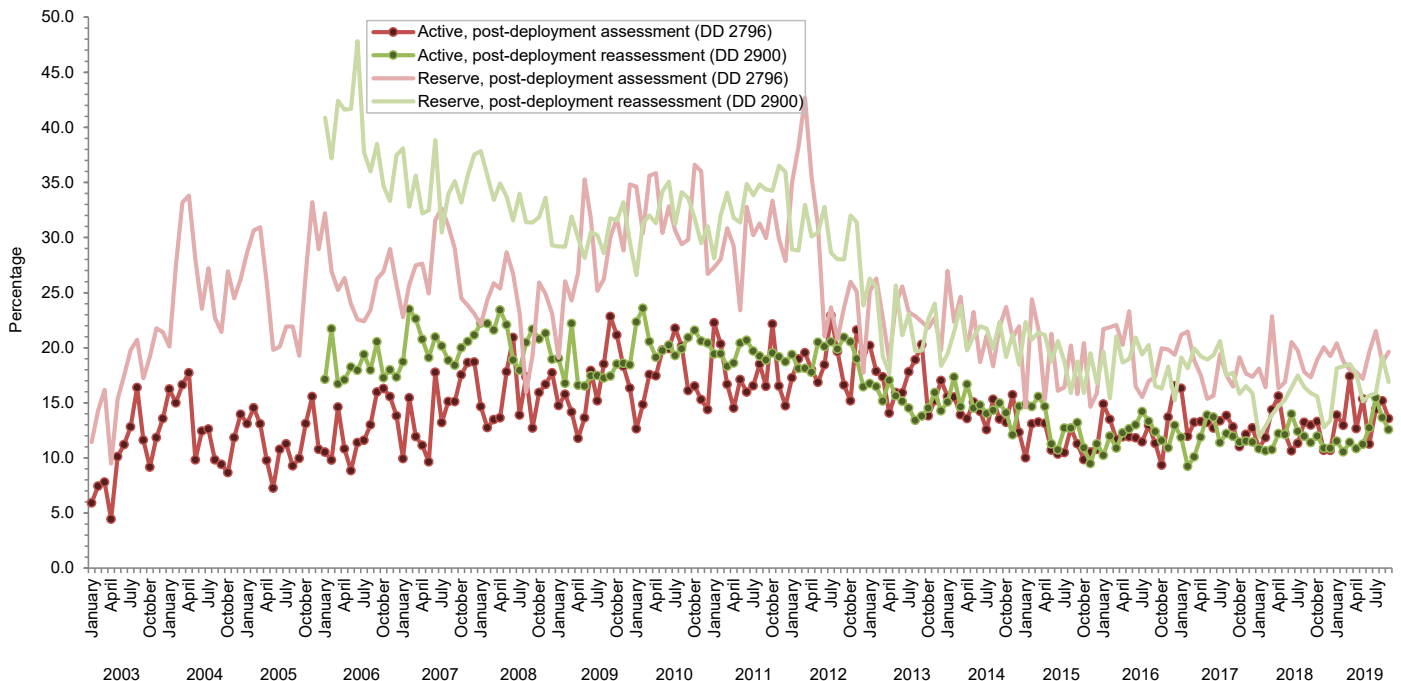
	Army			Navy			Air Force			Marine Corps			All active component service members		
	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900
Active component	n= 102,230 %	n= 53,951 %	n= 26,470 %	n= 5,940 %	n= 5,266 %	n= 4,393 %	n= 36,983 %	n= 31,371 %	n= 28,667 %	n= 19,375 %	n= 17,028 %	n= 9,999 %	n= 164,528 %	n= 107,616 %	n= 69,529 %
General health "fair" or "poor"	6.3	10.3	10.8	2.5	6.0	5.9	1.6	3.7	4.0	3.2	7.2	9.0	4.7	7.7	7.4
Health concerns, not wound or injury	6.2	17.7	11.7	4.8	13.7	10.5	3.2	10.8	8.1	4.6	10.8	10.4	5.3	14.4	10.0
Health worse now than before deployed	na	72.8	73.6	na	69.7	75.9	na	62.7	70.8	na	72.3	78.4	na	69.7	73.3
Exposure concerns	na	13.1	11.6	na	21.7	23.4	na	14.0	9.5	na	10.6	15.3	na	13.4	12.0
PTSD symptoms (two or more)	na	6.2	7.9	na	4.6	6.3	na	2.5	3.0	na	3.1	5.8	na	4.6	5.5
Depression symptoms (any)	na	21.3	21.2	na	18.9	20.0	na	9.7	9.9	na	17.0	19.7	na	17.1	16.3
Referral indicated by provider (any)	6.4	15.3	11.5	7.1	25.3	19.8	7.5	15.0	9.6	6.1	20.5	17.5	6.6	16.5	12.1
Mental health referral indicated ^a	1.6	2.5	9.3	1.4	4.8	17.0	1.1	2.0	8.5	0.9	2.4	15.6	1.4	2.5	10.4
Medical visit following referral ^b	87.2	98.8	97.2	81.8	85.2	81.0	97.6	98.2	97.8	83.4	92.5	90.6	89.1	96.5	94.3
Reserve component	n= 37,111 %	n= 30,502 %	n= 5,595 %	n= 2,467 %	n= 2,414 %	n= 2,398 %	n= 14,061 %	n= 13,492 %	n= 12,092 %	n= 2,050 %	n= 1,925 %	n= 494 %	n= 55,689 %	n= 48,333 %	n= 20,579 %
General health "fair" or "poor"	1.9	10.4	12.0	0.6	10.3	8.6	1.0	5.5	4.3	1.2	10.6	7.5	1.6	9.0	7.0
Health concerns, not wound or injury	3.1	19.3	12.9	3.3	37.7	11.6	1.7	12.3	5.8	2.3	18.2	7.5	2.7	18.2	8.4
Health worse now than before deployed	na	69.7	76.2	na	72.4	75.6	na	67.0	71.5	na	74.0	80.6	na	69.2	73.5
Exposure concerns	na	17.7	21.2	na	42.8	36.4	na	18.8	10.3	na	12.9	15.6	na	19.1	16.4
PTSD symptoms (two or more)	na	7.4	9.7	na	7.2	9.8	na	2.4	2.7	na	5.2	8.9	na	5.9	5.6
Depression symptoms (any)	na	20.5	20.4	na	20.3	22.5	na	9.5	7.8	na	17.2	18.8	na	17.3	13.2
Referral indicated by provider (any)	3.7	21.5	18.4	5.0	26.6	33.0	4.4	15.5	18.4	7.9	25.5	28.1	4.1	20.2	20.3
Mental health referral indicated ^a	0.8	3.3	12.9	0.9	3.0	32.4	0.5	1.7	17.9	1.7	4.6	26.7	0.8	2.9	18.4
Medical visit following referral ^b	88.2	99.3	52.2	95.4	97.1	62.9	80.3	85.8	81.8	96.7	85.6	49.3	86.8	95.8	68.6

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–September 2019



Data Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System