



SR2COMMUNITYLINK

The Army SHARP, Ready and Resilient Directorate Newsletter

DOD Takes 3-Pronged Approach to Suicide Prevention

By David Vergun, DOD

The causes of suicide are complex, with contributing factors that can range from environmental to biological to social to psychological. And there is no one fix, said the director of the Defense Suicide Prevention Office Aug. 27 as she opened the 2019 Department of Veterans Affairs/Department of Defense Suicide Prevention Conference in Nashville, Tenn.

The Defense Department has taken a number of steps to address those factors, Dr. Karin Orvis said, focusing on three areas:

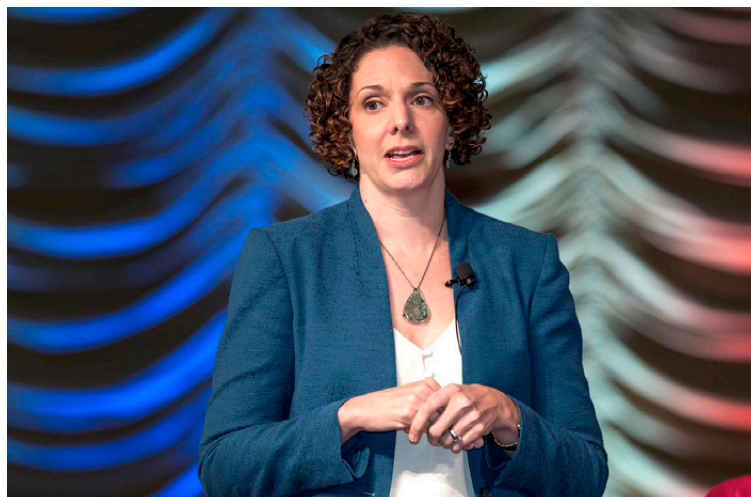
1. Data surveillance and reporting

Beginning this year, DOD will publish an annual suicide report. The first report, released Sept. 26, contains calendar year 2018's suicide counts and rates for

service members and provides data on suicide deaths among military family members from calendar year 2017. Regarding the data, "transparency and timeliness is of the utmost importance to us," Orvis said, adding that reliability and standardization of data are also important in compiling accurate reporting. As for data over recent years, Orvis said, she's "disheartened that the trends are not going in the right direction for our military community. We must do better," she said.

2. Program evaluation

Program evaluation includes outcomes, not only in terms of suicide deaths and attempts, but also in leading indicators such as unit cohesion, help-seeking behaviors and reducing barriers to care, Orvis explained.



Dr. Karin Orvis, director of the Defense Suicide Prevention Office, speaks at the 2019 Department of Veterans Affairs/Department of Defense Suicide Prevention Conference in Nashville, Tenn., Aug. 28. (Courtesy photo)

The department is also looking at promising practices in the civilian community that have been demonstrated to reduce

suicide. Those deemed effective are being started as pilot programs, with possible DOD-wide implementation, she said.

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Director's Column

New Initiatives Underway at SR2

Team,

In the last few months I have visited our SHARP, Ready and Resilient (SR2) teams across the Army, making stops at Army Materiel Command, U.S. Army Europe and U.S. Army Korea, to talk and field questions about our new organizational structure, which strengthens our capabilities through integration of programs while



Dr. James Helis

maintaining individual program expertise. At every stop, your dedication to our Army Total Force—Soldiers, DA Civilians and Family Members—was on full display. Thank you. As a result of your hard work SR2 continues to lead the way in advancing the personal readiness of our force, and I'd like to update you on our progress in the development of several SR2 Initiatives.

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R2 Performance Centers in Action

SR2 Strategic Communications

101st Leaders Test Their Mental Performance During PT Session

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. – The 101st Airborne Division Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Brian Winski, and Gen. Michael Garrett (right), Commanding General of FORSCOM, along with top leadership from Fort Campbell participated in an R2 physical training event as part of the Eagle Pre-Command Course (EPCC) in conjunction with Garrett’s visit to Fort Campbell. The R2 Performance Center facilitated the session for the leaders, including nearly 60 Battalion and Brigade Commanders and Command Sergeants Major. They received a hands-on capabilities demonstration consisting of physically demanding exercises followed by cognitive challenges led by Master Resilience Trainers-Performance Experts (MRT-PEs), who explained the purpose of each PT station from a cognitive perspective and related how mental training is tied to mission readiness.

