



Mental Health First Aid Resources



The Lehigh Valley Military Affairs Council (LVMAC) has prepared this list of mental health resources for student veterans and their families residing principally in or near the Lehigh Valley.

The information has been grouped by category to assist readers in finding the services they want, though many organizations qualify for listing under more than one category. Do not overlook that fact as they are only listed once. Listing does not constitute endorsement by LVMAC.

In general, within each category, the organizations are show in this order: 1) resources available to institution of higher learning students or the general public, 2) resources available exclusively to veterans and military service members and perhaps their families.

Note: The product was originally designed for downloading and printing in black on 5.3"x8.5" paper booklet. However, all email, chat and website links are active hyperlinks activated by clicking on them.

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Crisis Hotlines (Emergency)

Don't be afraid to use the services below if you, your loved one, or friend is facing an emotional crisis or threatening harm. Let your concern justify your actions and not technical definitions of crisis. Hotlines are a free service. Several alternatives are listed below.

Lehigh County Crisis Intervention

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: 610-782-3127

Website: <http://lehigh.pa.networkofcare.org/mh/>
<http://lehighcounty.org/>

Walk-ins: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Location: 17 South 7th St., Allentown

Northampton County Crisis Intervention

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: 610-252-9060

Website: <http://northampton.pa.networkofcare.org/mh>
<http://www.northamptoncounty.org/>

Walk-ins: 8 AM to 5 PM, M-F

Location: 45 N. Second St., Easton

Remarks: The counties use trained, crisis counselors. This Dept. of Human Services Mental Health service includes telephone counseling, emergency room transport when warranted, mobile crisis teams, walk-in crisis help, information and referral, assistance in obtaining community-based, inpatient and outpatient mental health care. Crisis intervention involves no fee.

9-1-1 Hotline

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: 911

Remarks: Provided by each county. If you just do not know where else to turn or the situation is life threatening or involves personal safety, this is the number to call. They'll use the appropriate responder, to include the county's crisis intervention team.

Your local hospital emergency room

Hours: 24/7

Remarks: If you are feeling desperate or in need of urgent care, consider a local hospital's emergency room.

Veterans Crisis Line (VA Crisis Call Center) and National Suicide Prevention Hotline (SAMHSA Crisis Call Center)

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: 1-800-273-TALK (8255), Press "1" for the VA

Live Chat: <http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/> (VA)

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/800273TALK>

Website: <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
<http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>

Remarks: Friends and family members of veterans in crisis are welcome to call. **You do not have to be contemplating suicide to receive its help.** If you press “1”, a VA mental health professional will answer and assist; and ultimately put the local VA in contact with you for additional assistance.

Self-Assessment Tools

If you, your family or a friend is still unprepared to admit help is needed, these tools may assist in arriving at a decision to talk to someone – though a professional will be ultimately required for treatment.

Help Yourself. Help Others

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: None

Website: <http://www.helpyourselfhelpothers.org/>

Remarks: Produced by SMH (Screening for Mental Health, Inc.), it is a thorough site which provides anonymous, self-assessments for depression, bipolar disorder, alcohol use, post-traumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, etc. for college students, military members and veterans and their families, and the general public. Gives referral information to services. etc.

Make the Connection

Website: <http://maketheconnection.net/>

<http://maketheconnection.net/conditions/ptsd>

Remarks: A VA product which can be customized, it focuses on mental/behavioral health, including PTSD. It is intended to be a one-stop resource for military, veterans and their families and friends to privately explore. Through the testimonials of others who have similar experiences, videos, checklists, identification of symptoms, it seeks to get the veteran to seek treatment. Includes a PTSD self-assessment from *MyHealthTheVet*.

Afterdeployment.Org

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: 1-866-966-1020 (DCoE Outreach Center)

Live Chat: <https://afterdeployment.dcoe.mil/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/afterdeployment/>

Website: <https://afterdeployment.dcoe.mil/>

Remarks: This is a Department of Defense (DoD) product. It is a feature-rich, internet-based wellness resource focused on helping service members, their families, and veterans with common post-deployment concerns. Emphases include pre-clinical self-care solutions, anonymous self-assessments, mobile applications, and also the use of social media, such as blogs and forums, with the intention of establishing an online community. Has a primitive service locator (See below for others.).

Lines to Help (Non-Emergency)

The first step towards a solution is to talk to someone who can help get you pointed in the right direction for treatment and other assistance. The following sampling of resources provides a person on the other end to discuss and assess your situation and to refer you.

Your family physician ... a good first stop

Kutztown University Counseling and Psychological Services

Hours: 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, M-F

Telephone: 610-683-4072

Email: cps@kutztown.edu

Website: <http://www.kutztown.edu/about-ku/administrative-offices/counseling-and-psychological-services.htm>

Address: Beck Hall, Rm 122 (Walk-Ins)

Remarks: If you are a Kutztown University student the following services are provided: confidential counseling services at no additional cost; services for students experiencing difficulties with anxiety, depression, family and relationship troubles, substance use, and other concerns; and services including, but are not limited to: group and individual counseling, relationship and academic counseling, crisis intervention, alcohol/drug counseling, psychiatric consultation, and community referrals.

