



Uniformed Services University
of the Health Sciences
4301 Jones Bridge Road
Bethesda, MD 20814-4799

Release No.15-05-04

May 4, 2015

Contact: Sharon Holland, Office of External Affairs

Voice: 301-295-3578

Email: sharon.holland@usuhs.edu

Center for Deployment Psychology-Led Program Cited as Model for Mental Health Legislation

Bethesda, Md -- Indiana Senator Joe Donnelly introduced legislation recently to improve mental health services for veterans, and is citing a program that uses content developed at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) and speakers from the University's Center for Deployment Psychology (CDP) as the model for future endeavors.

Donnelly introduced the "Community Provider Readiness Recognition Act," which was inspired by the Star Behavioral Health Providers (SBHP) program. Since 2011, USU's CDP, the Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University, state National Guard and other local partners have worked together to develop the SBHP program in the state of Indiana with expansion to other states, currently including Michigan, Georgia, South Carolina, Ohio, New York and California.

SBHP is a tier-based continuing education program offering CEUs to clinical professionals through up-to-date workshops focused on the unique needs of the military community. SBHP aims to enhance behavioral health providers' scope of knowledge and skills for addressing the deployment- and reintegration-related concerns of military Service members, Veterans and their families. This distinct program promotes grassroots networking by providing training events in various parts of the state and actively involving the National Guard and the National Guard Bureau Directors of Psychological Health.

CDP faculty members create and maintain the curriculum for SBHP and deliver the workshops several times a year in each state. In addition, CDP faculty trains mental health professionals from local communities in the select states to deliver the Tier One presentations. CDP speakers and trainers are nationally-recognized subject matter experts in deployment psychology and evidence-based therapies. CDP presentations for SBHP and other programs have been consistently evaluated by participants as highly effective, both in content and competency.

Providers who complete all three tiers of SBHP have a greater understanding of military culture, deployment cycle stressors, combat-related conditions, and effective, evidence-based treatments for behavioral health problems including insomnia, suicidal behavior, and PTSD. SBHP also provides a searchable, confidential registry of participating providers who have completed these varied tier levels so Service members, Veterans, and their families know they are entering a therapeutic relationship with a provider who elected to receive additional training to care for their unique needs.

Additionally, the state National Guard checks each provider's licensing credentials to ensure all providers on the SBHP registry are current and in good standing with their particular licensing board.

Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way

"Today, less than one percent of the U.S. population serves in the U.S. military. As a result, few civilian clinical providers – doctors, nurses and behavioral health professionals – have even a basic level of knowledge about military culture and the stressors and rewards of military service. Working with its partners, USU's Center for Deployment Psychology created the Star Behavioral Health Provider program to bridge this gap in understanding," said Arthur L. Kellermann, MD, MPH, dean of USU's F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine. "In my view, any civilian healthcare professional who treats veterans, active duty service members and their family members should have this training."

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU), founded by an act of Congress in 1972, is the academic heart of the Military Health System. USU students are primarily active duty uniformed officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Public Health Service who receive specialized education in tropical and infectious diseases, TBI and PTSD, disaster response and humanitarian assistance, global health, and acute trauma care. A large percentage of the university's more than 5,200 physician and 790 advanced practice nursing alumni are supporting operations around the world, offering their leadership and expertise. USU also has graduate programs in biomedical sciences and public health committed to excellence in research, and in oral biology. The University's research program covers a wide range of clinical and basic science important to both the military and public health. For more information, visit www.usuhs.edu.

For more information on USU's Center for Deployment Psychology or the Star Behavioral Health Providers program, visit www.usuhs.edu/centers, Center for Deployment Psychology.