

Elements of the Report of the DOD Mental Health Task Force

From Section 723 (c) (3), FY2006 National Defense Authorization Act:

ELEMENTS. – The assessment and recommendations (including recommendations for legislative or administrative action) shall include measures to improve the following:

(A) The awareness of the potential for mental health conditions among members of the Armed Forces.

(B) The access to and efficacy of existing programs in primary care and mental health care to prevent, identify, and treat mental health conditions among members of the Armed Forces, including programs for and with respect to forward-deployed troops.

(C) Identification and means to evaluate the effectiveness of pilot projects authorized by section 722 with the objective of improving early diagnosis and treatment of post traumatic stress disorder and other mental health conditions.

(D) The access to and programs for family members of members of the Armed Forces, including family members overseas.

(E) The reduction or elimination of barriers to care, including the stigma associated with seeking help for mental health related conditions, and the enhancement of confidentiality for members of the Armed Forces seeking care for such conditions.

(F) The awareness of mental health services available to dependents of members of the Armed Forces whose sponsors have been activated or deployed to a combat theater.

(G) The adequacy of outreach, education, and support programs on mental health matters for families of members of the Armed Forces.

(H) The early identification and treatment of mental health and substance abuse problems through the use of internal mass media communications (including radio and television) and other education tools to change attitudes within the Armed Forces regarding mental health and substance abuse treatment.

(I) The efficacy of programs and mechanisms for ensuring a seamless transition from care of members of the Armed Forces on active duty for mental health conditions through the Department of Defense to care for such conditions through the Department of Veterans Affairs after such members are discharged or released from military, naval, or air service.

(J) The availability of long-term follow-up and access to care for mental health conditions for members of the Individual Ready Reserve and the Selective Reserve and for discharged, separated, or retired members of the Armed Forces

(K) Collaboration among organizations in the Department of Defense with responsibility for or jurisdiction over the provision of mental health services.

(L) Coordination between the Department of Defense and civilian communities, including local support organizations, with respect to mental health services.

(M) The scope and efficacy of curricula and training on mental health matters for commanders in the Armed Forces.

(N) The efficiency of pre- and post-deployment mental health screening, including mental health screenings for members who have experienced multiple deployments.

(O) The effectiveness of mental health programs provided in languages other than English.

(P) Such other matters as the task force deems appropriate.

Sec. 735. Additional Elements of Assessment of Department of Defense Task Force on Mental Health Relating to Mental Health Members who were deployed in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Section 723© of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 (Public Law 109-163; 119 Stat. 3348) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph.

Mental Health needs of members who were deployed in OIF or OEF. As part of the assessment required by paragraph (1) of the efficacy of mental health services provided to members of the Armed Forces by the Department of Defense, the task force shall consider the specific needs with respect to mental health of members who were deployed in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom upon their return from such deployment, including the following:

(A) An identification of mental health conditions and disorders (including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, suicide attempts and suicide) occurring among members who have undergone multiple deployments in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom.

(B) An evaluation of the availability to members of assessments under the Mental Health Self-Assessment Program of the Department of Defense to ensure the long-term availability of the diagnostic mechanisms of the assessment to detect mental health conditions that may emerge in such members over time.

(C) The availability of programs and services under the Mental Health Self-Assessment Program to address the mental health of dependent children of members who were deployed in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom.

(D) Recommendations on mechanisms for improving the mental health services available to members who were deployed in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom, including members who have undergone multiple deployments.