Moravian College Counseling Center

Hours: 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Telephone: 610-861-1510

Website: <http://home.moravian.edu/public/stusvc/counseling/>

Address: 1307 Main St., Bethlehem (Walk-Ins)

Remarks: If you are a Moravian College student, their Counseling Center offers individual, couples and group counseling to students. Some of the reasons a student might talk with a counselor are to develop greater self-knowledge; to discuss a wide range of personal difficulties; or to develop more efficient ways to cope with stressful situations. When appropriate or requested by a student, referrals can be made to an off-campus resource.

The Warmline ... a local non-military resource in Lehigh County

Hours: 6 AM to 10 AM, 4 PM to 2 AM, Daily

Telephone: 610-820-8451

Website: <http://pbfalv.org/programs/warmline/>

Remarks: Pinebrook Family Answers, Inc., a nonprofit under contract, provides a free, confidential telephone support service for Lehigh County adults who are challenged by loneliness, confusion and other mental health concerns, or who need information about available services. Concerned family and friends can use the service also. Its purpose is to listen, care about, inform, discuss issues, and sometimes to comfort callers. As needed, callers may be referred to Family Answers counselors (licensed professionals) who have experience with PTSD on a sliding fee basis (does not accept TRICARE) or to other resources, both within and without the organization. Its Compeer Program provides supportive one-to-one friendship matches between persons in mental health recovery and trained community volunteers.

Peer Line ... telephone support service for Northampton County

Hours: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Telephone: 1-855- PA-PEERS (727-3377)

Website: <http://www.recoverypartnership.org/peerline.html>

Remarks: Like Pinebrook Family Answers, Recovery Partnership, Inc., is a nonprofit under contract which provides a free, confidential telephone support service but for Northampton County adults. It also offers peer specialist services for individuals with PTSD or other mental health conditions. Does not TRICARE, but individuals may receive peer support services through contracts with both Lehigh and Northampton County Mental Health offices and Magellan Behavioral Health. For more information, use the same phone no. or email.

County Mental Health Services ... a key local source of help

Lehigh County Info and Referral Unit

Hours: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Telephone: 610-782-3200

Email: informationandreferral@lehighcounty.org

Address: 17 South 7th St., Allentown (Walk-Ins)

Northampton County Info and Referral Unit

Hours: 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Telephone: 610-559-3270

Address: 2801 Emrick Blvd., Bethlehem (Walk-Ins)

Remarks: Counties offer an array of services normally, and not necessarily exclusively for those without mental health insurance or on Medicaid. It is a major player in mental health services and some resources are only available through them. A consultant will review the caller's concerns and service needs and direct that person to where these needs can best be met. The caller may be scheduled to meet with an intake specialist or may be referred directly to non-county treatment resources. The latter may occur if the caller qualifies for services provided elsewhere and/or if their insurance coverage requires them to use a specific provider network. See the county's "Crisis Hotlines" for more information via the website.

Pennsylvania 2-1-1 East ... connecting you to vital services

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: 211 (or 1-855-501-6785)

Email: See website

Website: <http://www.pa211east.org/>

Remarks: Part of a national movement for a single phone number, one-stop resource for health and human services and relatively new to Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania 2-1-1 East (operated by the United Way of Lancaster) is part of a network of call centers. Replaced the Lehigh Valley Red Cross' Valley Wide Helpline. It is a free, confidential, non-emergency, comprehensive information and referral service that connects Berks, Lancaster, Lehigh, Northampton, and Schuylkill county residents with the health and human services they need. Also operates a website database.

VA Veterans (Vet) Centers ... for combat veterans and families

Hours: 24/7 (Combat Vet Call Center only)

Telephone: 1-877-927-8387 (Combat Vet Call Center)

Email: <http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/>

Website: <http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/>

Locations: Below are probably the three closest:

Bucks County (Bristol):

Telephone: 215-823-4590

Location: 2 Canal's End Plaza, Suite 201B, Bristol, PA 19007

Luzerne County (Scranton):

Telephone: 570-344-2676

Location: 1002 Pittston Ave., Scranton, PA 18505

Montgomery County (Norristown):

Telephone: 215-823-5245

Location: 320 E. Johnson Hwy, Suite 201, Norristown, PA 19401

Remarks: The Office of Readjustment Counseling provides this service to any veteran or family member if the veteran served in any **combat zone** and received a military campaign ribbon (**the character of discharge and enrollment in VA healthcare system are irrelevant**). Entirely free, services can include individual and group PTSD counseling, marital and family counseling, alcohol/drug assessments and referral. The closest are an hour or more from the major urban areas of our region, but you may be closer to a center or perhaps an outstation (a very limited operation). VA Vet Centers are worth a try ...even if only for a phone call. They are known for going "the extra mile" in service when prompted.

Vets4Warriors Helpline ... designed for the Reservists and Guard

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: 1-855-VET-TALK (838-8255)

Email: VETS4WARRIORS@UMDNJ.EDU

Live Chat: <http://www.vets4warriors.com/chat/>

Website: <http://www.vets4warriors.com>

Remarks: Modeled on the New Jersey Vet2Vet program (see last item) and also provided by the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey – University Behavioral HealthCare, this free helpline offers peer counseling and support by trained veterans, telephone assessments, referrals, and assistance to National Guard and Reserve service members and their family members. Although funded by DoD, it does not discuss your calls with the military, the VA, or anyone else and, if you choose, you may remain anonymous.