(U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Brea Roland, 40th Public Affairs Detachment)



K9 Handlers Learn Stress Control In Simulated Building Searches

FORT STEWART, Ga. – MRT-PEs delivered two hours of performance training to working dog handlers from the 93rd Military Working Dog Detachment, July 31 to Aug. 1. The Soldiers, who frequently face complex and challenging real-world situations with their working dogs, were tested on their ability to control their physiology through deliberate breathing and cue words. Their stress response was tested during simulated building searches. During the training, the handlers were taught attention control and energy management to improve their stress response.



USASOC Spouse Symposium Includes R2 Training

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – During the USASOC CSM and Spouse Symposium, MRT-PEs led workshops teaching resilience and performance skills to Sergeants’ Major Spouses. The workshops, held July 29-31 at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, were organized into the themes of ‘challenging your mindset to create connections that count,’ ‘building connection through communication,’ and ‘the science of wellness.’ The intent was to prepare the spouses for the challenges of informal leadership roles, especially in light of the unique difficulties of the USASOC mission.



Workshop Teaches TF 1-28 IN How to Build Great Teams and Culture of Trust

FORT BENNING, Ga. – The Fort Benning R2 Performance Center conducted a three-day workshop on building great teams and culture for officers, NCO’s and junior enlisted Soldiers of Task Force 1st BN, 28th IN (TF 1-28) June 29 to July 2 at West Point, N.Y. The intent of the workshop was to increase cohesion, foster two-way communication, and promote a culture of trust within Task Force 1-28 IN. Two MRT-PEs facilitated the 20-hour workshop, focusing on enhancing Company cohesion and creating effective communication and trust. Soldiers also developed a glide path which included goals, milestones, and checkpoints to build, sustain and reinforce a new culture.



Building Safe Command Climates Combats Sexual Assault in Workplace

By Kari Hawkins, AMC

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala.— From a professional perspective, Gen. Gus Perna, commander of the U.S. Army Materiel Command, knows confident and happy employees who work in a safe environment where they are treated with dignity and respect are more dedicated to their jobs and more committed to the mission.

From an Army perspective, Perna is convinced a safe working environment builds unit cohesiveness, contributes to high morale and fosters trust—all essential to readiness.

But, from a personal perspective, the four-star general, who has nieces and granddaughters, said a workplace free of harassment, assault, intimidation, bullying and other negative behaviors is essential to the well-being of Army Families.

“We want our children to feel confident and follow in our footsteps,” Perna said.

No matter how he thinks about it, Perna said the Army’s SHARP program has a significant impact on ensuring a safe work environment, healthy and happy employees, and Army readiness.

Speaking to about 50 attendees at the AMC SHARP Summit Aug. 21, Perna thanked SHARP leaders for the information and support they provide employees to “create ink spots of excellence that will go through the organization. The goal is to have an organization where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, and an organization where we hold ourselves accountable to that. We are here because an organization of employees who trust each other is a better organization and that contributes to Army readiness.”

“Shaping a Culture of Trust” was the theme for the two-day AMC SHARP Summit, which was a synchronized effort across the AMC enterprise to bring together AMC senior leaders and SHARP program coordinators with local, state and federal advocates for sexual assault prevention as well as survivors of sexual assault and human trafficking to review and discuss issues pertaining to providing a full spectrum of SHARP support to AMC’s 190,000 employees. Guest speakers



Dr. James Helis, SR2 Director, said the SHARP program is about taking care of people. Helis was a guest speaker at the SHARP Summit at AMC Headquarters Aug. 20-21. (Photo by Doug Brewster, AMC)

included Pat McCay, director of the Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force; human trafficking and sexual abuse survivor Lynn Caffery, executive director for Safe Harbor for Youth; and sexual assault survivor Sherry Brown of Restoration Counseling Services. Even though the Army has instituted policies and programs to combat sexual harassment and assault within both its military and civilian ranks, the issue is far from gone in the workplace. At a recent meeting of the fifth annual SHARP Program Improvement Forum, it was reported sexual assault prevalence in the Army rose for women from 4.4% in 2016 to 5.8% in 2018. For men, the rate rose from 0.6% to 0.7%. It was reported that one in five women serving in an unhealthy command climate will be assaulted and that 24% of women serving in the Army report toxicity in their chains of command. For men, it’s 6%.

