



# Presentation to the House Committee on Defense and Veterans Affairs

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# Veterans Mental Health Program

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- DSHS began developing mental health services for returning veterans and their families in 2009
- Purpose of the program is to build trust, camaraderie, and hope through interaction with:
  - A well-coordinated network of trained peers
  - Clinicians trained in military-informed care
  - Accessible community based resources

# Peer-to-Peer Counseling

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- FY 14 DSHS trained 986 individuals in Peer to Peer Counseling skills
- **33,629 peers** were served in FY 2014 by Peer to Peer Counseling
- 35 volunteer coordinators in 33 Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs)
  - 13 new volunteer coordinators added in FY 14

- 2 field clinicians added in FY 14
  - Short-term counseling
  - Organization/training for military-informed providers
  - Suicide prevention training
  - Direct counseling services
- Identified military-informed professionals
  - 26 medical professionals
  - 58 professional counselors

# Peer and Coordinator Training

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- 986 peers trained using DSHS approved curricula
- Volunteer coordinators trained through:
  - 96 site visits
  - 2 statewide events
  - Volunteer coordinator handbook
  - Web-based sessions
- Enhanced community partnerships with veteran serving entities

# Veterans Mental Health Grants

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- DSHS–TVC joint program
  - \$1.55 million awarded to 11 local and regional veterans mental health projects
  - Grantees are to projected to serve over 5,000 vets
  - Service area includes 94 counties

- **DSHS-TDCJ partnership**
  - Volunteer coordinators provide peer support in jail to veteran offenders
  - Veterans treatment courts (12 LMHAs)
  - Jail Diversion Trauma Recovery Project (9 LMHAs)
- **DSHS-TDCJ pilot project**
  - Pre-and post-release peer support
  - Veteran-only dormitory at Travis State Jail with 24 participants
  - Provide continuum of care, reduce recidivism