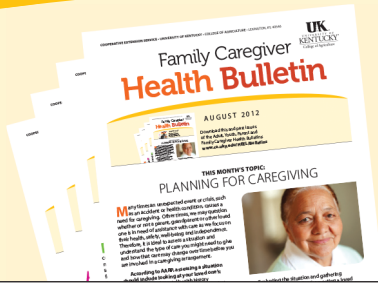


Family Caregiver Health Bulletin



MARCH 2014

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

SERVICES FOR MILITARY FAMILY CAREGIVERS

Do you care for a service member struggling with a mental health disorder such as posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety or substance abuse? Do you know that you are not alone? Do you know where you can go for support?

Life in the military can present unique and difficult challenges to service members and their families. While some challenges are manageable on one's own, others are not. In some instances, matters get worse and the stresses and challenges trigger additional problems and more serious issues. Common mental health issues can include posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety and substance problems. The Department of Defense recognizes that the record number of suicides among military members may not be directly related to



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extended deployments or combat experience, but underlying mental health issues. One way to help these service members and their families is to reduce the longstanding stigma associated with seeking mental health help so that appropriate help can be sought.

In an effort to support and strengthen the status of service members, veterans and their families in Kentucky, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CMHC) has designated 14 Military Behavioral Health Coordinators located within the state's CMHC regions. The coordinator will:

- Help insure that CMHC staff are informed to the unique behavioral health needs of active duty service members, veterans and their family members
- Act as a consultant, educator and mentor to the CMHC's clinical staff.
- Serve as the point of contact within each CMHC region.
- Create regional networking opportunities to bring together agencies such as the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Aging and Independent Living, Area Development Districts and Cooperative Extension.

The Kentucky Military Behavioral Health Coordinators will also reach out to military family caregivers. This is because caregivers of service members who struggle with mental health disorders play a key part in the recovery process. Due to high levels of concern, military family caregivers are usually the first to notice signs of depression. As someone in a position of trust, military family caregivers can then offer the necessary support and encouragement needed for service members to seek help and to move through the process of growth and healing.

Where to find help as a military family caregiver

There are many organizations committed to providing the men and women of our military with

access to mental health professionals and resources. Below is a list of a few of these organizations.

- **Kentucky Department of Veteran Affairs:**
<http://veterans.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx> or by Phone: (502) 564-9203; Toll-free: (800) 572-6245
- **Military OneSource:**
<http://www.militaryonesource.mil>
or (800) 342-9647
- **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA Caregiver Support):**
<http://www.caregiver.va.gov> or (877) 222-8387
- **Veterans CrisisLine Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org> or (800) 273-8255
- **National Resource Directory:**
<https://www.nrd.gov>
- **Defense Centers of Excellence:**
<http://dcoe.mil/Families.aspx> or (800) 510-7897
- **Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center:**
<http://dvbic.dcoe.mil> or (866) 966-1020
- **Commanding officer or chaplain**
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:**
<http://www.samhsa.gov/militaryfamilies>
or (877) 726-4727

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Health Bulletin

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