Experts at the SHARP forum noted a strong link between the health of a command climate and the incidence of sexual harassment with the likelihood that a sexual assault will occur. For Perna, ensuring a healthy command climate is key to confronting sexual harassment and assault in the workplace.

“We are getting better every day, but we are not where we need to be,” Perna said. “I think we have great pockets of excellence. They are a reflection of our current leadership. Those leaders are personally involved with holding people accountable. The consistency and depth of our SHARP programs have to go past the commander telling employees what they shouldn’t do. This is a difficult challenge and we have a lot of work to do.”

Also speaking at the summit was Dr. James Helis, SR2 Director.

“We can strengthen readiness by promoting a climate of trust. If we can improve the way we treat each other in our units, in the professional workplace, we can prevent negative behaviors,” Helis said.

“If we live the Army values, then we can fix a lot of the issues we are dealing with. We are really good at reporting, providing services to victims and holding perpetrators accountable. But your work is so vital to developing a command climate that keeps sexual harassment and assault from happening. At its core, the SHARP program is about taking care of people,” he said.



Dailey Oversaw 'Not In My Squad' Revamp On Last Days as SMA

By Antonietta Rico, SR2 Strategic Communications

ARLINGTON, Va.— Earlier this year, former Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel A. Dailey testified to Congress that the Army was expanding the Not In My Squad (NIMS) initiative in an attempt to change the problematic parts of Army culture and confront the problem of sexual assault and harassment in the military. In the months leading up to the end of his tenure, as Command Sgt. Maj. Michael A. Grinston officially became the new SMA Aug. 9, Dailey quietly oversaw the next iteration of his legacy program, changing the focus of the initiative from identifying culture problems in squads to giving squad leaders specific tools to make immediate changes.

“NIMS is the next step in creating programs that will empower our first-line leaders to identify and solve problems,” Dailey said. “The transition to NIMS is important as we continue to learn and evolve, just as we have always done for 244 years.”

NIMS, first fielded at the start of Dailey’s tenure as SMA in 2015, is a bottom-up approach to changing Army culture, and focuses on squad leaders as the linchpins to mitigating negative behaviors in their units. This approach complements top-down policy changes the Army has implemented. Originally spearheaded by the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic (now [CAPL](#)), the NIMS workshop is overseen by the Army’s SHARP, Ready and Resilient (SR2) Directorate, which has the ability to provide the workshop Army-wide through its 28 R2 Performance Centers. The change includes a transition to a more robust NIMS curriculum,



NIMS, fielded at the start of Dailey’s term as SMA, is a bottom-up approach to changing Army culture. (Photo by Brigitte Morgan)

including emphasis on giving squad leaders an ethical filter they can use for daily decision making which will enable them to build trust within their teams.

“We want to give them something tangible they can walk away with and implement in their squad,” said Casey Olson, Chief of Training for SR2. “We want squad leaders to feel empowered to take these skills and utilize them in their units, to grow as squad leaders, and to help the junior leaders below them get to the next level.”

The workshops will be taught by Master Resilience Trainers-Performance Experts (MRT-PEs), who are professionally trained in achieving behavior change and facilitating necessary conversations. The SR2 Directorate has been testing the new NIMS curriculum this summer with pilots in Houston, Texas; Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; and Fort Irwin, Calif. The pilot workshops have yielded feedback from squad leaders that has been incorporated into the curriculum. SR2 will field a final version of NIMS to Soldiers in Germany in December of this year. After the training in Germany, SR2 will evaluate the effectiveness of the NIMS

workshop at the 3-month, 6-month and 9-month mark to see if squad leaders have been able to effectively apply the skills learned. The evaluation will not only involve surveys of squad leaders, but also their platoon sergeants, who will be able to provide feedback on whether they have seen changes in the effectiveness and culture of their squads, Olson said.

Ideally, Soldiers will “take the tools they learn within the workshop and [when] they go back [to their units] apply it in relevant situations that occur on a daily basis so they can influence the culture and climate, build teamwork, make better decisions and increase motivation... to improve squad cohesion,” said Alex Rivera, Training Analyst at SR2.

So far, Soldiers who have taken the pilot workshop have provided positive feedback, stating the workshop gave them the opportunity for the self-reflection necessary to grow as leaders.

