

Profile of Veterans Not Fully Transitioned to Civilian Life

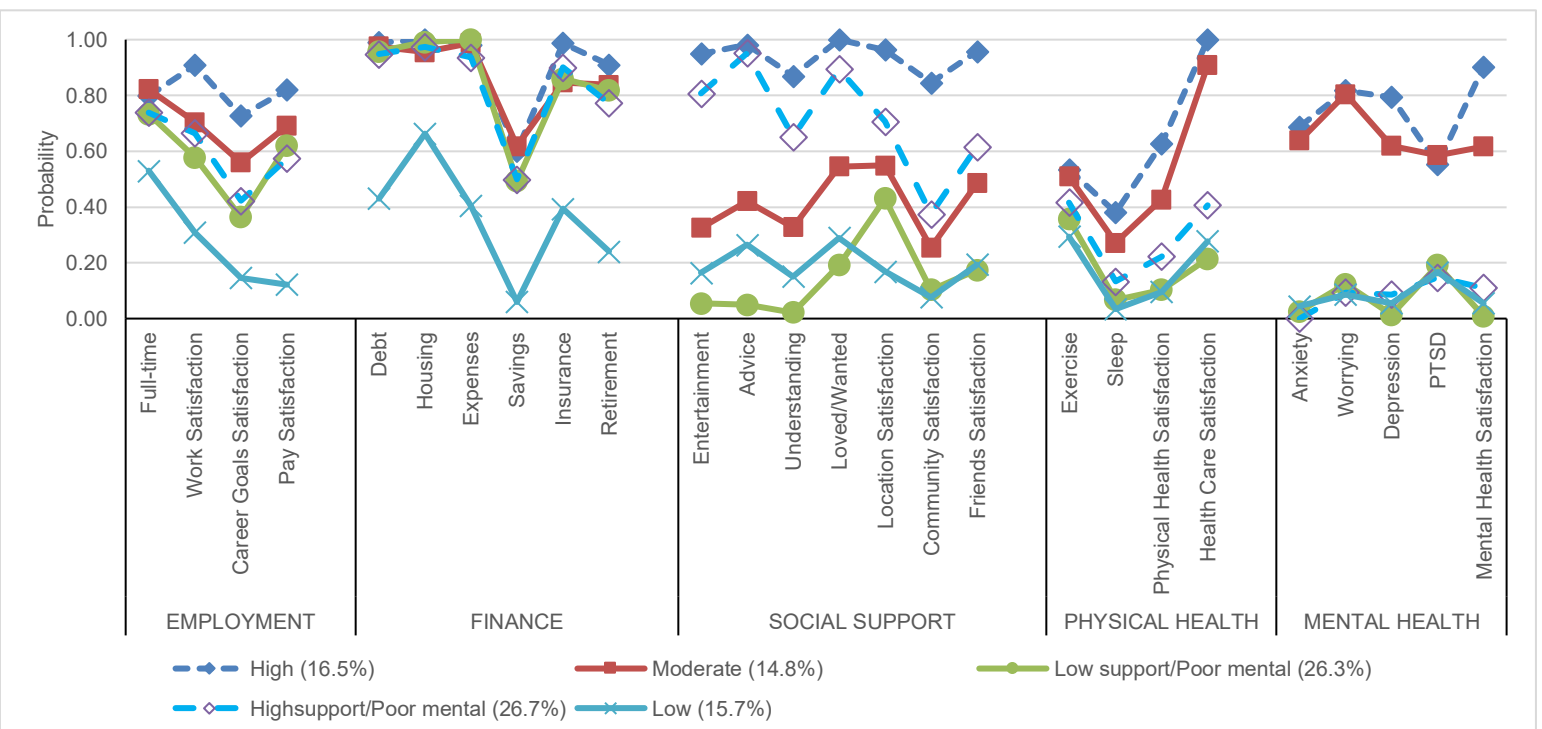
Takeaway: Among post-9/11 veterans who did not feel fully transitioned to civilian life after 6.5 years (18.9%), five profiles were developed along indicators from the life domains of employment, finance, social support, physical health, and mental health. Given the differences in each of the five profiles, the level and type of support needed by these veterans vary. The High and Moderate well-being groups need little or targeted support in certain areas, while the Low well-being group needs intensive, holistic support. The High support/Low mental health and Low support/Low mental health need support in the applicable low areas of well-being. Age, paygrade, social activity participation, social engagement, and resilience were significant predictors of profile fit.

