Exploring Ways for Veterans to Access Mental Health Services in the VA

NaTasha Allen
Outreach Coordinator
Indianapolis Vet Center
Welcoming Home Combat Veterans and Their Families
Getting Started

A Quick Survey

“Has anyone heard of a Vet Center?”
Vet Center History

- In 1979, Congress mandated the department of Veterans Affairs to establish outreach centers for Vietnam Veterans and their families.

- Service now extended to all war zone vets and sexual harassment/assault victims of any era.

- Goal is to provide a broad range of counseling, outreach and referral services, to help Veterans make a satisfying post-war readjustment to civilian life.
Currently there are over 300 Vet Centers nationwide whose mission is to provide a broad range of counseling, outreach, and referral services to assist Veterans and family members overcome the readjustment problems associated with war and personal trauma.
Our Mission

as a Vet Center, is to serve Veterans and their families by providing a continuum of quality care that adds value for Veterans, families, and communities. Care includes: professional readjustment counseling, community education, outreach to special populations, brokering of services with community agencies, and providing a key access link between Veterans and other services within U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
Our Mission: (cont’d)

• We are the people IN THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS WHO WELCOME HOME WAR VETERANS WITH HONOR BY PROVIDING QUALITY READJUSTMENT SERVICES IN A CARING MANNER, ASSISTING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS TOWARD A SUCCESSFUL POSTWAR ADJUSTMENT IN OR NEAR THEIR COMMUNITIES.

• No Cost and Confidential
What Does the Vet Center Offer?

• A safe place to talk
• Confidentiality
• Counselors who have experienced combat themselves
• Flexibility of hours
• Individual counseling
• Group counseling
• Marital and family counseling

• Employment guidance
• Liaison with the VA
• Benefits Assistance
• Military Sexual Trauma counseling
• Bereavement counseling
• Drug and alcohol counseling
• An ability to be seen on a walk-in basis
Activated Reservists, National Guard members and Service Members from all the Military Branches are eligible who served on active duty in a theater of combat operations and have been discharged under honorable or general conditions.
Who We Serve

Eligibility:

- Military Sexual Trauma/Harassment Counseling
  – Veterans of both sexes, all eras.
- Bereavement – Parents, Spouses and Children of Armed Forces personnel who died in the service of their country. Family members of Reservists and National Guardsmen who die while on duty are included.
Combat Operations:

**OEF: OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM**
Afghanistan combat zone. Includes the surrounding countries and all other GWOT nations except for OIF/OND. Combat Operations began on 7 October 2001 continuing through

**OIF: OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM**

**OND: OPERATION NEW DAWN**
Formerly OIF, beginning 1 Sept 2010 to 15 December 2011.

**GWOT: GLOBAL WAR ON TERROISM**
Broad term for numerous Global locations. Matching OEF/OIF/OND.
Indiana Vet Centers

Indianapolis Vet Center  8330 Naab Rd. Suite 103
Indianapolis, IN 46260
317-988-1600

Fort Wayne Vet Center 5800 Fairfield Ave. Suite 265
Ft. Wayne, IN 46807
260-460-1456

Evansville Vet Center 311 N. Weinbach Ave.
Evansville, IN 47711
812-473-5993

NorthWest Vet Center 107 E. 93rd Ave
Crown Point, IN 46307
219-736-5633

South Bend Vet Center 4727 Miami St.
South Bend, IN 46614
574-231-8579
What unique services does the Vet Center offers?

- Bereavement counseling
- Saturday hours & late week-day hours
- Outreach within the urban & rural communities - reaching the Veteran where they are
- Walk-in appointments
- Easy accessibility on bus route, with no parking restrictions
Groups Offered at Vet Center
Referral

- Vet Center Referral Form
- DD214
- Disability Information (if applicable)
- Other relevant information (i.e. medication list, treatment reports, etc.)
Mobile Vet Center
Outreach Motor Speedway

Mobile Vet Center
- Mobile Vet Center Driver:
- William (Bill) Moylan
- 317-988-1605
Indy Vet Center staff supporting our Veterans

June Watts, LMFT supporting our Veteran on the left. NaTasha Allen supporting our Veteran on the bottom right.
Indianapolis Vet Center

Staff Team:

Melanie Harris, ACSW - Team Leader
Tina Milam – Office Manager (PSA)

Counselors:
Keith Watts, LCSW
June Watts, LMFT
Terry Randall, LCSW

MVC Driver
William (Bill) Moylan

Outreach Coordinator:
NaTasha Allen, BSW, MPA

www.vetcenter.va.gov
Questions & Answers?
Thank You 😊!

Indianapolis Vet Center Team