



THE MEADOWS MENTAL HEALTH POLICY INSTITUTE

**House Committee on Defense & Veterans' Affairs:
Improving How Texas Meets the Mental Health Needs of Veterans and Their Families**

Kyle Mitchell | February 19, 2019

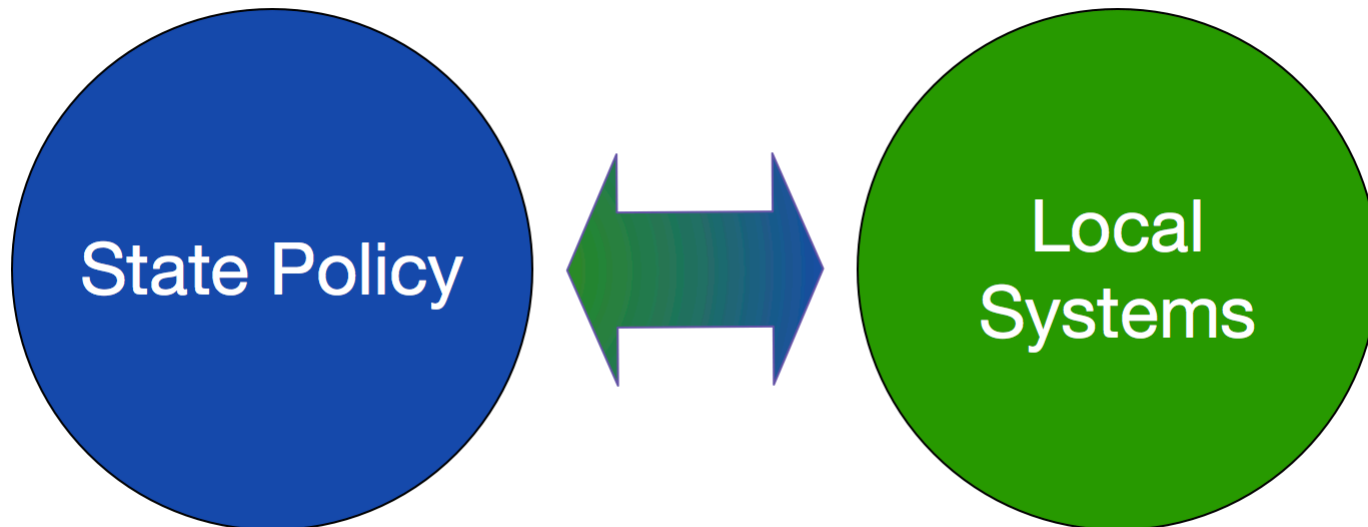
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Vision

We envision Texas to be the national leader in treating people with mental health needs.

Mission Statement

To provide independent, non-partisan, and trusted policy and program guidance that creates systemic changes so all Texans can obtain effective, efficient behavioral health care when and where they need it.



Texas Veterans Data (2018)

Texas Veterans with Mental Illness and Substance Abuse (Estimates)				
Type of Condition	Male		Female	
Any Mental Illness	190,000	13.3%	45,000	23.8%
Serious Mental Illness	40,000	2.9%	10,000	3.2%
Major Depression	60,000	4.3%	20,000	4.7%
Alcohol Use Disorder	90,000	6.5%	9,000	6.3%
Illicit Drug Use Disorder	120,000	8.3%	20,000	8.4%
Nonmedical Use of Psychotherapeutics	40,000	3.0%	9,000	3.1%
Nonmedical Use of Pain Relievers	30,000	2.3%	7,000	2.4%

Insights from the VA on Veteran Suicide

In 2018, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) released its most recent analysis of veteran suicide data for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Insights from the analysis included:

- Suicide rates *increased for both veterans and non-veterans*, underscoring the fact that suicide is a national public health concern that affects people everywhere.
- The average number of veterans *who died by suicide each day* remained unchanged at 20.
- The suicide rate increased faster among veterans who had *not recently used* Veterans Health Administration health care than among those who had.

More Data Points on Veteran Suicide



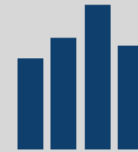
The rate of suicide was
1.8 *times higher among female Veterans*
compared with non-Veteran adult women.
** after accounting for differences in age*



The rate of suicide was
1.4 *times higher among male Veterans*
compared with non-Veteran adult men.
** after accounting for differences in age*



Male Veterans ages
18–34
experienced the highest rates of suicide.



