






Women Warriors



1SG Pamela JB Cypert, USA Retired
Executive Advisor - Field Operations
Women Veterans Coordinator
Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

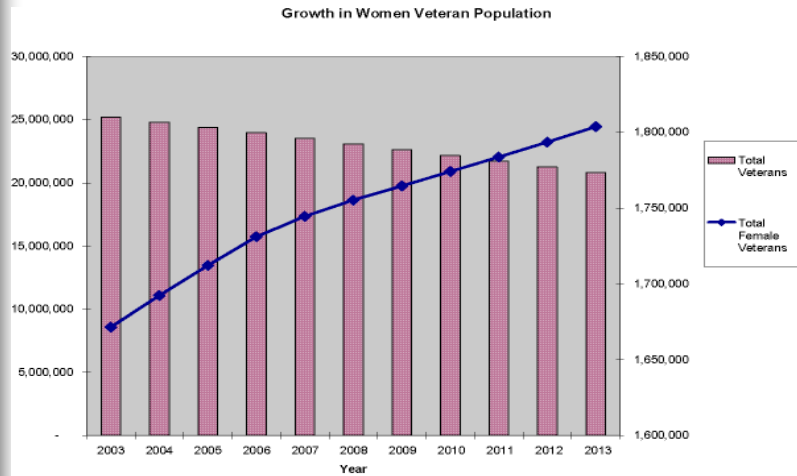



Women Service Personnel by Branch of Service

Branch of Service	Women as a % of Total Personnel	Number of Women	Officers	Enlisted
Air Force	19.6%	64,137	11,869	51,403
Reserve & Guard	17.6%	145,769	22,131	123,638
Navy	15.1%	50,008	7,736	41,364
Army	13.6%	73,902	13,539	59,683
Coast Guard	12.2%	4,950	1,160	3,790
Marine Corps	6.2%	12,290	1,171	11,119
Total	15.5%	351,056	57,606	90,997

DoD Personnel and Procurement Statistics: <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/index.html>

Women Veteran Trends



Race/Ethnicity Demographics of Separated Personnel Who Served in OEF/OIF

	Females		Males	
	(n=102,126)		(n=806,564)	
	#	%	#	%
White	58,395	57.2	571,188	70.8
Black	26,318	25.8	109,227	13.5
Hispanic	10,017	9.8	76,054	9.4
Others	4,094	4	25,344	3.1
Unknown	3,302	3.2	24,751	3.1

Source: FY2008, Third Quarter OEF/OIF Data, Han Kang, OPHEH

Women Veterans Are Younger

- **Average age of VA users**
 - Female veteran = 48
 - Male veteran = 61
- **Among women veterans returning from OEF/OIF:**
 - 85.3 are below age 40
 - 58.0% are between ages 20-29

VA Healthcare Utilization Among 94,010 Female OEF/OIF Veterans through 1st Qtr. FY 2008 Environmental Epidemiology Service

Areas of Concern for All Veterans

- ✓ **Healthcare** - medications, prosthetics, TBI, VA
- ✓ **Benefits** - Social Security, TRICARE, VA
- ✓ **Mental Healthcare** - PTSD, substance abuse, readjustment, marriage & family, inpatient
- ✓ **Education** - GI Bill, Voc Rehab, dependents
- ✓ **Employment** - resume, job training, networking
- ✓ **Financial Assistance/Housing** - shelters, home ownership, repair, modifications
- ✓ **Social Support** - automobile, dependents, travel
- ✓ **Legal Assistance** - custody, divorce, wills, POA

Readjustment Issues of Women Veterans

- Transitioning home and immediately resuming “mom” role
 - Differences for active duty, guard, reserve
 - Social support network near military bases vs. Guard, Reserve community based
 - Attachment disruption and parenting issues
- Transitioning active duty “job” roles to private sector: a step-down for women?
- Readjustment vs. PTSD Diagnosis

Expanding Population

High VA healthcare utilization by women who served in Operations Enduring Freedom & Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF)

- Over 102,126 Female OEF/OIF veterans
- 44.2% of women enroll
- Of these, 43.8% use from 2-10 visits



VA Healthcare Utilization Among 94,010 Female OEF/OIF Veterans through 1st Qtr. FY 2008 Environmental Epidemiology Service

Serving a Different Woman Veteran

- **Clinics serve needs of young, working women**
 - Access, flexibility of hours, use of technology
 - Address sexual health, family planning
- **Many have childcare responsibilities and eldercare demands**
- **Many are employed, difficult to get time off for appointments**
- **Adjustment and depression issues - high comorbidity with physical diagnoses**
- **Domestic violence and personal assault victims**

Fragmented Primary Care

- **Women's general health care and gender-specific health care often handled separately (67% sites) - inconvenient**
- **Too few primary care physicians trained in women's health**
- **Mental health care separate from primary care**

The Aging Women: WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and yes, Gulf War I

- Significant numbers over age 50 with largest subgroup from Vietnam Era
- Cardiac risk - number one for morbidity and mortality
- High prevalence diabetes and obesity
- Health concerns of peri-menopause and menopause
- Cancer screenings - mammograms
- Bone health: Osteoporosis risks, fractures

Aging and Women Veteran's Mental Health

- Increased incidence of Depression
- Increased suicide risk
- Losses as women outlive their male partners - partner, income, home
- Emergence of "buried trauma issues"

Challenge: Address Mental Health services for women & assess long term care supports

Gulf War I Women Veterans Health

- Fibromyalgia, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Dyspepsia → found to be more common in GWI deployed women than in non-deployed women**
- Gulf War I women had significantly more outpatient and inpatient visits compared to male veterans*

**Dept Veterans Affairs Study, 2000

*Iowa Persian Gulf Study Group, 1997

Mental Health Care

- Insufficient therapists licensed and experienced in counseling sexual trauma victims in VA system
- Option of selecting same sex therapists
- Same gender therapeutic groups
- Option to use fee-based services if appropriate care not available within VA system

Summary

- Shrinking total veterans population but a doubling of women veterans using VA healthcare
- VA must redesign primary care service delivery for women
- Communities must provide social support for WV's, particularly upon return from combat
- KDVA will assist veterans filing claims and accessing VA healthcare

Field Operations - KDVA

Judy Wiseman, VBFR

(502) 595-4447

judy.wiseman@ky.gov

- Name
- SSN
- Phone Number
- County