Real Warriors Campaign ... removing the stigma

Hours: 24/7 (DCoE Outreach Center)

Telephone: 866-966-1020

Live Chat: <http://www.realwarriors.net/livechat/>

Email: resources@dcoeoutreach.org

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/realwarriors>

Website: <http://www.realwarriors.net/>

Remarks: This Department of Defense (DoD) campaign combats the stigma associated with seeking psychological health care and is intended for returning service members, **veterans** and their families. The Outreach Center

is a free service staffed by trained, professional health resource consultants with expertise in psychological health and traumatic brain injury who will provide confidential answers, tools, tips and resources and referrals on psychological health and traumatic brain injury. Website has a wealth of resource materials.

Military OneSource ... for one-stop advice for all ... maybe

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: 1-800-342-9647

Email: <http://www.militaryonesource.com/>

Website: <http://www.militaryonesource.com/>

Remarks: A DoD contractor provides a one-stop call service to all military service members and their families regardless of branch and activation status on legal matters, addiction and recovery, readjustment information, immediate counseling and a link to each military branch. **It is also available to those with less than 180 days since separation from active duty.** The consultant uses a telephone assessment to determine course of action. Free, short-term, non-medical, local counseling services can be generally arranged within 30 miles of caller for issues resulting from deployment – like marital and family counseling – but **the service is not intended to address suicidal ideation and mental health issues.** Those are considered long-term problems and, more importantly, not part of the contract. **Such cases will be referred to a military treatment facility and/or TRICARE for services.** However, the other services may help address related issues, including the recognition that additional treatment is needed.

Family Assistance Center (Allentown) ... a local one-stop

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: 610-871-2246; Cell: 717-821-4687

Email: use joint services resource finder email

Website: <https://g1arng.army.pentagon.mil/Families/FACs/>
<https://www.jointservicesupport.org/ResourceFinder/>

Remarks: A National Guard Bureau contractor uses “Family Assistance Center Specialists” to provide assistance to all service personnel regardless of status, **veterans**, and their families (**not only National Guard members**) by offering information on a wide variety of military, federal, state, and local resources, including mental health ones.

Military and Family Life Consultant (MFLC) Program ... for all military service families

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: 1-888-755-9355 (24/7 general number)

717-673-3881 (PA adult consultant)

717-304-1572 (PA youth consultant)

Website: <https://g1arng.army.pentagon.mil/Families/MFLC/>

Remarks: The DoD Joint Family Support Assistance Program (JFSAP) uses a contractor. Consultants are licensed clinicians and offer confidential, nonmedical, short-term counseling for service members and families (**not only to the National Guard**). Examples of services are marital relationships counseling, crisis intervention, stress management, grief counseling, and financial management. They can arrange free, short-term, local counseling services. Like Military OneSource, it may be of use as a first step in getting

started on the road to assistance for PTSD as there are frequently related issues.

Chaplain Support ... for military families

Telephone: 717-861-9212 (PA National Guard)
609-562-3011 (Duty Chaplain, USAR, Joint Base
McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst)
570-615-9689 (Mental Health, Navy and Marines,
Tobyhanna)

Website: <http://www.strongbonds.org/> for “Strong Bonds” program

Remarks: Chaplains, local ministers and other spiritual leaders have traditionally been a source of advice and counseling. Do not overlook them. The National Guard and Reserve chaplains, assigned to all units at various levels, are learned in the military culture and trained in counseling – many having years of experience in pastoral and family counseling. They can be a great help towards addressing Post Traumatic Stress and PTSD issues. Ask about the “Strong Bonds” program also.

Treatment (Non-Emergency)

Below are some key, local community treatment providers of varying services are included, once a decision is made to get help.

St Luke's Behavioral Health Services (Bethlehem & Quakertown)

Hours: 8:30 PM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Telephone: 484-526-2400 or 1-866-785-8537 (InfoLink)

Email: infolink@slhn.org

Website: <http://www.mystlukesonline.org/conditions-and-services/behavioral-health-services-at-st-lukes/index.aspx>

Remarks: St. Luke's Hospital and Health Network provides outpatient and inpatient care at both its Bethlehem and Quakertown hospital locations. Accepts most medical insurances, including TRICARE.

Lehigh Valley Hospital Behavioral Science Center (Bethlehem)

Hours: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Telephone: 610-402-2273 (CARE) or 1-888-584-2273

Live Chat: http://www.lvhn.org/lvhn/Contact_Us

Website: http://www.lvhn.org/lvh/Your_LVH/Health_Care_Services/Mental_Health

Remarks: Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network provides inpatient care at its Muhlenberg hospital in Bethlehem and outpatient care in Allentown and Bethlehem locations. Accepts medical insurances, including TRICARE.

Pinebrook Family Answers, Inc. (Allentown and Bethlehem)

See "The Warmline" under "Lines to Help" for other services

New Vitae Wellness and Recovery (Quakertown area)

Hours: 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM, M – F

Telephone: (610) 965-9021 x 240 or 237 (Admissions Dept.)

Email: WHoke@TCRespite.com or JMuth@TCRespite.com

Website: <http://www.newvitaewellness.com/>

Remarks: This organization provides outpatient/residential/transitional behavioral health services to adults with post traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury and substance abuse. Provides residential-based behavioral health treatment services for VA-referred, chronic cases. Accepts most forms of insurance, including Medicaid and working to include TRICARE.

