

Psychological Health Center of Excellence

Annual Report 2018

PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

The Psychological Health Center of Excellence (PHCoE) provides a consolidated and centralized source of psychological health expertise within the Defense Health Agency and resides in the Research and Development (J-9) Directorate. PHCoE focuses on seven operational domains: implementation science; surveillance and medical intelligence, prevention and outreach; evidence synthesis and gap analysis; health services and population research; policy analysis and development; and special projects.

MISSION

Improve the lives of our nation's service members, veterans, and their families by advancing excellence in psychological health care, readiness, and prevention of psychological health disorders.

VISION

Be the trusted source and partner in facilitating implementation of evidence-based research and practices across the continuum of care that will enhance the psychological health of the military community.

HISTORY

The historical origins of PHCoE began in 1995 when the Gulf War Health Center at Walter Reed Army Medical Center was established with a mission to care for Gulf War veterans with war-related physical and mental health challenges. In 1995, the Department of Defense (DoD) also instituted the Comprehensive Clinical Evaluation Program (CCEP) to provide systematic clinical evaluations for the diagnosis and treatment of conditions connected to service in the Gulf War. The Gulf War Health Center developed and implemented the tertiary treatment component of the Comprehensive Clinical Evaluation Program (CCEP), a three-week specialized care program for veterans with medically unexplained physical symptoms.

The Gulf War Health Center was re-established in 1999 as the Deployment Health Clinical Center (DHCC) along with two other Department of Defense (DoD) centers of excellence for deployment health, the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center and the Naval Health Research Center. DHCC was responsible for coordinating the evaluation of veterans seeking care for post-deployment health concerns using the DoD and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Post-Deployment Health Clinical Practice Guidelines which replaced the CCEP in 2001.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 established a congressional mandate for the creation of centers of excellence for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury within DoD. DHCC then became a center under the newly established Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE). The National Defense Authorization Act charged the center to implement plans and strategies for the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of PTSD and other mental health conditions.

In February 2016, DCoE and its centers, including PHCoE (then DHCC), transitioned to the Defense Health Agency (DHA) from the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command. In October 2017, DHA disestablished DCoE and redistributed its three centers, to include the newly renamed PHCoE, within the DHA to better align with DHA's mission.

IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE

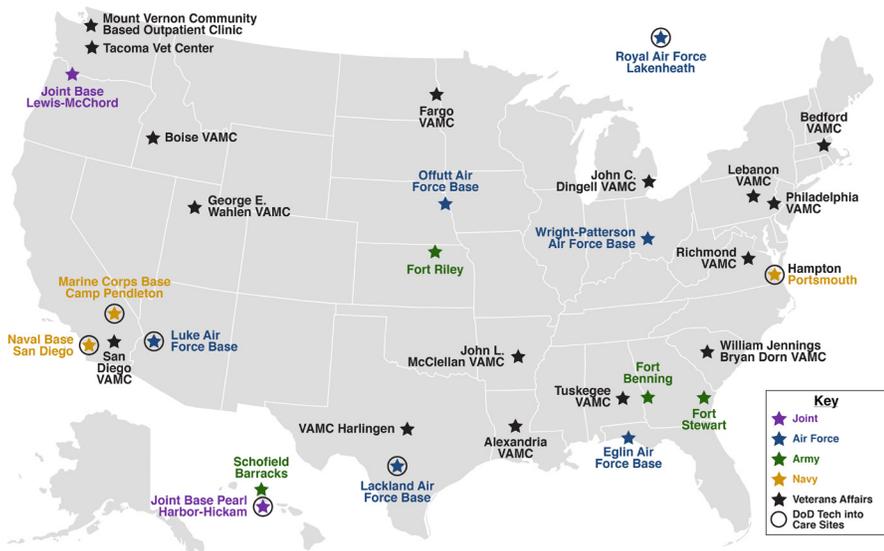
PHCoE's implementation science initiatives are related to the systematic dissemination, uptake, and sustainment of evidence-based practices to improve health care delivery and outcomes. PHCoE applies methods of implementation science to systematically study and promote the adoption of evidence-based practice change in pilot and enterprise settings.

