

COMBAT AND OPERATIONAL STRESS REACTIONS

FORT BLISS COSC TEAM
William Beaumont Army Medical Center
Department of Behavioral Health

Things YOU Need to Know
for the
Apartment Association

PURPOSE

- ◉ To inform property managers and customer service professionals of the unique issues facing Military Soldiers and family members.
- ◉ To identify signs that your tenants may need help from appropriate Military agencies.
- ◉ To identify the differences in PTSD and Combat and Operational Stress Reactions (COSR).
- ◉ To provide the tools needed to appropriately address the concerns of your tenants.

ISSUES FACED BY MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

- Unlike other populations within the El Paso community, Military service members and families are faced with unique challenges daily.
 - Deployment Cycles
 - Deployment cycles are ongoing in our El Paso Military community. Soldiers are either preparing to deploy or deploying at all times.
 - Family Separation
 - Whether Soldiers are deployed out of state, overseas, or simply engaged in long term field exercises, family separation is an issue.
 - Financial Strain
 - In some cases, Soldiers in our community are faced with maintaining multiple residences, resulting in expected financial strain.

THE DEPLOYMENT CYCLE



THE DEPLOYMENT CYCLE CONT...

- Soldiers and families preparing for deployment or redeployment are faced with various stressors.
 - Anxiety
 - Soldiers preparing to deploy are undoubtedly faced with anxiety about a) entering a potentially dangerous environment, b) leaving behind loved ones, c) meeting all obligations both at home and on the front line, d) missing important milestones.
 - Those returning Soldiers (redeploying Soldiers) may experience a sense of anxiety because they do not know what to expect when they get home. While they have been deployed, their families have continued going through the day to day processes.

FAMILY SEPARATION AND REUNIFICATION



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- Similar to the Soldier experiencing anxiety upon his/her return, the family members also experience anxiety as the Soldier prepares to come home.
 - Anxiety may stem from not knowing if or how the Soldier may behave differently.
 - Will things at home return to how they were prior to the deployment?
 - Will the children react to their mom/dad the same or will they have some resentment?

FINANCIAL STRAIN

- Family members may relocate during extended deployments.
- The cost of such relocations and maintenance of multiple residences may be unexpected and unmanageable for some Soldiers.
- For the deployed Soldier, very little can be done when family members decide to relocate during the deployment.
- What are some of the ways YOU have dealt with or can deal with such situations?

WHAT IS COSR

- The adverse reactions Soldier's may experience when exposed to combat or combat-like situations.
- Other terms used to describe COSRs
 - Shell Shock
 - Soldier's Heart
 - Battle Fatigue
 - Battle Exhaustion
- COSR symptoms may mimic behavioral health/psychiatric illnesses.
- These reactions are transient and in response to combat or operational stress.

WHAT CAUSES COSR

- ◉ Physical illness
- ◉ Traumatic events
- ◉ Home front issues
- ◉ Financial concerns
- ◉ Unit issues
- ◉ Chemical brain changes
- ◉ Lack of sleep

WHAT CAUSES COSR

- ◉ COSR may result from one or multiple events experienced by the Soldier or the family members.
- ◉ The stress experienced is usually temporary and can be resolved if dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner.
- ◉ While COSR can be caused from minor stressors, like long work days, more severe stressors may result in COSR.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COSR

- ◉ ALL Soldiers experience COSR!
- ◉ The nature of the job these individuals engage in on a daily basis in combination with the unique set of responsibilities and challenges faced by this population result in COSR.
- ◉ Not every Soldier experiencing COSR needs special assistance.
- ◉ The stressors may resolve themselves.
- ◉ Soldiers may be able to resolve stressors through already established support systems.

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

- ◉ Less than 25% of Soldiers returning from Iraq/Afghanistan will be effected by PTSD.
- ◉ Unlike COSR, the symptoms PTSD are long-lasting and impact one's ability to meet his/her daily demands.
- ◉ Soldiers experiencing PTSD NEED to seek professional help.
- ◉ Only a qualified medical professional is able to determine whether an individual has PTSD.

WHAT CAN YOU DO

- If you encounter a tenant who may need assistance:
 - Provide the tenant the informational handouts available to you.
 - Let the tenant know that you care about his/her well-being.
 - In extreme cases, contact the appropriate Military agencies to report incidents.
 - When faced with irate tenants, do not take the situation personally. Remember YOU are not the source of the tenant's rage.
 - Be empathic and provide solutions that you can offer.

SIGNS THAT YOUR TENANTS MAY NEED HELP

- ◉ Late payments or no payments at all
- ◉ Noise complaints from other residents
- ◉ Damage to rental units
- ◉ Reports of unattended children
- ◉ Unusual activity in/outside of the unit
- ◉ Information gained directly from the Soldier or family member
- ◉ Visibly edgy or irritable tenants
- ◉ Frequent verbal altercations with other tenants.

WHEN TO CONTACT WHOM

- ◉ If you are aware of situations of child neglect or abuse - report these incidents to the Military Police
- ◉ Violent arguments should be reported to the Military Police
- ◉ Soldiers expressing thoughts of hurting or killing themselves or others should be reported to the Military Police
- ◉ Persistent late payments should be reported to a Soldier's Command

RESOURCES FOR YOU

- ◉ If you are concerned about one of your Military service members or family members determine which agency may be best to contact.
- ◉ If you are not sure which resource to use, contact **US** first.

Combat and Operational Stress Control
Program

915-204-3490

915-208-8392

915-204-3988

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Army Community Service

915-568-1132

Family Advocacy Program

915-569-2800

William Beaumont Army Medical Center Emergency Room

915-569-2209

Fort Bliss Military Police

915-568-1236

Army One Source (24/7)

800-464-8107 or www.armyonesource.com

Military One Source

800-342-9647 or www.militaryonesource.com

HELPING YOUR MILITARY AND THEIR FAMILIES

- ◉ Please, use the information you have to assist your Military service members and their families in living the healthiest, safest lifestyles possible.
- ◉ After all, you have the potential to be the first and last person these individuals see or speak to on a daily basis.
- ◉ Give them the tools they need to get the assistance they need!
- ◉ Once you have informed the appropriate agencies, **YOU HAVE DONE YOUR PART** in helping your Soldiers and family members!

THANK YOU!

- ◉ Thank you for your commitment to serving and assisting our Military community!
- ◉ Each of you play an important role in making our service members and their families feel a part of the El Paso community.

QUESTIONS