Keenan House (Allentown)

Telephone: 610-439-8479 (Admissions Director)

Website: <http://www.treatmenttrends.org/KHserv.htm>

Remarks: A division of Treatment Trends, Inc., it is a **variable-length residential Therapeutic Community (TC)** and targets individuals struggling with addiction/alcoholism and co-occurring disorders including PTSD. Veterans who qualify for admission are routinely among those in treatment at the facility. A veterans group is offered and a specialized agency-wide Veterans Track is in development.

Confront Services (Allentown)

Telephone: 610-433-0148

Website: <http://www.treatmenttrends.org/CONserv.htm>

Remarks: A division of Treatment Trends, Inc. which provides both **outpatient and intensive outpatient** treatment for people recovering from drug or alcohol addiction and co-occurring disorders including PTSD. It also provides drug and alcohol services to adolescents. This agency has contracts with both Lehigh and Northampton Counties to provide services to parents of children who have been sexually and/or physically abused, as well as services to children who have been abused. Veterans are routinely among those in treatment at the facility. A veterans group is offered and a specialized agency-wide Veterans Track is in development.

Haven House (Allentown)

Telephone: 610-433-6181

Email: See website

Website: <http://haven-house.com/>

Remarks: A 501(c)(3) nonprofit providing psychiatric evaluation, individual and group counseling, psychiatric rehabilitation and referral services, with an emphasis on individual treatment. Has therapists trained in PTSD and related issues, including those involving the family. Does not accept most insurances – but does accept Highmark Blue Shield, Medicare, Medicaid and possibly TRICARE – and uses a sliding scale for fees according to ability to pay.

Mitchell Center (Emmaus)

Telephone: 610-965-6418 x 100

Website: <http://www.themitchellcenter.com/>

Remarks: This for-profit organization offers a full-service, psychiatric facility focusing on the treatment of a wide range of psychological disorders, addictions and substance abuse issues for men, women, children, families and couples. Can treat PTSD. Partial hospitalization and intensive outpatient programs are provided. Accepts most major insurances, but does not accept TRICARE, Medicare, and Medicaid

Bethany Counseling Ministry (Allentown)

Telephone: 610-437-2466

Email: BMCAllentown@bethanyhome.org

Website: http://lehigh.pa.networkofcare.org/mh/services/agency.aspx?pid=BethanyCounselingMinistry_794_2_0

Remarks: Provides professional counseling, including non-denominational, marital and family counseling, and other services on a sliding fee scale based upon financial circumstances after the first session. Has some experience with PTSD.

Eagles Wings Counseling Center (Nazareth)

Telephone: 610-759-0893

Email: mail@sjuccnaz.org

Website: <http://sjuccnaz.com/index.php/counseling-center>

Remarks: St. John's UCC minister provides non-denominational pastoral, licensed marital and family counseling in addition to other services on a sliding fee scale based upon financial circumstances after the first session.

Accepts most insurances, including TRICARE, Medicare, and Medicaid. Has experience with PTSD.

Operation Stephen's Touch ... a listening ministry that's local

Hours: 24/7

Telephone: 1-888-408-6824

Email: supportrequest@stephenstouch.org

Website: <http://www.stephenstouch.org/>

Remarks: Stephen Ministries is a non-denominational ministry which provides a free, one-on-one, confidential "listening" ministry – using trained Stephen Ministers from local congregations – to spouses, parents, adult children and siblings of those who died or those who are dealing with separation due to military service, to include trauma. The service is also available to returning veterans. Sessions are approximately an hour a week for up to one year. Contact is first initiated by telephone or email above.

Allentown VA Outpatient Clinic ... the local VA resource

Hours: 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Telephone: 610-776-4304 or 1-866-249-6472 and ask for a mental health nurse or social worker to guide you.

Fax: 610-776-4407

Website: <http://www.wilkes-barre.va.gov>

Location: 3110 Hamilton Blvd., Allentown, PA 18103

Remarks: This outpatient clinic provides the VA's closest service and **trained professionals for mental health and alcohol substance abuse or addiction.** [The Northampton County (Bangor) clinic does not have this capability.] It has PTSD therapy groups. A veteran must first enroll and be eligible for the VA healthcare service. Combat theater veterans of the current wars are eligible for enhanced benefits for up to five years from the date of last separation from active duty -- meaning they will receive VA care at no cost for any condition that may be related to their combat service. Afterwards, to receive continued treatment at no cost for PTSD, generally a service-connected disability must be established (there are exceptions). Treatment usually occurs within the VA system, for unlike TRICARE it has no insurance program provision. On occasion, VA is capable of alternative arrangements.

Other VA Resources ... less local

VA Veterans Centers

See "Lines to Help." They are a non-clinical service.