“You sit back and you look in the mirror and ask if you are doing everything that you are supposed to be doing,” said Sgt. Chad Alexander, with the 453rd Inland Cargo Transfer Company, a reserve unit from Texas.

“We all agreed if we want things to be better, we can’t continue to point fingers. It all starts with self.”

Immediately after the workshop, Alexander said he implemented a regular check-in with his Soldiers for physical training, instead of just waiting to check in during their monthly drill. Now they motivate each other to reach their PT goals by staying in touch throughout the month on social media and checking in via text and WhatsApp.

Staff Sgt. Casey Mann, with the 84th Engineer Battalion out of Schofield Barracks said the workshop “helps leaders lead,” making them more competent junior NCOs.

“I learned that our self-values don’t always align with Army values, which can cause internal conflict and hinder work,” Mann said, “Giving individuals the right tools to make hard decisions helps.”

While the Army already has professional and leadership education for NCOs, NIMS acts as a supplement, leveraging cognitive training SR2 MRT-PEs can deliver to make Soldiers more effective.

“I am extremely passionate about NIMS. It’s something that is very near and dear to me,” Dailey said. “Many of the Army’s large, complex strategic problems can be solved by individual first-line leaders committing to NIMS.”

To request a NIMS workshop for junior leaders in your unit, contact the R2 Performance Center closest to you or contact SR2 at usarmy.pentagon.hqda-dcs-g-1.list.resilience-training@mail.mil.



SHARP Focus

What Would You Say to a Sexual Assault Survivor?

FORT KNOX, Ky.— The Fort Knox Garrison SHARP program sponsored an “I Believe You” table at the Main Exchange July 24 to help bring awareness to SHARP issues. The table is a nod to the “Start By Believing Campaign,” which is a global sexual assault prevention campaign. Passersby were asked to write what they would say to a sexual harassment/assault survivor if they were to confide in them.

Right: Kathryn McLean writes her message to survivors.

(U.S. Army photo by Patrick K. Hodges)



TRADOC, MCoE Name Exceptional SARC of the Year at Fort Benning

FORT BENNING, Ga.— Maj. Gen. Gary Brito and Command Sgt. Maj. Martin Celestine, CG and CSM of the Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE), presented an award to Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Wisman June 28, in recognition of his selection as the TRADOC and MCoE 2019 Exceptional SARC of the Year. Brito presented the award to Wisman during the MCoE Quarterly Excellence Award Ceremony, a forum to recognize and reward outstanding service and support of military and civilian personnel who excelled in accomplishing the complex missions of MCoE. Wisman is now retired.



Fort Bliss Hosts 1st Armored Division SHARP Command Forum

FORT BLISS, Texas— Command Sgt. Maj. Jose Santiago, the senior enlisted advisor for 2nd Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, picks up literature and complimentary giveaways during a SHARP program command forum at Fort Bliss, Texas, Aug. 12. The SHARP command forum included command teams at all levels, ensuring they were informed and educated about complex SHARP issues in order to best support their Soldiers.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Matthew J. Marcellus)



NETCOM Gives Block of Instruction on SHARP to Airmen Supporting Army

FORT HUACHUCA, Ariz.— SHARP outreach comes in many forms. The Army Network Enterprise Technology Command (NETCOM) hosted a rock and canvas painting session at the beginning of August, with 11 members of the U.S. Air Force who were TDY at Fort Huachuca attending the Army Weather Support Class 19-008. These Airmen were motivated, using their off-duty time to paint messages and pictures of hope and inspiration for survivors of sexual assault. All of the students are now supporting Army organizations with first class weather support all over the world, so a short block of instruction about the Army’s SHARP Program was provided.



SARCs Must Be Aware of CATCH Program Requirements

Staff Report, SR2 Strategic Communications

The CATCH a Serial Offender Program (CATCH) is a new, confidential way for service members and their adult dependents to provide information about their Restricted Report of sexual assault and/or offender to DOD criminal investigators. CATCH allows DOD to capture allegations about offenders, assess the information, and then offer victims the opportunity to participate in the military justice process when they find there are other, similar reports. Criminal investigators compare CATCH entries against other CATCH entries, Unrestricted Reports, and other law enforcement databases that collect crime data.

