



Department of Veterans Affairs Programs for Justice-Involved Veterans

Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO)
Conference, hosted by the Erie VA Medical
Center Behavioral Health Clinic

June 2, 2011



Defining Justice-Involved Veterans

- A justice-involved Veteran is:
 - A Veteran in contact with local law enforcement who can be appropriately diverted from arrest into mental health or substance abuse treatment;
 - A Veteran in a local jail, either pre-trial or serving a sentence; or,
 - A Veteran involved in adjudication or monitoring by a court
- Related issues
 - Reentry for Veterans being discharged from State and Federal Prisons
 - Disruptive Behavior Committees to establish individualized strategies for safe management of Veterans who are dangerous to other patients, visitors, or providers





Invisible Wounds

- Combat can cause invisible wounds to the brain, mind, and soul
 - Traumatic brain injury
 - Mental health conditions
- Both types of injuries can lead to
 - Poor judgment
 - Impulsivity
 - Difficulty in matching behavior to the context
- Behaviors attributable to these injuries
 - Can look like criminal behavior
 - Can be criminal





Estimated Arrest Rates- 2007

2007 adult population

Arrest rates

	Male population	Female population	Male rate (per 100,000)	Female rate (per 100,000)
Veterans	22,614,000	1,650,000	5,076	703
Others	85,264,300	113,024,700	9,817	2,255

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics



Implications

- Veterans are not more likely to be arrested than other adults
- However, Veterans were service members who were trained to be skilled in matters of life and death
- America has an obligation to provide treatment and rehabilitation for the invisible wounds of the brain, mind, and soul to decrease rates of “criminal” behaviors, arrests, and incarcerations



Role of the VA

- Requirements for VA Medical Center and regional activity focused on justice-involved Veterans
 - VA Medical Centers must provide outreach to justice-involved Veterans in the communities they serve
 - In communities where Veterans' justice programs exist, VA will take the initiative in building working relationships to see that eligible justice involved Veterans get needed care
 - Veterans courts
 - Mental Health courts
 - Drug Courts
 - CITs
 - In communities where no such programs exist, VA will reach out to potential justice system partners to connect eligible justice-involved Veterans with VA services
 - Judges
 - Prosecutors
 - Police
 - Jail administrators
 - VA Medical Centers must also ensure that VA Police located at their facilities have received training on Veteran-specific issues



Mental Health Conditions in VHA

Fiscal Year 2006

Depression	771,461	51.5%
PTSD	345,844	23.1%
Anxiety	286,264	19.1%
Alcohol	244,124	16.3%
Drug use	157,454	10.5%
Psychoses	153,245	10.2%
Bipolar	85,496	5.7%
Total	1,498,762	100.0%

Disorders add to more than 100% because of coexisting conditions



OEF/OIF Veterans

Seen in VA Medical Centers & Clinics from
October 1, 2001 through March 31, 2010

- Total 1,168,953
- VA Medical Centers & Clinics 565,024
 - 48% of returning Veterans
- Gender: Male 88.1%
Female 11.9%
- Mental Health Conditions
 - Approximately 45% of Veterans who came to VAMCs
- PTSD
 - Approximately 23% of Veterans who came to VAMCs



Frequency of Possible Mental Disorders among OEF/OIF October 1, 2002-March 31, 2010

Disease category	Total Number of OEF/OIF
PTSD	147,703
Depressive Disorders	105,882
Anxiety Disorders	87,622
Affective Psychoses	62,548
Nondependent Abuse of Drugs	50,273
Alcohol Dependence	28,801
Mental Disorder due to Organic Brain Damage	18,404
Sexual Deviations and Disorders	14,611
Mental Disorders (other)	14,250