Mental Health and Behavioral Service, Wilkes-Barre VAMC

Hours: 8 AM to 4:30 PM

Telephone: 1-877-928-2621

Website: <http://www.wilkes-barre.va.gov>

Remarks: The assigned VA Medical Center for serving Lehigh Valley veterans (although veterans can choose another) also provides individual and group outpatient psychotherapy, as well as a series of classes to improve coping skills with symptoms, family, stress and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Closest VA Outpatient Clinical Teams specialized for PTSD

Coatesville VA Med Center: Telephone: 610-384-7711 x 6833

Lebanon VA Med Center: Telephone: 717- 272-6621 x 5437

Philadelphia VA Med Center: Telephone: 215- 823-5800 x 4061

Lyons VA Medical Center: Telephone: 908-647-1080 x 4862

Closest VA Domiciliary Facilities Specialized for PTSD

Coatesville VA Medical Center: Telephone: 610- 384-7711 x 4007

Remarks: Provides live-in treatment for a set period of time. The goal is to help the veteran get better and move to outpatient mental health care.

Give an Hour ... exists in the Lehigh Valley

Website: <http://www.giveanhour.org/>

Remarks: Give an Hour™, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, provides a wide range of free mental health services to U.S. military personnel, veterans, and loved ones (uses a broad definition) affected by the current conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, including members of the National Guard and Reserves who have not yet deployed. Providers are mental health professionals, licensed and in good standing. The process begins with using the Visitor portion of their website. There is no phone number to call. Based upon input, the nearest providers' contact information is given. Has a developed network in the Lehigh Valley.

The Soldiers Project ... near us and expanding

Telephone: 1-877-576-5343

215-242-7736 (local chapter)

Email: info@thesoldiersproject.org

info@thesoldiersprojectpa.org (local chapter)

Website: <http://www.thesoldiersproject.org/>

<http://www.thesoldiersprojectpa.org/> (local chapter)

Remarks: The Soldiers Project, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is a group of licensed mental health professionals trained in military culture, PTSD, TBI and a host of other trainings that provide them insight. Working from their offices, they offer free, unlimited psychological treatment to military service members (active duty, National Guard, Reserves) and veterans who have served or who expect to serve in the current conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere – and to their families and other loved ones. Claim they “will respond within 24 hours if not sooner.”

TRICARE Mental Health Services ... finding a local provider

Hours: See Telephone

Telephone: 1-877-747-9579 (if on Active Duty, 8 AM to 6 PM ET)
1-877-874-2273 (Others, 7AM to 7 PM)

Website: <http://www.tricare.mil/mentalhealth/>
<https://www.hnfs.net>

Remarks: This service is for those who are **authorized Department of Defense healthcare** (Active Duty, some Reservists/Guardsmen, military and military medical retirees). Since TRICARE acts like an insurance program, mental health services can be received from either a military treatment facility or the local community. Health Net Federal Services LLC (TRICARE North) currently manages the service in our area. Use to answer questions, for help in locating mental health providers and to receive assistance with routine and urgent appointments. Prior authorization rules for mental health care vary by military status. Patients diagnosed with PTSD are eligible for outpatient services such as individual or group psychotherapy, crisis intervention, family therapy, telemental counseling, etc. All is confidential unless there is risk of harm to the individual or others. The website leads one through a wealth of resources to include self-assessment and provider locators, and is ably supplemented by HealthNet's own site.

Support Groups

Support groups are typically found through county mental health agencies, community hospital networks, physicians, and helplines. Most local support groups in areas of the country such as ours are not necessarily experts on PTSD but are a valuable resource nonetheless – just having others who care and have similar experiences has its own value. Some key support groups for the veteran and the family are listed below. A few are “virtual” or internet communities, a relatively new development.

NAMI Lehigh Valley Chapter (Bethlehem)

Telephone: 610-882-2102

Fax: 610-882-0440

Email: info@nami-lv.org or via webmail

Website: <http://www.nami-lv.org>

<http://www.nami.org/veterans> (Vet Resource Center)

Remarks: The Lehigh Valley Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, a 501(c)(3), offers a wide variety of free educational and support groups including recovery support groups, family support groups, and peer-to-peer and family-to-family educational programs which use trained mentors and meet in different locations in the valley. It has familiarity with PTSD. Regardless, there may be a group or program that matches your needs as PTSD has parallels with other mental illnesses or brain disorders. NAMI chapters elsewhere have been actively involved with the military (e.g., through the Exceptional Military Family Program) and this one is willing to be.

Mental Health Association in PA ... for special support groups

Telephone: 866-578-3659

Email: info@mhapa.org

Website: <http://www.mhapa.org/>

www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/find_support_group

Remarks: The oldest and largest mental health advocacy nonprofit has no affiliates in the Lehigh Valley, the closest being in Bucks and Berks counties. The start point for advice and assistance is the Pennsylvania Association above. Its resources section is useful, as is its parent site, which is particularly feature rich – so extensive that it is useful when trying to find associated support groups for co-occurring problems, e.g. AA and Al-Anon.

Truth for Women

Telephone: 610-866-5755

Email: info@truthforwomen.org

Website: <http://truthforwomenscenter.org/>

Address: 3400 Bath Pike, Suite 110, Bethlehem

Remarks: A 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose purpose is to transform women from the inside out by confronting life issues through support, education and advocacy; to be a catalyst in the authentic transformation of women, offering individualized support which goes beyond the woman and impacts the community. Services include a mentor program, support groups, “Living in Truth” counseling, life enrichment.

Gift from Within ... virtual community

Telephone: 207-236-8858

Email: JoyceB3955@aol.com

Website: <http://giftfromwithin.org/>

Remarks: A 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to those who suffer or at risk for PTSD, and those who care for traumatized individuals. It develops and disseminates educational material, including videotapes, articles, books, and other resources through its website; maintains a roster of survivors who are willing to participate in a network of peer support. Its website is extensive and has good links to other groups and resources.

