

Deployment Health Assessments

U.S. Armed Forces

December 2017

(Data through November 2017)

Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch

Update: Deployment Health Assessments, U.S. Armed Forces, December 2017

Since January 2003, pronounced fluctuations in the monthly numbers of pre- and post-deployment health assessment (PDHA) forms transmitted to the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch (AFHSB) generally have corresponded to times of departure and return of large numbers of service members who deployed. Between April 2006 and November 2017, the number of post-deployment health reassessment (PDHRA) forms per month ranged from 5,708 to 36,863 (Figure 1). The number of pre-deployment health assessment forms transmitted to the AFHSB during November 2017 (15,103) was the lowest monthly total since November 2015 (Table 1, Figure 1). The rolling 1-year averages of monthly numbers of PDHRA forms during the most recent 21 months stayed below 10,000 and ranged from 8,858 to 9,909 (data not shown). For the purposes of this report about service members' responses to the assessment questions, it is important to note that the denominator is the total number of service members who completed deployment-related assessments, not the total number of service members eligible for the assessments.

During the past 12 months, the percentages of total returned deployers who rated their health as either "fair" or "poor" ranged from 6.8% to 8.8% on PDHA questionnaires and from 7.3% to 9.6% on PDHRA questionnaires (Figure 2). The percentages of total service members who rated their health as either "fair" or "poor" on pre-deployment questionnaires during this period varied between 3.2% and 4.3%.

In general, the percentages of "health concerns" and "exposure concerns" self-reported on PDHA and PDHRA forms were higher among reserve component members than among active component members (Table 2, Figure 3). Unlike their counterparts in the other services, service members in the active component of the Marine Corps were almost one and a half times as likely to report exposure concerns 3–6 months after deployment, compared to the time of their return from deployment. In addition, active component Marine Corps members were approximately twice as likely to report two or more PTSD symptoms at the time of the PDHRA compared to the time of the PDHA (Table 2).

At the time of return from deployment, 17.2% of active component and 15.0% of reserve component service members reported any depression symptoms. Service members in the active and reserve components were more than 4 and 14 times as likely, respectively, to receive a mental health referral at the time of the PDHRA, compared to the time of return from deployment. Moreover, at the time of the PDHRA, reservists were more than two and a half times as likely to receive a mental health referral as members of the active component (Table 2).

Figure 1. Numbers of deployment health assessment and reassessment forms, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, January 2003–November 2017

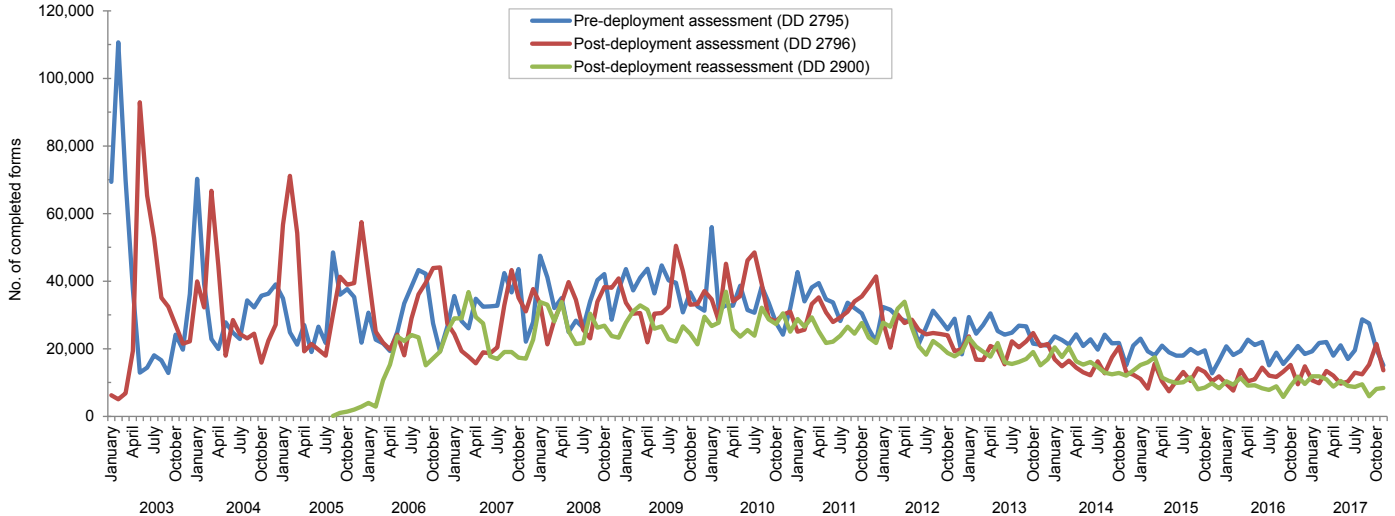
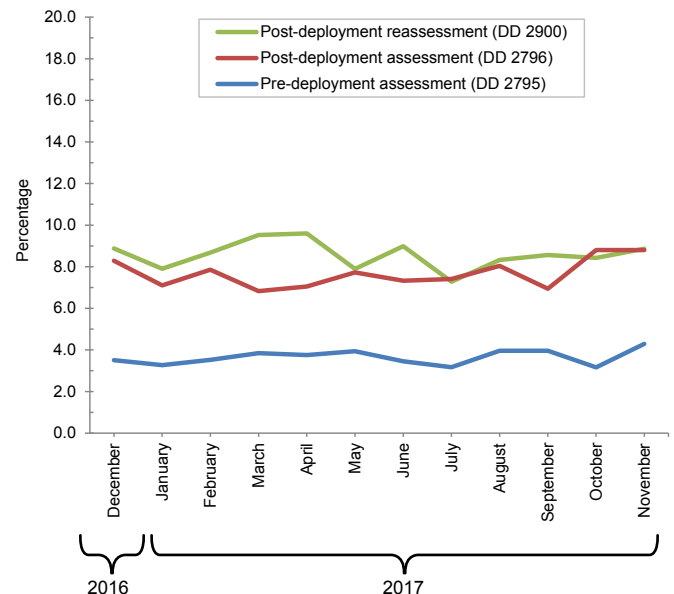


