

Much has been said about the challenges that the veterans are facing during the transition to civilian life. Moreover, many of these patriots have struggled to find their rightful place in today's complex society. And while many researchers and organizations have used significant funds on studies and reports that underline the reasons, the reality is that the world is evolving and new challenges are arising. A significant problem that has created many barriers for veterans that need to transition to civilian life has been the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, this article will provide some of the main issues such as preventing suicide of veterans during the current pandemic.

Underestimated Issue

The current pandemic received a lot of media attention. Moreover, there is also growing talk about the profound impacts on population mental health and suicide risk, and could have lingering effects on everyone. The harsh reality is that some military veterans are already at heightened risk of psychiatric disorders and substance. Moreover, there have been cases of suicide during 2020. For instance, a highly decorated Marine veteran who lost a leg during combat operations in Afghanistan committed a suicide which was related with the social isolation caused by the ongoing pandemic.

The second notable problem is the fact that the prospect of mental health treatment and support have been neglected

Unfortunately, mental health treatment may not be prioritized at this time due to overcrowded and overwhelmed healthcare systems, and some hospitals turning people away without appointments. Mental health professionals should take a proactive approach and conduct frequent and regular outreach, especially with military veterans who have a history of suicidal behavior or attempts. Military veterans should be encouraged to stay in touch with their mental health providers, and engage in social contact with family, friends, and other veterans. Mental health treatment needs to be adjusted to accommodate the use of technology. In addition, there should be more crisis helplines staffed by mental health professionals with knowledge of military veteran suicide risk factors, and evidence-based online mental health resources freely available on a large scale.

We must work to get back to more normal social interaction. One of the largest risk factors for suicide in the PTSD population is social isolation. You can help with this, if you know a veteran give them a call either on the phone or via a video call. Get in contact with your local VSO (Veterans Service Organization) to see how you can help veterans in your area. Our veterans have sacrificed so much for us, the least that we can do is provide them with a few minutes of social interaction.