StrengthofUs.org ... social networking for young adults (NAMI)

Website: <http://www.strengthofus.org>

Remarks: Developed by young adults, this user-driven social networking community from NAMI (above) allows young adults to connect with their peers, share and help by using blog entries, engaging in discussion groups, posting status updates on "The Wire" and sharing videos, photos and other news. It offers a variety of resources on issues important to young adults, including healthy relationships, family and friends, independent living, campus life, employment, mental health issues and much more.

Halfway Home of the Lehigh Valley (Allentown)

Telephone: 610-439-0218

Website: <http://www.treatmenttrends.org/HHserv.htm>

Remarks: A division of Treatment Trends, Inc., its multidisciplinary clinical team provides rehabilitative drug and alcohol treatment services to adult clients with a variety of needs in a chemical-free, residential environment, tailored to the client's needs. Populations served include voluntary placements and those with co-occurring addiction/mental health disorders including PTSD, a high potential for relapse, or financial and vocational difficulties. Veterans are routinely among those in treatment at the facility.

Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc. ... for veterans at unease

Telephone: 610-924-5481 (Hokendauqua Chapter)

Email: hokeytu@hotmail.com or info@lvmac.org

Website: <http://www.projecthealingwaters.org/>

Remarks: The Hokendauqua Chapter of Trout Unlimited in partnership with LVMAC operates an active, local PHWFFI program which is dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled military service members and veterans through fly fishing and fly tying education and outings.

Combat Veterans with PTSD ... blogging for insights, support

Email: maxharris@combatveteranswithptsd.com

Website: <http://www.combatveteranswithptsd.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CombatVeteransWithPtsd>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/@ComVetwithPTSD>

Remarks: Founded by a Lehigh Valley veteran in early 2011, the website's blog, 'Every Day is a New Day' has become well known for offering insight into the day-to-day struggles to live with combat-related PTSD. Since then, the website has evolved to include links to real-world and online resources to help veterans and their loved ones gain access to the support they need.

Veterans Organizations and Military Associations ... *the original support groups*

There are many in the Lehigh Valley – too many to list. Examples are Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 415, VFW and American Legion posts, Marine Corps League detachments, Military Officers Association of America Lehigh Valley Chapter, their auxiliary organizations, Blue Star Mothers Chapter 201, MOMS of Military Bethlehem Chapter, and Gold Star Mothers Lehigh Valley Chapter. To find one, look in a phone book, “Google” search, contact LVMAC or go to its website, www.lvmac.org, for a list of its member organizations.

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) ... *mutual support*

Telephone: 212-982-9699

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/IAVA.org>

Website: <http://iava.org/>

Remarks: IAVA, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, does not have local chapters. Its “Community of Veterans” is an online social network exclusively for veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan for mutual support. Also links veterans to resources and local events.

Grace After Fire ... *for women veterans*

Telephone: 1-800-362-6477

Email: <http://www.graceafterfire.org/contact.html>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/GraceAfterFire>

Website: <http://www.graceafterfire.org/index.php>

Remarks: Provided by Women’s Heart, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. It is one of the few designed to serve women veterans from all eras and branches of service and is in essence a virtual organization created by women veterans for women veterans to offer a safe and confidential venue – a 24/7 social network. Uses instant messaging, blogs and forum discussions. Working with its partners, it intends to develop online pre- and post-adjunct mental health services by using telemedicine to overcome barriers of work, childcare, and transportation and VA enrollment and appointments.

National Caregiver Support Line ... *The VA helping the family*

Hours: 8 AM to 11 PM (EST), M-F; 10:30 am to 6 PM, Sat

Telephone: 1-855-260-3274

Website: <http://www.caregiver.va.gov/>

Remarks: The Veterans Health Administration now operates a program for family members who are giving care to a veteran who has sustained a serious injury since 9/11/2001, including PTSD or other mental disorder. Licensed clinical social workers are available to answer questions, listen to your concerns and directly link you to the Caregiver Support Coordinator at your supporting VA Medical Center.

Hearts of Valor™ ... a program for Post 9/11 women caregivers

Telephone: 210-549-4631 (General Inquiries)

Email: sara.boz@operationhomefront.net (General Inquiries)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HeartsOfValor>

Live Chat: Yes, on their private forums

Website: <http://www.operationhomefront.net/servicedetail.aspx?id=1034>

Remarks: Operation Homefront, a nonprofit, seeks to support female caregivers of wounded warriors of the Post 9/11 era in their own journey of healing by facilitating an online community that provides social connections to other caregivers in similar situations, fostering support groups by geographic area to encourage resource sharing and friendships, and sponsoring annual retreats to provide education on relevant issues.

Veterans' Families United ... particularly oriented on PTSD

Telephone: 916-422-5005

Email: See contact section of website.

Website: <http://www.veteransfamiliesunited.org/>

Remarks: A nonprofit dedicated to empowering veterans and their families in the healing process. It provides detailed information on their website about readjustment, invisible wounds, and links to resources that can help. Email and phone inquiries will receive response within 24 hours. Has a good explanation of the various treatment techniques.