Table 1. Number of deployment-related health assessment forms, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, December 2016–November 2017

	Pre-deployment assessment DD 2795		Post-deployment assessment DD 2796		Post-deployment reassessment DD 2900	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	247,905	100.0	156,105	100.0	112,775	100.0
Average	20,659		13,009		9,398	
2016						
December	18,408	7.4	14,788	9.5	9,564	8.5
2017						
January	19,227	7.8	10,694	6.9	11,855	10.5
February	21,695	8.8	9,755	6.2	11,821	10.5
March	21,996	8.9	13,379	8.6	10,908	9.7
April	17,966	7.2	12,024	7.7	8,755	7.8
May	21,035	8.5	9,653	6.2	10,410	9.2
June	16,978	6.8	10,223	6.5	8,960	7.9
July	19,534	7.9	12,881	8.3	8,644	7.7
August	28,656	11.6	12,384	7.9	9,468	8.4
September	27,473	11.1	15,286	9.8	5,884	5.2
October	19,834	8.0	21,388	13.7	8,083	7.2
November	15,103	6.1	13,650	8.7	8,423	7.5

Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System (DMSS) as of 07-DEC-2017
Prepared by Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch (AFHSB)

Figure 2. Percentages of deployment health assessment forms with self-assessed health status rated as either "fair" or "poor," by month, U.S. Armed Forces, December 2016–November 2017



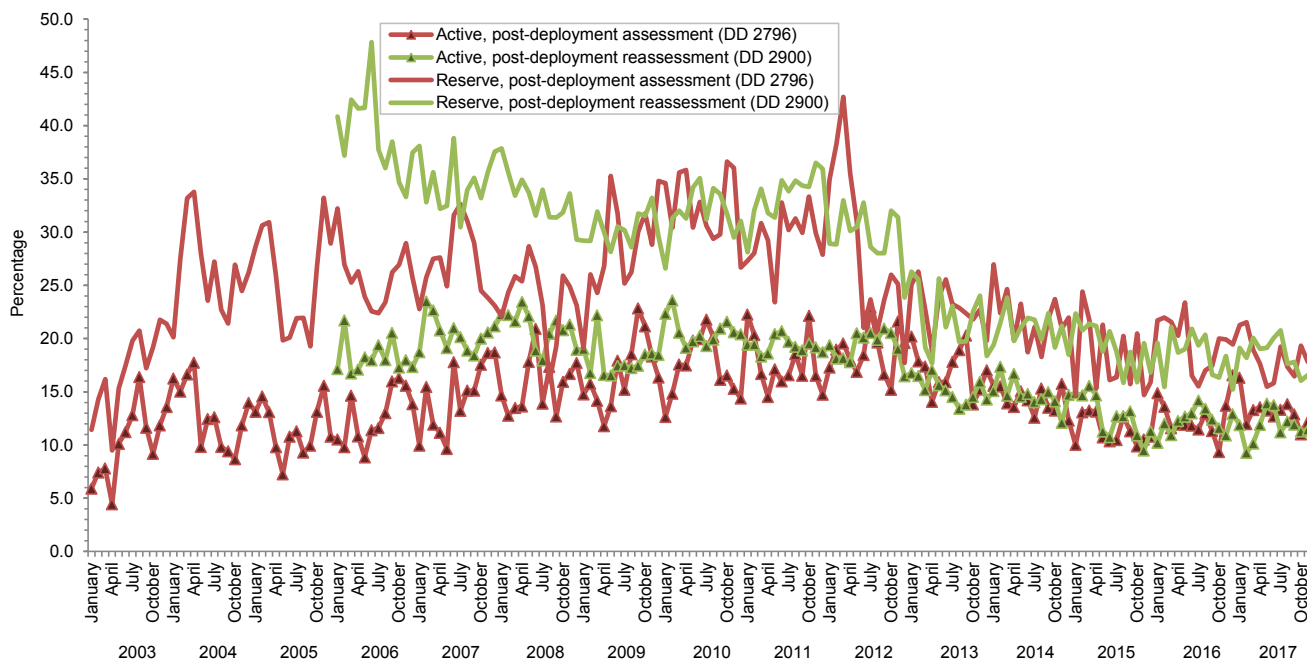
Data Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System