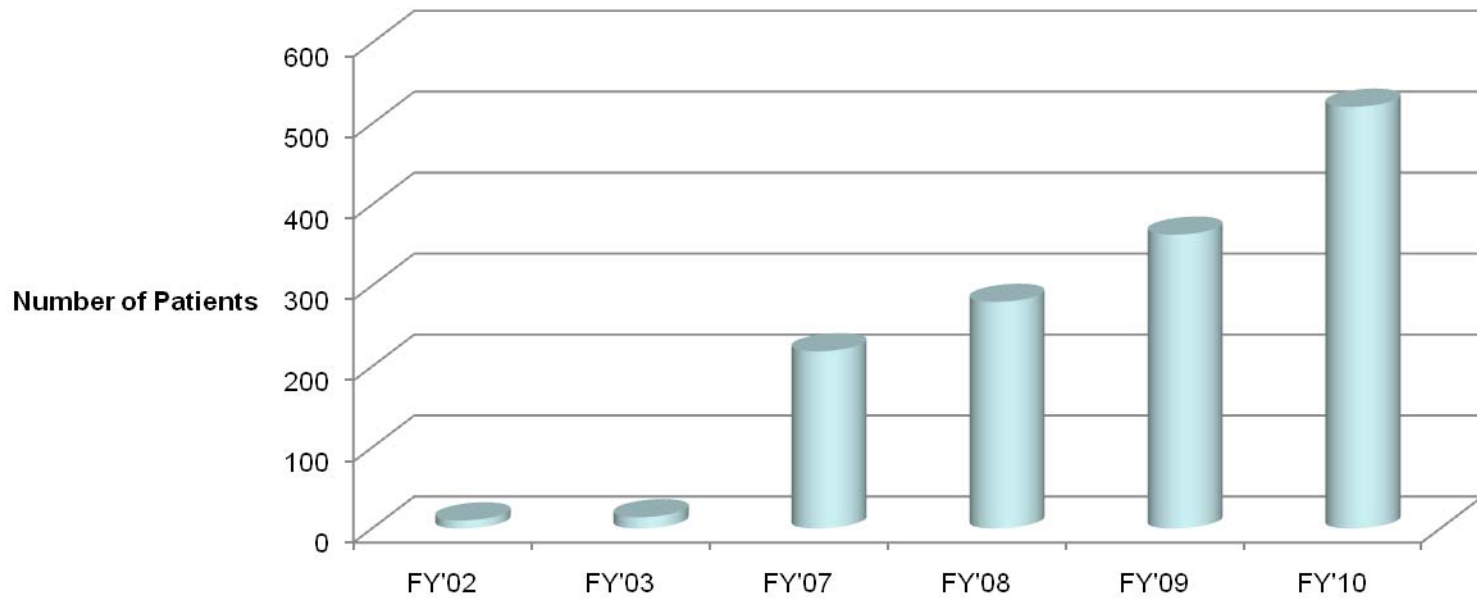
Erie VA Statistics: Demand for Services

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Unique Patients</u>	<u>MH Visits</u>	<u>SA Visits</u>	<u>Total Visits</u>
2001	1,762	6,987	1,838	8,825
2002	1,939	8,693	1,822	10,515
2003	2,054	8,976	1,877	10,853
2004	2,092	10,345	2,143	12,488
2005	2,218	11,636	2,194	13,830
2006	2,590	12,928	2,105	15,033
2007	2,851	15,022	2,122	17,280
2008	3,106	16,294	2,322	18,616
2009	3,319	20,595	2,692	23,800
2010	3,880	26,754	3,290	30,963



Erie VA Statistics

BH PATIENTS 18-30 YEARS OLD



FY'02	FY'03	FY'07	FY'08	FY'09	FY'10
10	14	219	280	363	521



Battlemind

Developed by the WRAIR Land Combat Study Team
(LTC Carl Castro)

- Battlemind includes combat skills and the combat mindset that sustained a soldier's survival in the combat zone
- However, battlemind may be hazardous to their social and behavioral health in the home zone





Non-defensive (combat) vs Aggressive Driving

- **In Combat:**
 - Driving unpredictably, fast, using rapid lane changes and keeping other vehicles at a distance is designed to avoid IEDs and VBIEDs.
- **At home:**
 - Aggressive driving and straddling the middle line leads to speeding tickets accidents and fatalities.