Family Readiness Groups ... military unit support groups

Websites:

<https://g1arng.army.pentagon.mil/Families/FRGs/> (Army Guard)

<http://www.armyfrg.org/> (Army)

http://www.manpower.usmc.mil/portal/page/portal/M_RA_HOME/MF (Marines)

http://www.cnic.navy.mil/CNIC_HQ_Site/WhatWeDo/FleetandFamilyReadiness/ (Navy)

Remarks: All military units, including those in the Reserves and Guard, have these or their equivalent. They are composed of family members, volunteers, and soldiers belonging to a unit. They provide an avenue of mutual support and assistance, and a network of communications among the family members, the chain of command, and community resources.

Locator Services

Although “Crisis Intervention Hotlines” and “Lines to Help” can normally get you where you need to go, Locator Services are particularly useful for finding additional resources; e.g. individual psychologists, psychiatrists, and support groups. Listed below are some of the more useful ones.

Network of Care ... another good one for the local area

Website: <http://lehigh.pa.networkofcare.org/mh>
<http://northampton.pa.networkofcare.org/mh>

Remarks: Under a state OMHSA contract, Trilogy Integrated Resources, LLC includes a Mental/Behavioral Health portion for its site – which has been recognized as a model. Among other things, it provides information to help link an individual to services and support groups.

SAMHSA Behavioral Health Treatment Locator ... sophisticated

Telephone: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
Website: <http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>

Remarks: A U.S. Department of Health and Human Services search engine that finds, summarizes and locates governmental, nonprofit or for-profit accredited mental health or substance and alcohol abuse services within a geographic area. Allows you to specify whether organization has veterans programs/capabilities, for example. Alternatively, use the telephone number.

The Mental Health America Resource Center

Telephone: 1-800-969-6642
Website: <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/finding-help>

Remarks: This leading nonprofit is dedicated to helping all people live mentally healthier lives. This is a one-stop site of locators and information.

Sidran Institute ... trauma stress education and advocacy

Telephone: 410-825-8888
Email: help@sidran.org
Website: <http://www.sidran.org/> , then go to Help Desk

Remarks: Offers referral list of therapists, treatment centers, and support groups for PTSD and dissociative disorders.

National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology “Find a Psychologist”

Website: http://www.findpsychologist.org/advanced_search.html
http://www.findpsychologist.org/customize_search.html

Remarks: Provides an in-depth search engine of licensed psychologists.

Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT) “Find a Therapist”

Website: <http://www.abct.org/> ,then go to Public&Media

Remarks: This site provides a useful, in-depth database by age group and specialties.

TRICARE Mental Health Services Locator ... for the military

Go to “Treatment (Non-Emergency)” It is considered a primary site for help and reliable care providers.

County Governments' Websites ... to find who they use

Go to "Crisis Intervention Hotlines" for the website and seek their Dept. of Human Services Mental Health page.

Other Alternatives

- Read <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/pages/finding-a-therapist.asp>
- Call your private health insurance plan and ask for a referral to a mental health professional.
- Look in the phone book under the section for Physicians and Surgeons by specialty, and then find the "Psychiatry" section.

Additional Reading for the Military-Veteran Family

Websites

Service Members and Families. Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health & Traumatic Brain Injury. <<http://www.dcoe.health.mil/Families.aspx>> <<http://www.realwarriors.net/family/>>

Remarks: DoD's key source for a family's coping with deployments, family stress and PTSD. The "Taking Care of Yourself" and "For Children" pages and the *Children of Military Service Members Resource Guide* are particularly useful. Connects to Real Warrior site above also.

Community Educational Outreach. LVMAC. <http://www.lvmac.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=91&Itemid=90>

Remarks: Created to support a community educational outreach initiative involving school districts in the Lehigh Valley, a section of it provides a compendium of carefully selected, suitable sites for military/veteran families and their children for coping with deployment and family stressors, including a parent's PTSD.

Resiliency Training and Comprehensive Soldier/Family Fitness. U.S. Army Medical Dept. <<https://www.resilience.army.mil/family.html>> <<http://csf.army.mil/>>

Remarks: Army sources for developing family resiliency through assessment and training online

Veterans Resource Center. NAMI. <<http://www.nami.org/veterans/>>

Remarks: NAMI's Veterans Resource Center – another one-stop site for family information.

Books/Booklets

La Grecca, Annette M. *Helping Children Cope with the Challenges of War and Terrorism*. Coral Gables, Florida: 7-Dippity, Inc., 2010. Web. Tel:1-866-734-7748. <http://www.7-dippity.com/other/op_hcc.html>

La Grecca, Annette M. *Supplement to: Helping Children Cope with the Challenges of War and Terrorism*. Coral Gables, Florida: 7-Dippity, Inc., 2009. (for teachers and counselors)

Remarks: Designed for use with children 7-12 years of age, however many of the activities can be adapted for older or younger children.

Mason, Patience. Various publications. Web. http://www.patiencepress.com/patience_press/PTSD_Help-Gazettes.html>

Remarks: A good source of free introductory materials from a person who has suffered through living with PTSD.

Mason, Patience H.C. *Recovering From the War: A Guide for All Veterans, Family Members, Friends and Therapists*. Coral Gables,

Florida: Patience Press, 1998. Print. Tel: 904-454-1651.

<<http://www.patiencepress.com/>>

Remarks: A highly regarded book often distributed to other families by its readers.