ONGOING PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

- Conduct knowledge translation through implementation of the [DoD/VA Practice-Based Implementation \(PBI\) Network](#), an infrastructure that serves to more rapidly translate psychological health research findings by facilitating practice changes
- Develop evidence-based and policy-based [clinical support tools](#) for psychological health conditions and substance use disorder (SUD) to translate and simplify content in DoD/VA clinical practice guidelines to be better understood by clinicians
- Develop and implement SUD trainings for military providers

KEY 2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Published 27 journal articles, and provided 18 conference presentations and 10 poster presentations
- Piloted use of mobile applications in Military Health System (MHS) behavioral health care through the PBI Network. The pilot trained 95 providers, evaluated barriers and facilitators to implementation, and made system-level recommendations to improve uptake
- Initiated the PBI Network Cognitive Processing Therapy Trained Trauma Specialist (CPT-TS) pilot, which will test an innovative care delivery model targeting the treatment of PTSD
- Partnered with VA to deliver a 3-day VA/DoD Women's Mental Health Mini-Residency, which trained more than 150 interdisciplinary providers in the provision of gender-sensitive care
- Developed three [clinical support tools](#) on pregnancy and substance use, PTSD medications, and trauma-informed care
- Developed and implemented DoD Opioid Prescriber Safety Training (more than 18,000 DoD providers trained in 2018)
- Executed [Buprenorphine Waiver Training](#) (192 DoD and VA providers trained in 2018)
- Facilitated two [Chaplain Working Group](#) webinars for DoD chaplains on psychological health topics



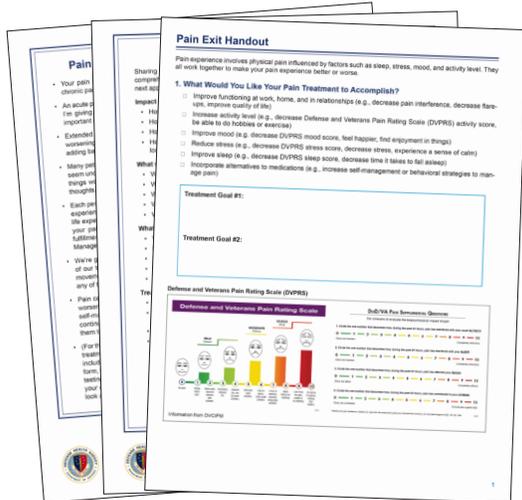
Map of DoD/VA PBI Network clinical sites

IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE INITIATIVE HIGHLIGHT: PRIMARY CARE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The Primary Care Behavioral Health (PCBH) program at PHCoE provides leadership and tri-service support in translational psychological and behavioral health services in primary care and works with the services to create optimal outcomes for health, well-being and readiness through the development and implementation of clinical pathways.

ONGOING PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

- Develop PCBH curriculum and deliver training to increase knowledge, skills and abilities for internal behavioral health consultants (IBHCs), behavioral health care facilitators (BHCFs), external behavioral health consultants (EBHCs), primary care clinicians, and Patient-Centered Medical Home leaders
- Facilitate the service-funded PCBH tri-service trainers program, which provides structured mentorship for and evaluation of PCBH staff at military treatment facilities throughout DoD and includes providing feedback to clinic and service leads
- Conduct PCBH program evaluation, metrics and mentoring to measure successes and identify areas of improvement including BHCF monthly data pulls and PCBH case tracers
- Develop core competencies for PCBH staff



