

Ask the Question:

"Did you serve?"



Agencies and organizations may not be providing service members, veterans and their families appropriate treatment or the quantity of resources available to them due to the lack of identification.

The "TEXANS ASK- Did you serve?" statewide campaign in Texas encourages all agencies, organizations (to include healthcare, social services, housing and education) and service providers to ask individuals "Did you serve?" in efforts to support those who have served our country.

Interested and want to learn more?



veteransmentalhealth.texas.gov/



Texas Statewide Initiative



TEXANS ASK: Did you serve?

One question can make all the difference.



Veterans Mental Health Department



AT A GLANCE



- Every year, approximately 200,000 men and women transition out of active-duty service and return to civilian life.
- Studies indicate that forty-four to seventy-two percent experience high levels of stress during transition from military to civilian life.
- In 2020, approximately 5.2 million Veterans experienced a behavioral health condition.
- More than half of Veterans with a mental illness did not receive treatment within the past year.
- More than 90 percent of those experiencing a substance use disorder did not receive treatment.

References

Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. (n.d.). Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Retrieved August 8, 2023, from <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/>

Owens, S., M.S.W., LCSW-C. (2022, November 8). Supporting the Behavioral Health Needs of our Nation's Veterans. <https://www.samhsa.gov/blog/supporting-behavioral-health-needs-our-nations-veterans>

Why ask?

There is no consistent or universal definition of who is and is not a veteran; states, localities, and individual government programs define veteran status differently.

As veterans navigate these various definitions from place to place, they may be unsure whether they can identify as a veteran. The result? Individuals may fail to self-identify as a veteran due to uncertainty about their own status, causing them to miss out on crucial benefits and may experience unnecessary economic or health-related hardships.

Though Veterans may not always offer up the information they served, many will be open to disclosing their service when asked specifically; this is usually a large component of their life experience. Diligently asking ensures veterans can access Texas' large number of resources for veterans that--unless identified for their service-- they would be ineligible for.

Questions?



Reach out and let our team assist!
veteransmentalhealth.texas.gov/

GET STARTED



ASK everyone! Ask anyone and everyone. This can be as easy as working the question into a casual conversation, or incorporating the question into an intake process, first contact, healthcare appointment or screening etc.

BUILD RAPPORT by being genuine and asking open-ended questions. Share connections or resources but only promise what you *can* deliver and is realistic. Acknowledge and validate the veterans' experience A

FAMILIARIZE yourself with the resources or services available in your area to the military-veteran population and have that information on hand.

ATTEND a Military Cultural Competency or Military Trauma-Informed Care training, provided by the Veterans Mental Health Department of TVC. Learn more and submit a Training Request Form online!