Full-time Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) in authorized TDA positions, as well as Lead SARCs, have user accounts in CATCH. CATCH users must log into CATCH once every 30 days or their account

becomes inactive. After 45 days of account inactivity, the account is deleted.

It is critical that SARCs and Victim Advocates (VA) understand and explain the CATCH Program to victims. They must discuss basic information using the SARC Talking Points for CATCH. SARCs can give interested victims the info sheet and issue Restricted Reporters a username and password for CATCH system access, but SARCs and SAPR VAs cannot give hands-on assistance with the entry. Victims have to use their own computer to submit the CATCH entry. Refer eligible victims to a Special Victims' Counsel/Victims' Legal Counsel to answer investigatory or legal questions. SARCs and VAs must not provide advice on whether victims should participate in CATCH.

R2 Improving Spouse Employment in South Korea

By Alexandra White, R2 Program Specialist, Eighth Army

The Ready and Resilient (R2) program has recently supported an initiative to improve hiring procedures for military and civilian spouses stationed in South Korea. Significant barriers such as frequent transitions, lengthy hiring procedures, and specific federal requirements negatively impact spouses from securing gainful employment. These challenges are compounded in OCONUS environments as specific visa requirements limit employment opportunities outside of the installation.

"Many spouses have expressed frustrations with the hiring process and the Eighth Army command is passionate about addressing these issues," said Jose Villarreal, Eighth Army R2 program manager.

In response to voiced concerns, Eighth Army leadership and the R2 program hosted several spouse employment forums across the Korean Peninsula to identify issues and synchronize efforts for improvement.

To emphasize spouse hiring, Eighth Army published a policy letter which outlines the use of an Expedited Referral List. Eighth Army also authorized candidates for certain positions to complete drug testing and physical examination procedures after arriving in Korea rather than beforehand. Additional changes include consolidating all areas of Korea into one commuting area,



Spouses and community members voice spouse employment challenges in Korea. (Courtesy photo)

which reduces the restriction of certain positions that are only open to the local commuting area.

Currently under review is an initiative that would authorize applicants to use their Military Spouse Preference (MSP) selection 30 days prior to arriving in Korea. The current policy, DoDI 1400.25 Vol 315, allows spouses to apply 30 days prior to their report date. However, candidates must be physically located in Korea to claim MSP and accept an official job offer.

This initiative requires DOD approval.

The Army Civilian Human Resources Agency at U.S. Army Garrison-Humphreys has also created a resume repository where spouses can submit their resumes and supporting documents for future employment consideration.

Spouse employment is a priority across the Korean Peninsula as it significantly impacts family wellness and national security. Supporting agencies want to ensure that spouses have as many employment opportunities as possible while serving alongside their service member in Korea.



SR2 Initiatives Build Personal Readiness *SR2 INITIATIVES Continued from page 1*

Commander's Risk Reduction Dashboard (CRRD)

As of Aug. 20, the Commander's Risk Reduction Dashboard (CRRD) Increment 2 achieved initial operational capacity. The first generation CRRD gave commanders the capability to understand their Soldiers' individual readiness based on a report generated from their personnel data which flagged high-risk factors. Increment 2 adds predictive modeling, which makes use of the available data on more than 40 risk factors to forecast possible behavior outcomes, giving commanders the ability to proactively and non-punitively provide their Soldiers the help they need to sustain their readiness.

Annual Suicide Report

On Sept. 26, DOD released the first Annual Suicide Report, which included data on the suicide deaths of Soldiers as well as Army Family Members. The new report is part of the DOD strategy for suicide prevention, which incorporates surveillance and standardization

of the most recent data available on suicide deaths. This will increase transparency and provide Army commanders the most accurate and timely picture of how suicide is impacting their formations, so they can appropriately respond and plan individual and unit outreach.

Suicide Prevention Pilots

At the recent 2019 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs/U.S. Department of Defense Suicide Prevention Conference, held in Nashville, Tenn., Dr. Karin Orvis, the director of the Defense Suicide Prevention Office, announced ongoing pilots for suicide prevention. Orvis said the pilots are focused on problem solving and teaching emotional regulation skills and help-seeking behavior. We're also in the final planning phase of a 12-month, Army-specific pilot which will kick off this fall and winter at several installations. In addition, the Army's Behavioral Health Readiness and Suicide Risk Reduction Review (R4) pilot is ongoing at a couple of installations. Both pilots will enable us to assess the efficacy of new Leader Visibility

Tools, training and education initiatives, and awareness products.