KEY 2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

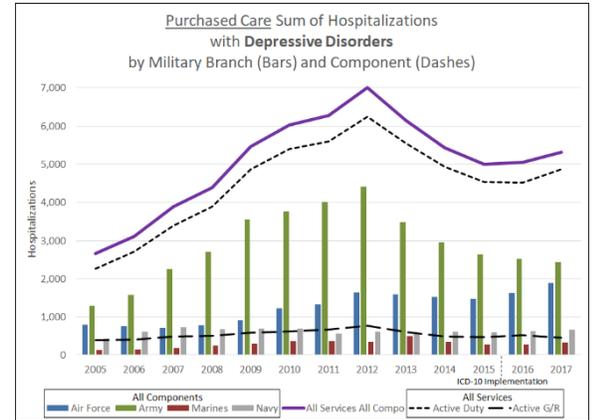
- Conducted 69 site visits and 455 phone mentorship calls by tri-service traveling trainers
- Provided initial training for 73 IBHCs and 31 BHCFs. This multi-week training is required before IBHCs and BHCFs provide patient care in DoD clinics
- Led workgroups which developed implementation materials for two clinical pathways in primary care: Stepped Care Model for Pain Pathway and Sleep Improvement Pathway. Materials will be piloted in early 2019.

SURVEILLANCE AND MEDICAL INTELLIGENCE

PHCoE aims to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the MHS psychological health care system by supporting evidence-based decision-making through analytics. PHCoE performs agile data analytics to respond quickly with near-real-time data addressing questions influencing mental health policy and operations in the MHS.

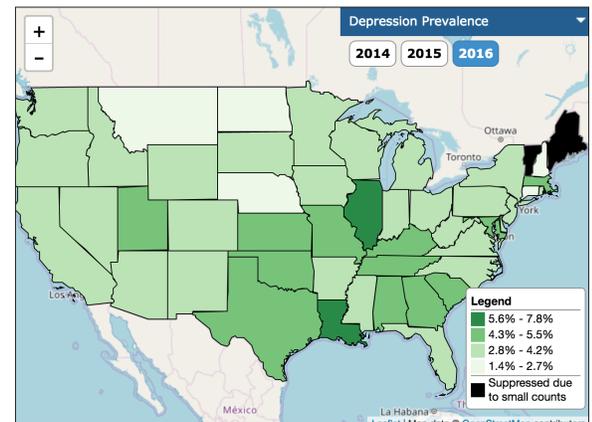
ONGOING PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

- Conduct surveillance of prevalence and incidence rates of mental health conditions of interest and monitor MHS utilization data for these conditions ; produce reports to inform MHS leadership, clinicians, and staff
- Provide analytic and program monitoring support to the Primary Care Behavioral Health initiative, including producing quarterly productivity reports, preparing tailored reporting tools for performance mentoring, and responding to specific ad hoc analysis requests from the services
- Prepare analyses of opioid prescription practice and opioid misuse disorder prevalence to monitor the scope of the problem for the MHS and support operational decision-making and response planning
- Provide comprehensive suicide intervention and surveillance mission support including surveillance via the Department of Defense Suicide Event Report (DoDSER) system, dissemination via the DoDSER Annual Report, collaborative research and evaluative efforts with DoD stakeholders and fulfillment of select objectives from the Defense Strategy for Suicide Prevention (DSSP)

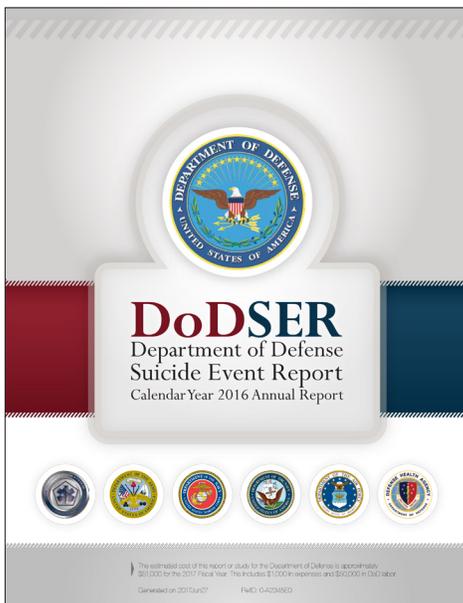


KEY 2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Delivered a suite of analyses related to opioid prescription practice and opioid misuse to stakeholders in support of efforts to both understand the scope of the opioid epidemic within the MHS and assess the effectiveness of prevention strategies
- Provided primary care behavioral health program managers with quarterly information on program performance at the enterprise, service, and installation levels



