



State of Vermont
Department of Mental Health
Office of the Commissioner
103 South Main Street
Wasson Hall
Waterbury, VT 05671-2510
www.mentalhealth.vermont.gov

Agency of Human Services

[phone] 802-241-4008
[fax] 802-241-4009
[tty] 800-253-0191

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Dear Provider

As commissioner of the Department of Mental Health I am great concern that Vermonters who are in need of supports to address health, mental health, and substance abuse conditions can have access to that help. Since I became commissioner in 2007 I have kept informed on the needs of combat veterans and their families as the men and women of our armed forces follow their orders to deploy in Iraq and Afghanistan. As many of you are aware, a large contingent of Vermont National Guard troops were sent on such a deployment late last year and will be returning to Vermont in the next few months. The Guard, the US Department of Defense, and the U S Department of Veterans Affairs, and others have been supporting this deployment. The plans for support of veterans and their families upon reunification have been identified, but your help, being part of the group of Vermonters to help meet those needs, is needed..

I am writing to request that you strongly consider being a partner in filling the need for mental health and substance use services for returning veterans, especially those Vermonters in the National Guard who will be returning in significant numbers over the next few months. You may already be among the number of licensed mental health professionals both in the Designated Agencies and in private practice who have applied to be providers under TRICARE, the primary insurer for veterans and their families. If so, thank you for joining the growing number of persons providing such services. However, according to information from TRICARE and the Guard it appears that we now have about 20-25% participation by licensed providers who have been approved for reimbursement and more are needed. As many of you are aware one prime issue in addressing mental health needs is availability of a range of providers, thus in this is a case of more is better.

The requests for mental health and support services for veterans and their families will be increasing as troops return in the near future. DMH, in league with a host of organizations and individuals focused on veteran's healthcare, has expressed to federal partners and the congressional delegation our concern that both masters level psychologists and substance abuse counselors have been excluded from reimbursement by TRICARE. We will continue to press for some changes to this practice; however, this situation increases the need for TRICARE to have providers who are eligible, especially those who are trained to address substance use as well as mental health conditions. While DMH does not endorse any insurance product, in this case TRICARE is the one chosen by the federal government as the dominant entity that veterans and their families will be likely to use.

The need for you to lend your expertise in addressing the mental health needs of veterans and their families is highest in the northern part of our state, especially the Northeast Kingdom.

However, signing up to be in TRICARE provider in any part of the state would be of help to this cause. I urge you to contact TRICARE to be of service to your fellow Vermonters who have placed themselves in harms way, and for the families that support them. To begin the application process you can go to www.mhn.com and click on "**Provider Portal**", then click on "**visit MHN's Provider Portal**". On that page you will find a button for "**Join our Network**". After reviewing the information there you can click a button at the bottom of the page, "**MHN Network Participation Request Form**", to sign up as a provider. The entire process to become a MHN/TRICARE eligible provider will take at least 6 weeks to process, however, the need for care for veteran's and families will be an ongoing as both make the adjustment of being back home together.

Another option also exists for individual providers who want to participate in helping veterans is to make contact with Military OneSource and signing up to be a provider through a different portal. MOS pays providers for services for an individual veteran for up to 12 sessions per participant. This may be an avenue that is easier for those in individual practices to sign up for.

Providers looking to join the Military OneSource Team team must have a Master's degree or higher in counseling, social work, psychology, or a related mental health profession. MD's (psychiatrists) are not eligible. Providers must have a state license. See our [Affiliate Provider Network Criteria](#) for more information. Brooke Lockwood-Cole, who is the Director of Psychological Health for the Guard may be of assistance in this effort and can be reached via email at: brooke.lockwood-cole@ceridian.com.

New providers can apply to join the MOS network at www.CeridianProviderSolutions.com or contact the Military Provider Network Services at 1-800-367-3920 for further information. **Disclaimers:** *Military OneSource counseling services are not part of TRICARE. Provider Services are a part of the Ceridian EAP network. If you are an existing Military OneSource provider, please contact Military Provider Network Services with questions about rates, paperwork, or referrals. Network providers near Military instillations do not coordinate care for Military OneSource referrals with base personnel. Providers contact Military OneSource consultants or Provider Services to discuss care.*

Again, I urge you to take this step to help our fellow Vermonters who may benefit for years to come by having local access to assistance in returning home to families, friends, and work colleagues.

Sincerely,


Michael Hartman,
Commissioner