Matsakis, Aprhrodite. *I Can't Get Over It: A Handbook for Trauma Survivors*. 2nd ed. Oakland, California: New Harbinger Publications, 1996. Print. Tel: 1-800-748-6273. <<http://www.newharbinger.com/>>

Remarks: This book explains PTSD and how it affects soldiers and other trauma survivors. It describes how to cope with anger, grief, and guilt and problems related to PTSD such as substance use, depression and low self-esteem. The message of the book is that hope can be restored and a positive future can be possible again.

Nadel, Carolina. *Daddy's Home*. Virginia: Mookind Press, 2010. Web. <<http://www.carolinanadel.com/>>

Remarks: A picture book which helps parents explain the invisible wounds of war, including post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), to their small children. Can be viewed free online in its entirety.

Blue Star Families, Vulcan Productions. *Everyone Serves: A Handbook for Family and Friends of Service Members During Pre-deployment, Deployment and Reintegration*. New York, NY: NBC Publishing LLC, 2013. Web, Print. Tel: 202-630-2583. <<http://www.everyoneservesbook.com/>>

Remarks: The successor to *A Handbook for Family & Friends of Service Members: Before, During and After Deployment* and developed in collaboration with the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury and HealthNet. Prepares family and friends of military service members with information to better understand and cope with the range of emotions and stress that often accompany deployment and reintegration. Comes in free web, pdf, and ebook versions; limited print copies. Incorporates video, worksheets and an expanded resources section.

Roberts, Cheryl. *Coping with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Guide for Families*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 2003. Print. Tel:336-246-4460. <<http://mcfarlandpub.com/>>

Remarks: This book provides education for families about the symptoms of PTSD and how PTSD experienced by a loved one may impact family life. It covers medications and other treatments and includes a resource guide.

VA National Center for PTSD. *Returning from the War Zone: A Guide for Families of Military Members*. Veterans Health Administration, 2010. Web. < http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/reintegration/returning_from_the_war_zone_guides.asp >

Remarks: Also in audio and video formats.

VA National Center for PTSD. *A Supplemental Take-Home Module for the NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program: Understanding and Coping with PTSD*. NAMI, 2011. Web. < <http://www.nami.org/>

Content/NavigationMenu/Find_Support/Veterans_Resources/Veterans_Resource_Center.htm > [Go to PTSD section]

Remarks: Excellent introduction and similar in approach as previous citation because both prepared by same agency.

Videos

A Guide for Families. Web. < http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/reintegration/returning_from_the_war_zone_guides.asp >

Remarks: A product of the VA's National Center for PTSD, it is interactive module with video clips of families dealing with the challenges of reintegration following deployment to war. Comprehensive. A good starter product.

Support for Military Children and Adolescents. Web. <<http://www2.aap.org/sections/uniformedservices/deployment/videos.html>>

Remarks: Provided by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Watch Mr. Poe and other cartoon characters talking about deployment issues affecting children ages 6 to 11. Watch an interactive video on developing an individualized, teen stress management plan.

Sesame Street's Talk, Listen, Connect: Deployments, Homecomings, Changes. Web. < <http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/tlc> >

Remarks: An initiative designed for military families and their young children (ages 3 to 5) to share.

Training Our Professional Family

Most veterans do not use VA health care for one reason or another. Therefore, we cannot depend on the VA to assume the burden in this area alone. Community civilian health care providers are a gateway to care. This section provides useful links for medical providers to enable them to help veterans and their families.

VA National Center for PTSD (Professional Section)

Telephone: (802) 296-6300 (Voice Mail)

Email: ncptsd@va.gov

Website: <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/>

Remarks: Intended for both researchers and providers, the VA's authority on PTSD provides this section which contains training materials as well as information and tools to help with assessment and treatment. These materials are based on the latest research.

Center for Deployment Psychology

Telephone: 301-816-4775

Email: general@deploymentpsych.org

Website: <http://deploymentpsych.org/>

Remarks: Don't let the name throw you off. This Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (Department of Defense) resource "...trains military and civilian behavioral health professionals to provide high-quality, culturally-sensitive, evidence-based behavioral health services to military personnel, veterans and their families." It is probably one of the best training one-stops available: webinars, seminars, current professional literature, 'apps'.

Master Websites

<<http://www.samhsa.gov/>> ... from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), an essential source.

<<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/posttraumaticstressdisorder.html>> ... from the of the U.S. National Library of Medicine, National Institute of Health (NIH) ...very comprehensive

<<http://thirdofalifetime.wordpress.com/>>... a concerned citizen's compendium of useful information.

<<http://www.psychologyinfo.com/problems>> ... Psychology Information Online ... good for definitions of mental health problems.

<http://www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov/family_and_caregiver_support/family_support> ... from the Departments of Defense, Labor and Veterans Affairs, the National Resource Directory was created as a one-stop for connecting wounded warriors, service members, veterans, and their families with those who support them.

<<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/>> ... from the VA's National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, its authority and a source site for others.

<<http://www.dcoe.health.mil/>> ... from the Defense Centers of Excellence (DCoE) for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury ... very complete.

<<http://www.behavioralhealth.army.mil/>> ... from the U.S. Army Medical Department ... a very robust site.

Websites Last Accessed: 20 April 2016