

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT SPECIAL PROJECT

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Military Sexual Trauma Awareness

Military Sexual Trauma (MST) refers to a service member's experience with sexual assault or sexual harassment including any sexual activity against his/her will. Examples are:

- Forced or coerced sexual encounters
- Sexual contact or activities without your consent including when asleep or intoxicated
- Inappropriate sexual jokes or lewd remarks
- Unwanted physical contact that makes him/her feel uncomfortable
- Repeated sexual advances
- Comments about his/her body or sexual activities

- Offers of something in exchange for sexual favors or punishment for refusal of sexual favors

An estimated 1 in 3 women and 1 in 50 men have experienced MST. The rate is higher for women as there are so many more men than women in the military. MST can affect veterans of any gender and background and can have a lasting impact on their mental health. What can we do to help?

- Invite speakers to your meetings. Invite VFW members to hear the speaker.
- Distribute information bringing awareness to MST.
- Raise funds to help the VA to help veteran MST survivors.



Fundraising

We will partner this year with the VA Center for Women Veterans. They will be providing material distribution and speakers. Our fundraising will go to the CWV. It will be split evenly between the 7 VA Medical Centers in Florida. Our goal this year is to raise \$84,000.

Ways we can fundraise:

- Donate \$2 / member to Special Projects
- Hold raffles
- Put up bar decorations for donations
- Hold -THON- : walk, bike, rock, dance, bingo, etc
- Special events such as auctions, vendor fairs,
- Hold special dinners such as steak dinner, spaghetti dinners, Valentine dinner, St. Patrick's Dinner, etc.

Send checks to Dept. Treasurer

Veteran Women Health Care

Women veterans are a very diverse population. They vary in age, race, ethnicity, rank and branch of service. They are mothers, professionals and retirees. Only about 44% of women veterans are enrolled in VA Health Care. They are not utilizing their earned benefits.

Women veterans have many of the same needs as men veterans however, they have their own needs. Some of them include:

- Chronic pain
- Musculoskeletal disorders
- Mental Health Wellness

- Obesity
- Cardiovascular
- Breast cancer
- Maternity care
- Gynecological care
- Fertility Services

These services are provided by VA Center for Women Veterans (CWV). The CWV serves as an advocate for cultural transformation and raise awareness of the responsibility to treat women Veterans.

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