

MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN THE MILITARY

Stigma About Mental Health Care is Strong in the Military

Mental health stigma is still entrenched in military culture, and providers should take care to avoid reinforcing it. For example, providers should stay away from clinical terms and labels that reduce the warrior's experience to "symptoms" and "illness." They should not overlook the inherent toughness and skills of service members and their families. Providers should understand and explain the rules of patient-provider confidentiality and the types of information (eg, criminal actions) that would have to be disclosed to a commander and could potentially affect the service member's career and security clearance. Learn more about stigma in the military at <https://www.health.mil/Military-Health-Topics/>.

Civilian Providers Play a Direct Role

More and more, community-based organizations and providers are being called on to provide direct services to military families and children. The civilian mental-health community is providing support and interventions for military families experiencing the stress of deployment, psychological or physical injury, or grief and loss. Civilian providers also play an important role



in supporting the psychological well-being of military children, specifically addressing such issues as anxiety, depression, somatic complaints, sleep difficulties, and academic issues. Learn more about meeting the needs of service members and their families at:

www.samhsa.gov/mental-health

-one-stop access for information and guidance on government mental health services

www.whitehouse.gov/joiningforces

-national initiative to unite all sectors of society in supporting service members and families