Army Profession Forum

In December, SR2 along with the Center for the Army Profession and Leadership (CAPL), will co-host the 2019 Army Profession Forum in Arlington, Va. The forum provides an opportunity for leaders across the Army to discuss existing ethical challenges to the Army Profession, as well as share ideas on how to build a culture of trust, and how to reinforce and instill the essential Army Ethic and Values in our Army Total Force.

Along with these initiatives, SR2 Headquarters continues to work on reviewing and revising relevant policies and regulations to strengthen the resilience of our Army Family. By creating a culture of trust, promoting positive behaviors, and enhancing prevention efforts, we're creating a more a more ready and capable force.

Army Strong!
Dr. James Helis

New Approach Aims to Reduce Suicide

SUICIDE PREVENTION *Continued from page 1*

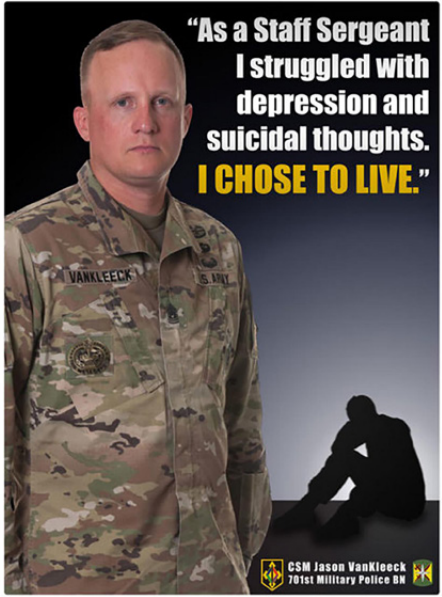
For example, several pilot studies are now being conducted, including ones focused on problem solving, teaching emotional regulation skills, and encouraging help-seeking behavior.

3. Private and public collaboration

"We can't act alone to prevent suicide," Orvis said, noting that DOD partners with other federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, academia and community organizations, looking at the best ways to support service members, Veterans and their Families.

For example, DOD works with National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention on areas such as building help-seeking behavior, hope and education for those in need. Also, DOD is partnering with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors to support Family members of a loved one whose death was by suicide.

The biggest collaborative efforts are with the VA and the Department of Homeland Security, focused especially on high-risk veterans who are transitioning out of the military.





'I Chose to Live'

Command Sgt. Maj. Jason VanKleeck, who suffered from depression after several fast-paced, high-stress assignments, is sharing his story for a new suicide prevention awareness campaign. He spoke at Fort Leonard Wood's Army Substance Abuse Program's annual Suicide Prevention Awareness event held Aug. 29. The event, themed "Choose to Live," focused on telling the story of people, like VanKleeck, who were able to get the support they needed to get through their depression.

"It does take leaders like myself to let those younger generations and even our peers know that 'it's OK; you have a story to tell,'" he said. "We have to be willing to be the example and not act like it doesn't affect us."

(From a story by Sam Campbell, at the Guidon).







Leaders Talk Strategies on Reducing Mental Health Stigma

Kyra Davenport, SR2 Strategic Communications

ARLINGTON, Va.— Nine- to-12-month combat deployments, roadside bomb explosions, longing for your Family, seeing your battle buddy killed. These can all be traumatic to Soldiers’ mental health. When that trauma occurs, Soldiers should feel secure in seeking mental and physical healing. That starts with military leadership creating a culture of openness.

The U.S. Army offers a plethora of programs to assist Soldiers with their mental health, but the biggest obstacle might be the stigma about mental health issues.

“Mental health stigma is when Soldiers (and people in general) feel that they are looked upon negatively when they have a behavioral health problem,” said Maj. Carrie Donoho, Chief of the Army G-1 Population Data Science Branch. “It limits people’s willingness to talk openly about behavioral health, and seek treatment when it is warranted.”

According to “Psychology Today” magazine, mental health stigma can be divided into two distinct types. Social stigma is prejudicial attitudes and discriminating behavior toward individuals with mental health problems. Perceived stigma or self-stigma is the mental health sufferer themselves internalizing these perceptions of discrimination.