- Produced provider-specific performance and context surveillance tools to enhance primary care behavioral health implementation support efforts
- Supported more than 120 ad hoc requests for analyses of behavioral health administrative data
- Expanded PHCoE's analytic capabilities adding geospatial analysis, CarePoint access, and economic forecasting and modeling to its repertoire of analytic tools



PREVENTION AND OUTREACH

PHCoE promotes a culture of support for psychological health by engaging in initiatives that prevent mental illness, link beneficiaries with services, and support health promotion and risk reduction efforts.

ONGOING PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

- Direct the Real Warriors Campaign, a multimedia public awareness campaign to reduce stigma, encourage help-seeking behavior and educate service members, veterans and their families, leaders and providers about psychological health and available resources
- Direct the inTransition program that supports a reduction in the number of service members who disengage from mental health care by providing behavioral health care assistance and coaching support for gaps in care during service members' times of transition
- Conduct PHCoE Outreach Team presentations and booths at Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program events and conferences
- Administer the Psychological Health Resource Center, a 24/7 call center providing psychological health information and resources to service members, their family members, and veterans
- Implement the Combat and Operational Stress Control (COSC) mission for DHA and facilitates standardization across the services
- Facilitate Chaplain Working Group webinars that provide education on psychological health topics and enhance collaboration with mental health providers
- Support the DoD response to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) stigma report and five GAO recommendations for barriers to mental health care

KEY 2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Published 49 Clinician's Corner blogs on current topics of interest for psychological health care providers in the MHS
- Received 114,923 user visits to the PHCoE website in 2018, up from 53,787 in 2017
- COSC mission accomplishments:
 - Revised the COSC workgroup charter at the request of the Psychological Health and Readiness Council (PHRC)
 - Conducted an annual data call and produced a report of the services' COSC services and activities
 - Conducted a review of the services' COSC policies for alignment with DoDI 6490.05
 - Provided the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) a report summarizing gaps between DoDI 6490.05 and USMC COSC documentation, report summarizing the assessment of USMC COSC training presentations, rapid literature review, and logic model of the USMC deployment training
- inTransition program accomplishments:
 - Performed 126,448 outbound outreach calls to service members preparing to be separated from the military or reservists/ National Guard members transitioning back to their civilian jobs, conducted 30,999 intake assessments, and opened 7,916 coaching cases
 - Collaborated with the VA to accept inTransition referrals from VA providers conducting Separation Health Assessments, including VA staff training and creating procedures for referral acceptance, tracking, and reporting
 - Collaborated with the VA Vet Centers to establish a process to verify service members' successful transitions to Vet Center care
 - Maintained a satisfaction rating of 95 percent for service members and 98 percent for providers as measured by the Interactive Customer Evaluation system



- PHCoE Outreach team exhibited at 12 Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program events with 1848 booth visitors and 6,410 brief attendees and attended 14 conferences with 1,491 booth visitors
- Real Warriors Campaign accomplishments:
 - Developed a Theory of Change model to evaluate effectiveness of campaign tactics and frame future evaluation efforts; initiated collaboration with PHCoE Performance and Analytics team to use prevalence data to inform campaign improvements
 - Reached more than 1.3 million unique users on social media, received more than 54,900 interactions on 2,207 new posts, which led to more than 3.7 million impressions; hosted first RWC Twitter chat, reaching more than 100,000 users and garnering more than 100,000 impressions
 - Participated in 26 events and site visits, directly engaged 2,210 attendees, distributed 9,117 pieces of material, and briefed more than 5,311 people
 - Facilitated three radio media tours and two audio news releases, potentially reaching more than 42,500,000 listeners
 - Received 402,833 page views with 254,307 visits from 217,761 unique visitors, including a 9 percent increase in referral traffic to campaign website from Facebook



EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS AND RESEARCH GAPS ANALYSIS

PHCoE conducts an integrated portfolio of psychological health research to improve the system of care, including research activities related to the generation of new findings, knowledge, and judgments based on extant and in-progress research, as well as the identification of gaps in research. Evidence synthesis and gap analysis projects apply rigorous scientific methods to establish priorities and to answer specific questions pertinent to practicing clinicians, researchers, and funding sources.

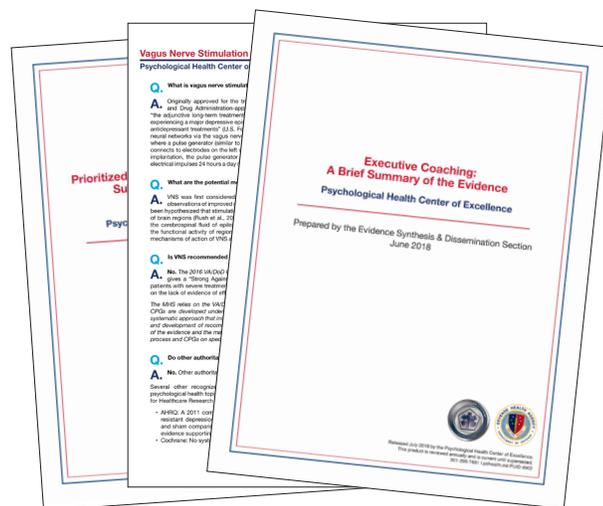
ONGOING PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Evidence synthesis and dissemination:

- Solicit input from key stakeholder groups to select and prioritize evidence synthesis topics
- Refine selected topics based on the scope of existing evidence, potential impact, and other criteria
- Devise and execute a protocol that applies systematic, rigorous, and transparent methods to evaluate and summarize available evidence
- Produce and disseminate various types of evidence synthesis products: Psych Health Evidence Briefs, rapid reviews, systematic reviews, and evidence maps

Research gaps analysis:

- Identify one to two significant psychological health topics each year
- Solicit key stakeholder input for process
- Engage in rigorous, efficient, and transparent methodology to identify and prioritize research gaps in current research for selected topics
- Produce and disseminate an annual prioritized research gaps report



KEY 2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Published 18 Psych Health Evidence Briefs, produced four rapid reviews in response to MHS stakeholder requests, initiated four large scale systematic reviews to inform relevant MHS practices and policies, and sponsored five systematic reviews from external agencies
- Published a peer-reviewed article based on the 2016 annual report on gaps in PTSD and depression research, disseminated results from the 2017 report on SUD research gaps as an online, pre-press publication, and produced the 2018 report on gaps in adjustment disorder research
- Developed a team of investigators skilled in systematic review methodology, and established key relationships with the Cochrane Collaboration, Evidence-based Practice Centers, and the GRADE working group

Evidence Synthesis & Dissemination

- **Evidence Briefs**
Brief reviews of existing and potential psychological health treatments
- **Rapid Reviews**
Timely reports tailored for MHS stakeholder groups to inform health care decisions
- **Systematic Reviews**
Comprehensive, rigorous syntheses to address important clinical questions, identify research gaps, and inform policy

Research Gaps Analysis

- **Important Topics**
Key Stakeholders designate 1-2 important psychological health topics each year for analysis
- **In-depth Analyses**
For each designated topic, identify and prioritize gaps in current research
- **Annual Report**
Produce and disseminate annual "Prioritized Research Gaps Reports" to inform and direct psychological health research funding in the military

HEALTH SERVICES POPULATION RESEARCH

PHCoE conducts an integrated portfolio of psychological health research to improve the system of care, including research activities related to the generation of new findings, knowledge, and judgments based on novel research. [Health services population research](#) projects leverage existing or novel active duty service member Tri-Service data sets to answer questions not previously addressed in the literature. Research foci include health systems and population-level outcomes and trends.