Male Veterans ages
55 and older
had the highest count of suicide.

69% *of all Veteran suicide deaths resulted from a firearm injury.*

Addressing Needs Through Peer Services

81(R) SB 1325 (Nelson) established the **Mental Health Program for Veterans** to provide peer-to-peer counseling for veterans.



The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) coordinate to administer the program.

The program provides **peer counseling services** to service members, veterans, and their families through contracts with **local mental health authorities (LMHAs)**, **local behavioral health authorities (LBHAs)**, and the **Texas A&M University Health Science Center (TAMUHSC)**.

Mental Health Program for Veterans

The Texas Legislature has continually supported **expansions in this program** – most recently in **85(R) SB 27 (Campbell)**, which focused on the “peer service” nature of these services.

What other ways can the Texas Legislature **support** this program?

- **Budget alignment** of TVC funding,
- Additional support for **justice-involved veterans** and **faith-based** work at TVC,
- **Additional support** for peers or targeted populations.



Addressing Needs Through Community Grants

84(R) SB 55 (Nelson) directed HHSC to establish a grant program to support **community mental health programs** that provide and coordinate **mental health services and treatment** for **Texas veterans and their families**.

- The Texas Veterans + Family Alliance (TV+FA) provides grants to **community collaboratives** to fund the delivery and coordination of mental health and supportive services.
- Communities must match state grants on a **dollar-for-dollar basis**, demonstrating their commitment to addressing mental health needs.
- A **Request for Applications (RFA)** is *currently open*, with a deadline of March 19, 2019.

Texas Veterans + Family Alliance in Action

Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinics at Endeavors™ – provide high-quality, accessible, and integrated mental health care to veterans and their families, *regardless of discharge status or ability to pay.*

Veteran “one-stops” in El Paso, West Texas, Waco, and Central Texas.

Increased access to a **broad range of mental health services** for veterans and their families across the state.

Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinics

The Cohen Veterans Network was founded by philanthropist Steven A. Cohen, who made a \$275 million commitment to launch a *network of mental health clinics* in April 2016 to serve *veterans and families*. The focus is on **post-9/11 veterans and families** in order to *get ahead of transition challenges before they become chronic or acute*.

4,400 CLIENTS SERVED
IN TEXAS

9,464 CLIENTS SERVED
IN NETWORK

TOP 3 ADULT DIAGNOSES

Depression/Anxiety
Relationship Concerns
PTSD

55%
VETERANS

45%
FAMILY
MEMBERS

73%
MALE
VETERANS

27%
FEMALE
VETERANS

Addressing Needs Through TVC Grants


- **Veteran Mental Health grants** focus on the *mental health needs of veterans and their families* by funding projects that emphasize **direct services to veterans and their families**.
- **Veteran Treatment Court grants** *assist Texas veterans* in obtaining services through **Veterans Treatment Court programs**.
- TVC and HHSC should *continue their close coordination* to achieve the goals of their grant programs and to prevent duplication in funding.

Addressing Needs Through Coordination

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `sanantonio.americaserves.org`. The page features a navigation menu with links for HOME, ABOUT, SERVICES, BLOG, and CONTACT. A 'GET ASSISTANCE' button is located in the top right corner, along with the phone number 1-888-SA-4-VETS. The main content area includes the TXServes San Antonio logo and a descriptive paragraph about their services. Below this is a dark blue section with the heading 'GET ASSISTANCE NOW' and a form with fields for First name, Last name, Date of birth (with a calendar icon), and Phone number.

1-888-SA-4-VETS GET ASSISTANCE

HOME ABOUT SERVICES BLOG CONTACT

 **TXServes**
San Antonio


TXServes offers service members, veterans and their families access to a class-leading continuum of providers that runs the gamut from superior housing and emergency service providers to employment, recreation and fitness, financial capabilities and more!

GET ASSISTANCE NOW

First name *

Last name *

Date of birth *

Phone number *

TEXAS STATE
— of —
MIND

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okay
to say

The truth is: mental illness affects more people than you may think, and we need to talk about it. It's Okay to say..." okaytosay.org
