Respite Care Supporting our Nation’s Wounded Warriors

Take Off with Respite – 2017 National Lifespan Respite Conference
Huntsville, Alabama
October 11 – 13, 2017

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Tanya McKee, Elizabeth Dole Fellow - Alabama
Agenda

• Welcome & Introductions
• Dole Caregiver Fellow
• Statistics, similarities & differences military and civilian caregivers
• Respite scenario
• Action steps
• Resources
• Grants for Lifespan Respite Coalitions
Learning Objectives

- Participants will:
  - Identify the unique circumstances of military caregivers in comparison to their civilian counterparts
  - Increase knowledge related to providing respite support for service members/veterans and their families
  - Learn about specialized military caregiver respite scenarios
  - Be able to identify at least 3 new resources related to the delivery of respite services supporting military caregivers
About Easterseals

• Established in 1919
• 74 U.S. Affiliates with partners in Puerto Rico, Canada, Mexico and Australia
  • 550+ service sites
• Headquarters – Chicago with Office of Public Affairs in DC
• Premier nonprofit provider of services for people with disabilities and other special needs and their families across the lifespan
• Supporting service members, Veterans & their families since WWII
“When one member joins the military, the whole family serves”
On April 19, 2008, my son, Matthew sustained a severe traumatic brain injury. Matthew was serving in the Army at the time of his injury. With over 30 years of experience as a critical care nurse, I was ready to take on the role as his caregiver. Since his injury, Matthew has made exceptional progress and I am learning how to address each challenge as it comes along. Sometimes, this means thinking outside of the box.

My entire adult life has always been about caregiving. As both his mother and his critical care nurse, taking care of Matthew is the most challenging thing I’ve ever done. With everything that has changed in our lives, including helping our family adjust and coping with the loss of friends, we move forward. The most important thing for a caregiver is to seek help, this is the most difficult, yet most rewarding, job you will ever have. And you must always move forward, for yourself and for your loved one.
Hidden Heroes
America’s Military Caregivers
Rajeev Ramchand, Terri Tanielian,
Michael P. Fisher, Christine Anne Vaughan, Thomas E. Traill,
Caroline Epley, Phoenix Voorhes, Michael William Robbins,
Eric Robinson, Bonnie Ghosh-Dastidar

Key facts and statistics from the RAND Military Caregivers Study

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9% of U.S. adults are caregivers

16.9 million
civilian caregivers

4.4 million
Pre-9/11 military caregivers

1.1 million
Post-9/11 military caregivers
CAREGIVERS GIVING CARE TO PEOPLE WHO SERVED pre-9/11 r from CAREGIVERS GIVING CARE TO PEOPLE WHO SERVED post-9/11

RECIPIENTS

RECIPIENTS
Threats to the future of caregiving: aging parents and young marriages

- 25% of post-9/11 caregivers are parents
- Perceived quality of caregiver-recipient couples' relationships:
  - 5.0
  - 3.4

% over 75 years old

- 2013: 0%
- 2018: 25%
- 2023: 50%
- 2028: 75%
Respite Providers
Supporting Military Caregivers

• Recognize, value and validate military culture
  – Hire service members, veterans and their families
• Know key military values and beliefs
• Diversity of Veterans and their experiences
• Prevalence of specific physical & behavioral health concerns
• Develop partnerships/collaborations
Respite Scenario

Jun was in Iraq when the truck he was in hit an IED and blew up. He was blown out of the truck, receiving severe burns on his arms, chest, and part of his face. Airlifted to Landstuhl Army Regional Medical Center in Germany, he later spent significant time at the San Antonio Military Medical Center while having operations and skin grafts. The scar tissue on his arms makes it difficult to reach all the way forward and even 2 years later, he still tires easily. Portions of his bottom lip had to be reconstructed, so sometimes his words aren’t always clear when speaking.

He reports that, “People I meet sometimes have a hard time dealing with my burns. They try not to stare at my face and some seem uncomfortable when I extend my hand to shake theirs.”

Jun studied to be a bookkeeper while he was healing and going through therapy. “After all, my brain still works great, it’s just my body that isn’t like it used to be,” he says with a smile.

Discussion Questions:
1. What factors might you and Jun want to keep in mind when planning activities?
2. How might you approach difficult public situations such as those described by Jun?
Respite Provider discussion exercise

• How might these core values impact Military caregivers:
  – Reaching out for respite support?
  – Your relationship with the caregiver?
  – With the veteran?

WARRIOR ETHOS
I will always place the mission first
I will never accept defeat
I will never quit
I will never leave a fallen comrade
Respite Provider discussion exercise:
Differences based on era. . .

» World War II (1939 – 1945)
» Korean War (1950 – 1953)
» Gulf War (1991)
» Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) – (2001 – present)
» Operation New Dawn (Iraq) – (2010 – present)

National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization:  www.wehonorveterans.org
Psycharmor:  www.psycharmor.org
Resources & References

VA Caregiver Support
- Additional information, and information supporting Veterans’ families, and caregivers
- Caregiver Support Coordinators
- Toll-free Caregiver Support Line – 1-855-260-3274
- www.caregiver.va.gov

National Military Family Association
- Programs that strengthen, and protect uniformed service families
- Children on the Homefront: The Experience of Children from Military Families
- www.militaryfamily.org
Resources & References

Elizabeth Dole Foundation
• National Coalition for Military Caregivers
• Dole Caregiver Fellows Program
• www.hiddenheroes.org
• www.elizabethdolefoundation.org

Military Veteran Caregiver Network
• www.milvetcaregivernetwork.org

Easterseals
• Military Caregiver Tobacco Cessation Toolkit
• www.easterseals.com/militarycaregiver
Resources & References

PsychArmor

- Providing free education and support on how to work with, live with, or care for military veterans.
- www.psycharmor.org
- Toll-free line "Helping You Help Veterans" Support Center at 844-PsychArmor

RAND “Hidden Heroes” study and other resources

- The RAND Military Caregivers Study focuses on the caregivers of wounded, ill, and injured military servicemembers and veterans.
- www.rand.org/military-caregivers
Resources & References

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Cooperative Extension System
• Military Families Learning Network webinars
• Other military caregiver resources
• [www.extension.org](http://www.extension.org)  
  – (search “military caregivers”)
• eXtension – resource pages for Caregivers and Military Caregivers

ARCH National Respite Network
• NEW Tools and Resources specific to military respite
• [www.archrespite.org](http://www.archrespite.org)
Hidden Heroes Respite Grants

- $500 each for up to 10 Coalitions
- Creative mechanisms to enhance respite supporting military caregivers
- Brief application
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