Targeted vs Inappropriate Aggression

- **In Combat:**
 - Split second decisions that are lethal in highly ambiguous environments are necessary. Kill or be killed.
 - Anger keeps you pumped up, alert, awake and alive.

- **At home:**
 - You may have hostility towards others.
 - You may display inappropriate anger, or snap at your buddies or NCOs.
 - You may overreact to minor insults.



Lethally Armed vs “Locked & Loaded” at Home

- **In Combat:**

- Carrying your weapon at all times was mandatory and a matter of life or death.



- **At home:**

- You may feel a need to have weapons on you, in your home and/or car at all times, believing that you and your loved ones are not safe without them.



Discipline & Ordering vs Conflict

- **In Combat:**

- Survival depends on discipline and obeying orders.
- Following orders kept you and those around you safe and in control.



- **At home:**

- Inflexible interactions

(ordering and demanding behaviors) with your spouse, children and friends often lead to conflict



Accountability vs Control

- **In Combat:**
 - Maintaining control of weapon and gear is necessary for survival.
 - ALL personal items are important to you.

- **At home:**
 - You may become angry when someone moves or messes with your stuff even if it is insignificant.
 - You may think that nobody cares about doing things right except for you.



Estimated Justice-Involved Veteran Population-2007

	US Number	Est'd % Veterans	Est'd Veteran Number
Probation	4,293,200	9.3%	399,300
Parole-Supervised Release	824,400	9.1%	75,000
Local Jail	780,600	9.3%	72,600
State Prison	1,315,300	10.4%	136,800
Federal Prison	197,300	9.8%	19,300
Total Correctional	7,328,200	9.6%	703,000
Adults Arrested	12,078,000	9.6%	1,159,500

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics



Incarceration in Prisons-2004

Rate per 100,000 adult males

Age	Veterans	Others
All adults	630	1,390
18-24	1,391	1,446
25-34	1,232	2,260
35-44	1,861	1,763
45-54	1,314	846
55-64	345	451
65 and older	76	105

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics



Types of Discharge- 2004

	State Prisons	Federal Prisons
Total number	127,500	12,500
Honorable	61.6%	65.3%
General (honorable conditions)	16.9%	15.9%
General (other)	3.1%	1.9%
Other than honorable	8.8%	6.4%
Bad conduct	3.0%	2.5%
Dishonorable	2.8%	5.6%
Other	3.7%	2.4%

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics



Veterans in Prison

- Older
- Less likely to be minorities
- More likely to have been married
- More educated
- More violent offenses
 - State (57.4% vs 46.8%)
 - Federal (19.0% vs 14.1%)
 - More likely to have known victim *
 - More likely relatives/intimates* (37.1% vs 21.1%)
 - Less likely to use weapon* (29.5% vs 37.8%)
- Less drug offenses
 - State (15.0% vs 22.1%)
 - Federal (46.3% vs 56.2%)
- Longer sentences
 - State (mean 147 vs 119 mos)
 - Federal (mean 138 vs 127 mos)

* State prisons



Veteran Treatment Courts: a growing movement

Operational Courts:

Alabama – 1

Alaska – 1

Arizona – 1

Arkansas – 2

California – 8

Colorado – 1

Delaware – 1

Florida – 3

Georgia – 2

Illinois – 7

Indiana – 1

Louisiana – 1

Michigan – 4

Minnesota – 1

Missouri - 2

Nevada – 1

New York - 7

Ohio - 3

Oklahoma - 2

Oregon - 1

Texas - 7

Utah - 2

Virginia - 1

Washington - 4

Wisconsin - 3

**Pennsylvania – 5: Alleghany, Berks, Philadelphia, Montgomery,
Lackawana**