The U.S. Army has a variety of resources to assist Soldiers, such as the Deployment Health Assessment Program (DHAP), Wounded Warrior Transition services, Psychological Health Center of Excellence, and the Sexual Harrasment/Assault Response and Prevention



“Reach Out A Hand.” (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Roger Jackson)

(SHARP) program. These are just a few of the Army’s efforts to ensure Soldiers know that leaders care about their well-being.

But what about mental health stigma? What steps are being made to break down that barrier?

“DOD and the services have engaged in stigma reduction efforts, and have worked to reduce stigmatizing wording in mental health policies, and face-to-face events at military installations in the U.S. and Japan, among other efforts,” said Lt. Cmdr. Evette Pinder, with the Psychological Health Center of Excellence.

There are several reasons why service members hesitate to seek mental health treatment:

- They think unit members may have less confidence in them.
- They worry they may be seen as weak.
- Others may treat them differently.

- Concerns about confidentiality.
- Seeking care would be embarrassing.

In the past 10 years, the Real Warriors Campaign has sought to increase help-seeking behavior by showing video profiles of service members who experienced mental health concerns, sought care, and reintegrated into their Family, unit, and mission. See these personal stories of strength at <https://www.realwarriors.net/personal-stories>.

These and other efforts have made a big difference in reducing mental health stigma.

“Studies at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research show a 50% decrease in behavioral health stigma in the past decade,” Donoho said.

“This is in large part because leaders are now more open and aware of behavioral health concerns among their Soldiers. The Army has done a great job at

reducing mental health stigma. We still have a long way to go, but we are definitely moving in the right direction.”

Military leadership at all levels plays a major role in removing mental health stigma.

“Leaders can talk about behavioral health openly, discuss statistics of the number of Soldiers who experience behavioral health problems, share personal stories about struggling with behavioral health problems, and give Soldiers time to get help when they need it,” Donoho said.

“Leaders can also talk about factors that contribute to these problems, such as loneliness, relationship problems, financial problems, postpartum adjustment, and transitions (moving, changing jobs). They also need to tell Soldiers where to get help and to not view seeking treatment as a liability, but rather as strength of character.”



Updated ABCP Encourages Soldiers to Utilize Performance, Health Experts

By David Gercken, SR2 Strategic Communications

WASHINGTON— The same resources and expertise the Army is using to build high performing units and ready and resilient Soldiers, can now be utilized by Soldiers, commanders and leaders in executing the Army Body Composition Program (ABCP) according to the updated version of Army Regulation 600-9. The Army is incorporating tenets of the Performance Triad: sleep, activity, and nutrition, and the capabilities of Ready and Resilient (R2) Performance Centers and Army Wellness Centers in taking a holistic and proactive approach to Soldier readiness and body composition management.

Soldiers are being encouraged to take a proactive role in managing their mental and physical readiness. Under the updated regulation, individuals do not have to be referred to the centers or enrolled in the ABCP to take advantage of their course offerings and experts, and those who fail the weight-to-height screen and are enrolled in the ABCP will receive the full support of these programs. The primary objective of the ABCP is to ensure all Soldiers achieve and maintain optimal well-being and performance under all conditions. The Army often operates in a dangerous, complex, and stressful environment. To perform and succeed in these conditions, Soldiers must maintain a high level of mental and physical readiness. Physical readiness is made up of an individual's fitness, endurance and overall health. Body composition, measured by the

weight-to-height test, is a key indicator of physical readiness and can directly affect a Soldier's ability to perform.

"Performance is highly dependent on the components of fitness and body composition is one of those components," said Carrie Shult, the Army Public Health Center's liaison to the SHARP, Ready and Resilient Directorate, DCS G1. "Individuals with desirable body fat percentages tend to exhibit increased physical strength and endurance and experience the lowest risks of injury, especially from weight bearing exercises. This directly impacts Soldier and unit readiness."