Table 2. Percentage of service members who endorsed selected questions or received referrals on health assessment forms, U.S. Armed Forces, December 2016–November 2017

	Army			Navy			Air Force			Marine Corps			All active component service members		
	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900
Active component	n= 107,779	n= 53,662	n= 37,086	n= 6,055	n= 7,103	n= 5,829	n= 36,839	n= 33,761	n= 28,873	n= 16,403	n= 14,456	n= 9,436	n= 167,076	n= 108,982	n= 81,224
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
General health "fair" or "poor"	5.5	10.1	12.0	2.0	7.7	6.0	1.4	3.5	3.7	2.6	5.6	8.2	4.2	7.3	8.2
Health concerns, not wound or injury	6.4	19.5	14.9	3.9	13.4	9.2	3.2	9.2	7.4	3.4	9.0	8.4	5.3	14.5	11.1
Health worse now than before deployed	na	73.1	76.9	na	72.4	74.8	na	62.9	71.1	na	68.7	77.5	na	69.3	74.8
Exposure concerns	na	14.2	13.1	na	16.5	18.0	na	12.4	8.8	na	8.6	12.0	na	13.1	11.8
PTSD symptoms (two or more)	na	6.4	8.4	na	9.0	6.8	na	2.3	3.0	na	2.8	5.4	na	4.8	6.0
Depression symptoms (any)	na	21.4	22.4	na	23.3	19.5	na	9.2	9.3	na	16.7	19.2	na	17.2	17.2
Referral indicated by provider (any)	5.4	18.9	14.6	9.1	28.3	19.8	6.1	14.5	11.6	4.3	20.1	14.7	5.6	18.3	13.9
Mental health referral indicated ^a	1.6	2.9	12.4	1.1	6.3	16.5	1.0	1.8	9.8	0.6	1.8	12.4	1.3	2.7	11.8
Medical visit following referral ^b	99.2	99.4	98.8	93.5	91.3	87.9	98.3	99.7	99.1	86.5	92.4	91.4	97.5	97.5	97.1
	Army			Navy			Air Force			Marine Corps			All reserve component service members		
	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900	Pre-deploy DD2795	Post-deploy DD2796	Reassessmt DD2900
Reserve component	n= 33,331	n= 22,689	n= 16,644	n= 2,941	n= 2,169	n= 2,372	n= 14,379	n= 12,702	n= 10,858	n= 922	n= 571	n= 537	n= 51,573	n= 38,131	n= 30,411
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
General health "fair" or "poor"	1.6	10.1	12.5	0.6	10.8	8.9	1.1	4.6	4.7	0.9	7.4	7.8	1.4	8.3	9.3
Health concerns, not wound or injury	2.5	21.7	18.4	1.6	35.1	10.6	1.8	9.6	5.4	2.6	21.9	5.6	2.3	18.4	12.9
Health worse now than before deployed	na	70.8	77.3	na	71.1	74.6	na	67.0	72.3	na	77.9	76.4	na	69.7	75.3
Exposure concerns	na	18.3	21.6	na	38.0	32.9	na	14.3	9.3	na	25.2	21.4	na	18.2	18.1
PTSD symptoms (two or more)	na	6.3	10.4	na	7.1	9.1	na	1.5	2.3	na	5.8	10.4	na	4.8	7.4
Depression symptoms (any)	na	18.1	20.3	na	21.1	20.8	na	8.1	7.3	na	19.6	20.3	na	15.0	15.7
Referral indicated by provider (any)	3.2	21.4	40.3	4.1	40.6	32.1	3.6	15.5	19.2	5.6	35.6	29.6	3.4	20.8	31.9
Mental health referral indicated ^a	0.7	2.5	39.6	0.5	4.7	31.6	0.5	1.3	18.9	1.4	3.0	29.4	0.6	2.2	31.4
Medical visit following referral ^b	85.7	99.5	49.4	100.0	99.0	60.2	73.1	79.6	62.9	68.4	69.0	37.7	82.4	93.7	53.3

PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder
^aIncludes behavioral health, combat stress and substance abuse referrals.
^bRecord of inpatient or outpatient visit within 6 months after referral.

Figure 3. Percentages of service members with completed assessments who endorsed exposure concerns on post-deployment health assessments or reassessments, by component, by month, U.S. Armed Forces, January 2003–November 2017



Data Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System