Background and Methodology

From a longitudinal study of post-9/11 veterans, 18.9% of 2,970 veterans reported not feeling fully transitioned to civilian life 6.5 years after separating from the military. To better understand those not feeling fully transitioned, profiles (i.e., subgroups) were identified based on indicators across five life domains (i.e., employment, finance, social support, physical health, and mental health). For each domain, indicators were dichotomized as shown below.

Employment	Finance	Social Support	Physical Health	Mental Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employed full-time Satisfied with work Satisfied with career goals Satisfied with pay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No debt Housing stability Able to pay expenses Has emergency savings Has insurance Has retirement savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has someone for fun/entertainment Has someone for advice Has someone for understanding Has someone for feeling loved/wanted Satisfied with location of residence Satisfied with sense of community Satisfied with friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercises often/most of the time Sleeps well Satisfied with physical health Satisfied with health care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No anxiety No worry No depression No PTSD Satisfied with mental health

Five Profiles of Not Fully Transitioned Veterans



High Well-being

16.5% of not fully transitioned veterans fit this profile.

- *Employment* – stable and highly satisfied
- *Finance* – stable
- *Social* – strong ties
- *Health* – strong mental and physical well-being

Generally, these veterans are thriving across all domains and likely need minimal support.

Moderate Well-being

14.8% of not fully transitioned veterans fit this profile.

- *Employment* – stable, moderately satisfied
- *Finance* – largely stable
- *Social* – moderate ties
- *Health* – mid-level (fair) mental health

These veterans are mostly stable but could benefit from targeted help with social connections and mental health.

Low Well-being

15.7% of not fully transitioned veterans fit this profile.

- *Employment* – unstable and dissatisfied
- *Finance* – unstable
- *Social* – weak support
- *Health* – poor physical & mental health

These veterans are facing challenges across all domains and need more intensive and holistic support.

High Support/Low Mental Health

26.7 % of not fully transitioned veterans fit this profile.

- *Employment* – moderately stable, but less satisfied
- *Finance* – mixed
- *Social* – strong support
- *Health* – poor mental and lower physical well-being

These veterans have robust support yet still struggle with mental health. Therefore, mental health care is needed.

Low Support/Low Mental Health

26.3 % of not fully transitioned veterans fit this profile.

- *Employment* – relatively stable, but less satisfied
- *Finance* – mixed
- *Social* – very limited support
- *Health* – poor mental and lower physical well-being

These veterans have dual vulnerabilities in weak support and poor well-being. Thus, comprehensive social-connection and mental-health interventions are needed.

Differences Across Transition Profiles

Differences between the profiles were examined based on demographic factors (i.e., gender, race, education), military history (i.e., military paygrade, disability rating, combat exposure), and psychosocial traits (i.e., engagement with social activities, adverse childhood experiences, post-traumatic growth, resilience, health and financial stresses).

Overall, higher military paygrade, stronger resilience, post-traumatic growth, and social engagement were associated with more favorable transition profiles, whereas higher levels of adverse childhood experience and ongoing financial and health stressors were linked to more vulnerable profiles. Gender and combat exposure did not differ across transition profiles.

Study Summary

The Veterans Metrics Initiative: Linking Program Components to Post-Military Well-Being (TVMI) collected six waves (i.e., 3, 9, 15, 21, 27, and 33 months) of well-being and program utilization data from almost 10,000 post-9/11 veterans who had separated from military service in 2016. Additional waves (i.e., 51 and 78 months) of data were collected independently by the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State through the Veterans Engaging in Transition Studies (VETS), which is part of the VETERANetwork. Veterans from TVMI voluntarily chose to participate in VETS (n = 3,514).

Acknowledgements

TVMI research was managed by the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine, Inc. (HJF), and it was collaboratively sponsored by the Bob Woodruff Foundation, Health Net Federal Services, HJF, Lockheed Martin Corporation, Marge and Philip Odeen, May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust, National Endowment for the Humanities, Northrop Grumman, Prudential, Robert R. McCormick Foundation, Rumsfeld Foundation, Schultz Family Foundation, The Heinz Endowments, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Health Services Research and Development Service, Walmart Foundation, and Wounded Warrior Project, Inc. VETS Wave 7 was sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts. VETS Wave 8 was sponsored by the Wounded Warrior Project, The Heinz Endowments, May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust, and The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation.