The importance of a comprehensive approach to managing body composition is stressed in the regulation with the inclusion of several key programs and resources for commanders and leaders to utilize. The Performance Triad promotes healthy lifestyle choices that combine the right amounts of sleep, activity, and nutrition to reach optimal performance and provide a foundation for a fit and ready force. Insomnia, which has been tied to weight gain, is up over 650% in the military since 2003, according to a study by the Sleep Research Society. R2 Performance Centers, staffed by Master Resilience Trainers-Performance Experts (MRT-PEs), offer individual and unit tailored human performance optimization and resilience training that enables Soldiers to improve performance and promote efficiency during physical training and sustain personal readiness. MRT-PEs can work directly with

Soldiers to develop personalized training plans specific to their needs. Army Wellness Centers (AWC), staffed with a full range of health educators, offer customized health coaching, advanced technology and standard instruction programs to support components of fitness. Units can also utilize AWCs to support and enhance their physical fitness programs. Under the updated regulation, commanders can request assistance from the AWC in training designated personnel in proper height, weight and body circumference methodology to assess body fat composition, conducting weigh-ins and body fat assessments, developing physical fitness programs and providing coaching on a number of physical fitness programs ranging from healthy sleep, nutrition and weight management to proper exercise and fitness techniques.

The Army is directly affected by changes in the physical fitness, diet and nutrition habits of the greater U.S. population. A study by the Council for a Strong America found that approximately a third of young Americans are now too overweight to join the military.

"Recruiting and retaining Soldiers who are fit and ready to fight is not only imperative for the Army, it's essential to the security of our Nation," said Sgt. Maj. Gabriel Harvey, the SR2, DCS G1 Sergeant Major. "The ABCP assists leaders at all levels in meeting these goals."

The updated version of AR 600-9, published on July 19, went into effect on Aug. 16.

2-Day Forum at Fort Benning Focuses on Curbing Sexual Assault

By Franklin Fisher, Army.mil

FORT BENNING, Ga. -- A two-day gathering of experts on prevention of sexual harassment and assault opened Sept. 4, focusing on what can be done to prevent sexual assaults from happening in the first place.

The first day of Fort Benning's third annual SHARP Advocate Forum began at 9 a.m. in the blue-carpeted Banquet Room of McGinnis-Wickam Hall, headquarters of the U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence.

The forum is focused specifically on what sexual assault response coordinators, known as SARCs, as well as SHARP advocates and others, can do to prevent sexual assault and harassment incidents before they happen, according to Michelle Fonseca, who heads MCoE's SHARP program.

That focus comes in the wake of a DOD Prevention Plan of Action issued in April and covering the years 2019 through 2023, she

said. It directs all of the armed services to put emphasis on prevention, Fonseca said.

"Up to this point, most of our SARCs and advocates have been focused on response," she said, "but response is focused on after an assault has happened. Now, DOD is focusing on prevention."

Editor's Note: For full article please follow the link: ["With Two-day SHARP Forum, Fort Benning Eyes Next Steps in Curbing Sexual Assault."](#)



Did You Know?



SR2 Directorate Organizational Structure

The SHARP, Ready and Resilient (SR2) Directorate, formed through the consolidation of the Army Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) and Army Resiliency Directorates, contains six divisions. The major functions of the divisions include:

SHARP: Provides and oversees program management, reporting and data analysis of Army SHARP-related incidents.

Strategy: Develops, evaluates, executes, and communicates strategy, policy, and long-term planning for SR2 efforts.

R2I and Training: Manages governance, training, deterrence, and prevention programs in support of

the SR2 mission.

Science and Research: Develops complex behavioral modeling and conducts research to inform programs and initiatives designed to cultivate ready, resilient Soldiers of character.

Assessments: Conducts evaluations, analytics, and systems development for the SR2 mission.

Operations: Provides oversight of day-to-day directorate tasks and future resource requirements in support of SR2 missions.

- SR2 priorities include:
- Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention
 - Suicide Prevention
 - Army Substance Abuse
 - Prevention

SHARP, Ready and Resilient Directorate

SR2COMMUNITYLINK

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SR2 Upcoming Events



OCTOBER RETIRED 4-STAR SPOUSES FORUM

October 9: SR2 will brief retired 4-Star's and their spouses on SHARP and resilience initiatives.

Location: TBD

NOVEMBER AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

November 2-6: APHA's Annual Meeting and Expo is considered the largest and most influential annual gathering of public health professionals.

Location: Philadelphia, Pa.

VSO/MSO/NFE QUARTERLY ROUNDTABLE

November 14: Stakeholders will receive a presentation on SR2 Suicide Prevention/Resilience programs.

Location: Arlington, Va.

DECEMBER ARMY PROFESSION FORUM

December 11-12: The Army Profession Forum engages leaders in tackling ethical challenges to the Profession.

Location: Arlington, Va.

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