

THE MILLENNIUM COHORT PROGRAM

PROTECTING SERVICE MEMBER, VETERAN AND FAMILY HEALTH

A US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS STUDY



MILLENNIUM COHORT STUDY



*We are committed to helping
protect service member, veteran, and family health*

Dear Colleague,

We are pleased to share with you our most recent program updates. This newsletter includes brief summaries of new scientific publications released in recent months. Topics covered in these papers include health outcomes among lesbian, gay, and bisexual service members and veterans, combat exposure and behavioral health among U.S. Army Special Forces, problematic anger around the time of transition from military service, and military and family stressors related to service member career satisfaction.

Sincerely,

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Health Disparities among Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Service Members and Veterans¹

This study examined mental, physical, and behavioral health among lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) service members and veterans (N=96,930). LGB service members reported poorer mental health, (e.g., post-traumatic stress disorder and problematic anger), physical health, (e.g., more somatic symptoms), and behavioral health, (e.g., smoking and problem drinking), than heterosexual peers, most notably among gay/lesbian women and bisexual individuals.

Combat Exposure and Behavioral Health among U.S. Army Special Forces²

Different types of combat (e.g., combat severity, threat to oneself, and killing noncombatants) were associated with mental health disorders, trouble sleeping, and problem drinking for the three Army occupational specializations investigated (General Purpose Forces infantrymen, Ranger Qualified infantrymen, and Special Forces personnel), however, the prevalence of these adverse behavioral outcomes was generally lower for Army Special Forces personnel and Ranger Qualified infantrymen.

Problematic Anger and Military-to-Civilian Transition³

In the Millennium Cohort Study's third paper documenting the risks associated with problematic anger, 16% of active duty service members reported problematic anger two years before military separation. This prevalence essentially doubled to 31% two years following separation.

Military and Family Stressors Related to Service Member Career Satisfaction⁴

This study evaluated military life stress reported by service members and their spouses, as well as the ways social support resources and marital quality may protect families from military life stress. Spousal perceptions of work-family conflict in relation to career satisfaction of their military partners were also examined. Service members with more deployment experience and better mental health were more satisfied with the military; while spouse employment outside the home and work-family conflict were associated with less satisfaction. Gender, marital quality, and social support moderated the relationships between stressors and military satisfaction, suggesting they may impact men and women differently. The findings demonstrate the need to focus separately on male and female service members' needs in order to improve their satisfaction and enhance retention.

References

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