ONGOING PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

- Aggregate, prepare, and validate large datasets of opportunity via direct collaborations and direct requests
- Leverage large datasets to answer relevant health services and population research questions
- Deliver research reports and policy memos to leadership and MHS stakeholders to inform psychological health care delivery

KEY 2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Compiled a health services and population research dataset of more than 3 million service members across 13 years, combining 14 health care, personnel, deployment, suicide, entrance processing, training, and disability data sources. The project examines psychological health issues of active duty service members and currently includes 16 ongoing studies with collaborators from PHCoE, Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center, and Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.
- Managed the PHCoE Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) portfolio and served as action officers on four completed FFRDC projects and 10 active FFRDC projects
- Completed a brief to Congress: “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year, Section 735 Study on Safe Opioid Prescribing Practices”

Health Services Population Research

• *Large Datasets*

Collect, aggregate and analyze large datasets to answer health services and population research questions

• *Outcomes and Policy*

Deliver research reports and policy memos to leadership and MHS stakeholders to inform psychological health care delivery

Health Services Population Research Dataset

Large Tri-Service dataset compiled from:

- DMDC (Defense Manpower Data Center)
- ARMS (Aviation Resource Management System)
- DTMS (Digital Training Management System)
- MODS (Medical Operational Data System)
- MDR (MHS Data Repository)
- TMDS (Theater Medical Data Store)
- DoDSER (Department of Defense Suicide Event Report)
- DAMIS (Drug and Alcohol Management Information System)
- PDCAPS (Physical Disability Case Processing System)
- BHDP (Behavioral Health Data Portal)

POLICY ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT

PHCoE is involved in the review and creation of policies that impact psychological health care across the MHS and DoD.

KEY 2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Provided DoD support for health care management of sexual assault and sexual harassment efforts, including leading the DoD Sexual Assault Advisory Group; conducted literature reviews on psychological health needs related to sexual assault/sexual harassment; identified gaps in psychological health research, policy, treatment, and services for service members who disclose sexual assault or harassment; led efforts to create new procedural instructions; co-chaired a Health Affairs/Defense Health Agency Work Group to develop policy for medical management of patients with sexual assault
- Led several working groups focused on women's mental health, including the VA/DoD Women's Health Work Group, the DoD Women's Mental Health Work Group, and the Health Affairs Women's Health Issues Work Group
- Led a Behavioral Health Technician (BHT) Work Group with representation from all services, initiated a BHT training, policy and curriculum review, and produced a health care provider's practice guide for the utilization of behavioral health technicians
- Conducted SUD-related policy analysis and coordinated across the services to create new SUD procedural instructions
- Reviewed more than 400 mental health-related policies for stigmatizing language and proposed changes, with results informing policy changes at the DoD and service level

SPECIAL PROJECTS

PHCoE provides support and consultation to the services and combatant commands on psychological health matters and responses to taskers and queries from Congress and other external agencies.

KEY 2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Responded to 374 external taskers, including 14 congressional taskers
- Served as the DOD sponsor of the International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership Military Issues Work Group, which shares operational, accessible practices for the delivery of mental health and addiction services across the globe. The work group met twice in 2018 with participants including leaders in mental health care for service members and veterans in Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, Germany, Canada, US, and Great Britain.

Photos courtesy of the Defense Department.



Released March 2019 by the Psychological Health Center of Excellence.
This product is reviewed annually and is current until superseded.
301-295-7681 | pdhealth.mil