

The Veterans Metrics Initiative: Linking Program Components to Post-Military Well-Being Study (TVMI)

Data Findings for Military Sexual Trauma

Problem Statement

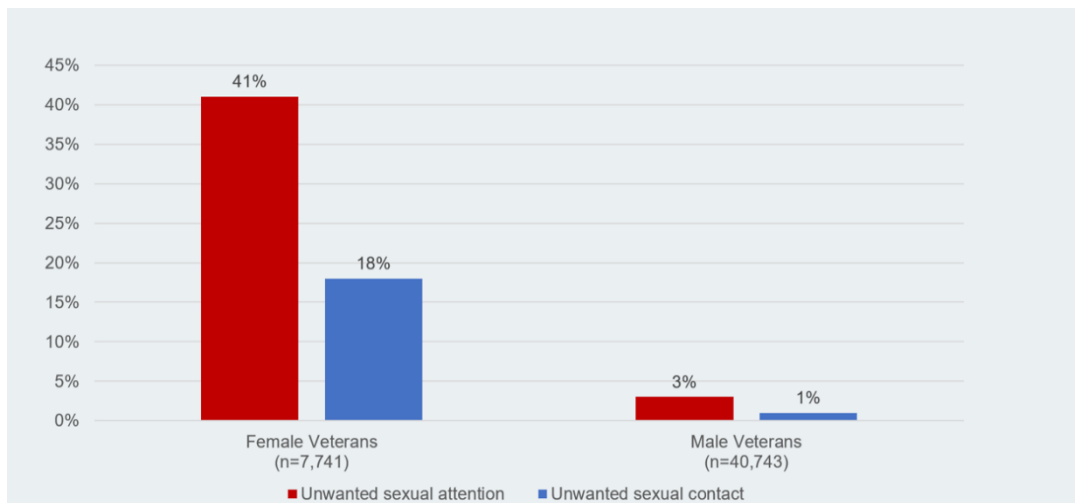
Unwanted sexual attention and contact is a pervasive issue in the U.S. military.

TVMI Military Sexual Trauma Findings

The Veteran Metrics Initiative (TVMI) study examined veterans longitudinally (over time) and holistically (across many outcomes). In regard to military sexual trauma (MST), the study found the following:

- 41% of the female veterans in the representative sample of post-9/11 veterans reported receiving unwanted sexual attention, and 17.5% reported receiving unwanted sexual contact during their military service.
- 3.2% of male veterans in the sample reported they received unwanted sexual attention, and 1.1% reported unwanted sexual contact during their military service.
- The TVMI rate was higher than the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) screening rate of 1 in 3 for women and 1 in 50 for men (https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/mst_general_factsheet.pdf).
- The rate within the TVMI sample is consistent with other published research (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30415636/>; <https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/article/military-sexual-trauma-among-recent-veterans-correlates-of-sexual-assault-and-sexual-harassment/>). Rate differences are likely due to many factors including underreporting to the United States Department of Defense (DoD) and VA and the fact that more men than women are likely to use VA healthcare.

Table 1. Military Sexual Trauma Reported by the TVMI Sample.



Specific TVMI Survey Questions about Military Sexual Trauma

Two questions were asked to measure veterans' MST. These questions are consistent with the MST screener utilized by the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) in their universal screening process (<https://ps.psychiatryonline.org/doi/full/10.1176/ps.2008.59.6.635>).

1. "While you were in the military, did you receive uninvited and/or unwanted sexual attention, such as touching, cornering, pressure for sexual favors, or verbal remarks?"
2. "Did someone ever use force or threat of force to have sexual contact with you against your will?"

TVMI Study Summary

The Veterans Metrics Initiative (TVMI) was coordinated by the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine, Inc. (HJF). TVMI was designed with a partnered approach to leverage the strengths of federal, private, and academic research settings. The researchers represented the Department of Defense (DoD), Veteran Affairs (VA), the Pennsylvania State University through the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness, and private industry (ICF International, Inc.). The study aims included (1) documenting veteran well-being and factors that predict changes in veteran well-being during the military-to-civilian transition and reintegration period; (2) identifying programs that veterans use during civilian reintegration and distilling them into their common components; and (3) examining the links between common program components and veteran well-being to identify effective program components. To the study partners' knowledge, TVMI was the first longitudinal investigation of the military-to-civilian transition process with a national sample of post-9/11 veterans. There were a total of six waves of data collection. Data collection began in early fall 2016 and was completed in late spring 2019. Researchers at the Pennsylvania State University continued the study with additional surveying of the original sample in 2020-2021 through the Veterans Engaging in Transition Studies Survey.

*For further information on the sample, procedures, and participant demographics see the following: Vogt D., Perkins D. F., Copeland L. A., Finley E. P., Jamieson C. S., Booth B., Lederer, S., & Gilman, C. L. (2018). The Veterans Metrics Initiative study of US veterans' experiences during their transition from military service. *BMJ Open*, 8(6), e020734. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29895650>*

For more information on the TVMI study visit: <https://veteranetwork.psu.edu/projects/tvmi-study/>

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