



Military Culture: Core Competencies for Health Care Professionals Training

About the Training:

The Veterans Choice Program is making it easier for thousands of Veterans to receive their health care from providers outside of the VA system. Many community providers are not trained or experienced in treating this unique Veteran patient community. To make it easier for health care professionals to understand Veterans and their military experience, VA and the Department of Defense have developed a free online continuing education course, Military Culture: Core Competencies for Health Care Professionals. The course is aimed at helping providers to better serve Veterans and Service members by increasing their knowledge and awareness of military culture and experiences. Erica Berger, an award winning clinical social worker in the District of Columbia, has taken the course and thinks it is a valuable resource. "We should all be aware of how our military is structured and what they experience as they serve." The eight-hour online course covers a variety of topics through interactive features, video vignettes, case examples and treatment planning scenarios. There are four modules and each offers two hours of free continuing education credits. The modules include topics such as military organization and roles, stressors and resources, and treatment resources and tools. Each of the modules within the course was developed using research, surveys and extensive interviews with Service members and Veterans.

Source: <http://www.va.gov/HEALTH/NewsFeatures/2015/July/Helping-Your-Provider-Understand-Military-Culture.asp>

Training can be accessed for free by following these steps:

1. Please refer to the system requirements on page 2 of this document before beginning.
2. Create an account on the TRAIN website by going to <https://vha.train.org/DesktopShell.aspx>
3. Read TRAIN policies and agree
4. Complete the registration form by filling out all required field
5. After you complete registration you can choose to be added to several different community of practice portals (you must select at least one portal).
6. Choose your professional roles and work settings (up to 3)
7. Demographic information
8. On the dashboard go to the upper right hand corner and type the name of the course in the search box then hit the magnify glass icon to search. **NOTE-** below you will find a menu of courses and their intended audience. You must register for each module separately. Although not mandatory it is suggested that the modules be completed in order.



System Requirements for TRAIN:

The following are minimum requirements for the TRAIN website. Courses launched from TRAIN may have additional requirements. Please review the course description for each course for any additional system requirements.

Minimum System Requirements:

- Web Browser Minimum Requirements:
 - Internet Explorer 9
 - Chrome Version 12
- Javascript enabled
Cookies enabled

Recommended System Specifications/Software:

- Internet Explorer 9
- Chrome Auto Update Enabled (Latest Version)
- Microsoft Office or compatible applications (Office 2000 or later recommended).
- Adobe Reader

Users running other browsers could potentially experience problems when using TRAIN or accessing courses posted to TRAIN. Run the Environment Checker for additional troubleshooting (See: [Test Your Environment](#) on the left-hand menu).

Please note that some courses posted to TRAIN may require the following software:

- Adobe Flash
- Java
- ActiveX



Military Culture: Core Competencies for Health Professionals Training Modules:

Purpose

These trainings provide information about the role of military culture in the lives of Service members, Veterans, and their family members. The focus will be on the different facets of military culture and how military culture can affect patients in various ways.

Module 1: Self-Assessment and Introduction to Military Ethos

Target Audience:

These courses are offered to all health care professionals and public health providers, with mental health professionals as the primary audience. These courses are intended to benefit any health care professional who provides care for Servicemembers, Veterans and their families, regardless of setting. This includes physicians---particularly psychiatrists, nurses, psychologists, social workers and counselors.

Outcome/Objectives:

At the conclusion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Identify factors that shape opinions about the military and military service;
2. Analyze potential prejudices and biases that you may hold related to military culture, Service members, and/or Veterans;
3. Evaluate the possible impact of military culture and military ethos on a Service member's, Veteran's, and/or Family member's sense of self, others and worldview;
4. Describe the characteristics and functions of military ethos and how it may impact clinical presentation and interactions you may have with Service Members, Veterans, and their families; and
5. Describe how military ethos may contribute to stigma, help seeking, and health behaviors.



Module 2: Military Organization and Roles

Target Audience:

These courses are offered to all health care professionals and public health providers, with mental health professionals as the primary audience. These courses are intended to benefit any health care professional who provides care for Servicemembers, Veterans and their families, regardless of setting. This includes physicians---particularly psychiatrists, nurses, psychologists, social workers and counselors.

Outcome/Objectives:

At the conclusion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Identify the key functions and roles in Military organizations;
2. Identify how Military organization and roles impact Service members' and Veterans' lives;
3. Recognize how Military organization and roles affect Service members and Veterans in need of healthcare; and
4. Determine how healthcare professionals can apply knowledge of military organization and roles to improve practice.

Module 3: Stressors and Resources

Target Audience:

These courses are offered to all health care professionals and public health providers, with mental health professionals as the primary audience. These courses are intended to benefit any health care professional who provides care for Servicemembers, Veterans and their families, regardless of setting. This includes physicians---particularly psychiatrists, nurses, psychologists, social workers and counselors.

Outcome/Objectives:

At the conclusion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Identify common stressors across contexts and populations;
2. Describe the stressors unique to the military deployment cycle from both a Service member and family member perspective;
3. Describe common stress reactions related to military life stressors; and
4. Identify military support systems and services that are commonly used to offset or ameliorate stress reactions.



Module 4: Treatment Resources and Tools

Target Audience:

These courses are offered to all health care professionals and public health providers, with mental health professionals as the primary audience. These courses are intended to benefit any health care professional who provides care for Servicemembers, Veterans and their families, regardless of setting. This includes physicians---particularly psychiatrists, nurses, psychologists, social workers and counselors.

Outcome/Objectives:

At the conclusion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Identify the core competencies that are necessary for military culture competence, and have a better understanding of your own strengths and weaknesses;
2. Discuss the role of stigma and other obstacles to treatment-seeking and compliance;
3. List some of the cultural vital signs necessary for gaining a better understanding of the impact of military culture on your patients; and
4. Identify ways to incorporate military cultural competency into assessment and treatment planning and provision.