Psychological Well-Being in A Deployed Setting

Surveillance Period:
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Objectives

To further clinical knowledge and to gain a better understanding of a U.S. Navy deployment:

- Recognize the unique stressors of a Navy Individual Augmentee Sailor
- Describe the factors contributing to a Navy Individual Augmentee Sailors psychological well-being
- Use the information to leverage civilian practice when treating post deployed Individual Augmentee Sailors

Disclaimer

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Mobile Care Team 7

Officer in Charge
Jean F. Fisak
Psych/MH CNS-BC
CDR, Nurse Corps

Assistant Officer in Charge
John L. Melton
PhD, Research Psychologist
LCDR, Medical Service Corps

Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge
Johnny S. Siegert
Psychiatric Technician
HM1 (IDW)

Introduction to the “Dirt Life”
Journey Downrange

Getting Settled

Amenities: Chapel, Postal Service, Morale & Welfare, Education Services, Beauty and Spa, 24/7 Dining, Gymnasiums.
Site Visit Preparations

Adventures of MCT-7

Afghan Bazaars (Retail Therapy)
MCT 7 Mission

Emphasize preventative mental health care, surveillance, and command consultation, including care for the caregiver at static medical commands, by engaging in routine site visits outside traditional medical settings in an effort to reduce mental health stigma and remove barriers to care.

Methods and Results

U.S. Navy Behavioral Health Needs Assessment (BHNAS)
Primary instrument used to gather information on quantitative behavioral health information risk exposures and leadership variables

Focus Groups
Qualitative discussion that will enhance the results of the BHNAS by giving Sailors an opportunity to expand on issues in the survey and other quality of life issues

Unit Level Consultation
Conducted individually or in a group Informal & Nonmedical

Individual Consultation
Focused on the member
Aimed at facilitation of services

Psycho-Education
Workshops to build strength & resilience
Operational Stress Control and Prevention
Combat & Operational Stress First Aid
Building Resilience
Sleep Hygiene

MCT 7 Sites Visited

[Map of Afghanistan showing sites visited]
**Major BHNAS Findings**

*Presented according to Mission Type*

**Staff/Single Unit Deployments**

Detainee Operations have historically been some of the highest stressed positions in the theater. However, throughout MCT 7's tour we saw comparable response levels of psychological distress from Sailors in staff positions and single unit deployments across theater.

**Detainee Operations**

Detainee Operations are the only unit that MCT has followed longitudinally. The last Trident group redeployed beginning of April. Their longitudinal results showed a decrease in the positive aspects and risk mitigating variables, while deployment mental health issues continued to increase across time.

**Medical**

Medical continues to report some of the highest reported levels of “contributing to the mission”. They also report high levels of boredom and continues to be a concern regarding skill retention for surgeons, especially during the low-fighting season.

**Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)**

PRTs have reduced from seven teams to three in May. PRTs continue to have some of the highest satisfaction with leadership, risk mitigating and positive deployment scores in Afghanistan. Similarly, they have some of the lowest levels of mental health issues though they are participating in a high op-tempo command.

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**PTSD Components**

**Intrusive Thoughts**

- **Avoidance Increased**

  - Legal/Detainee Ops: 30% (33%)
  - Medical: 19% (18%)
  - Paladin: 1% (0%)
  - PRT: 16% (11%)
  - Singles/Staff: 24% (15%)

**Arousal/Anxiety**

- Legal/Detainee Ops: 21% (21%)
- Medical: 18% (18%)
- Paladin: 0% (1%)
- PRT: 11% (11%)
- Singles/Staff: 15% (15%)

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**Present to Past Comparison**

- MCT 7 Teams
- Past Year's Team Result
- Present in Theater

**Mental Health Components**

**Acute Stress**

- Anxiety: 3% (3%)
- Depression: 3% (3%)
- Any MH: 11% (11%)

**Positive Screening**

- Legal/Detainee Ops: 9% (3%)
- Medical: 2% (1%)
- Paladin: 0% (0%)
- PRT: 6% (4%)
- Singles/Staff: 9% (3%)

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*Presently Reported in Theater*

- Medical: 1% (1%)
- Paladin: 0% (0%)
- PRT: 3% (2%)
- Singles/Staff: 3% (3%)
Personal and Unit Morale

Present to Past Comparison

Presently Reported in Theater

Officer Leadership

Enlisted Leadership
Leadership Tool

Informs Leaders of Deployment Strengths:
- Pre-Deployment Training
- Leadership Qualities
- Local Resources

Informs Leaders of Deployment Concerns:
- Seeking Care
- Troop Drawdown

Provides Leadership Recommendations:
- Best Practices for Training
- Leadership

Sailors are willing to volunteer for another deployment because of the unique occupational experiences.

Questions

References

- Photographs courtesy of Mobile Care Team-7; CDR Jean Fisak, LCDR John Melton, HM1 Johnny Siegert