

# The Development and Initial Evaluation of a Call Center for Concerned Family Members of Military Veterans



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*Coaching Into Care* is a program developed by the Department of Veterans Affairs to educate and provide support to people surrounding the Veteran to promote help-seeking behavior. The call center receives calls from family members and friends who are looking for help regarding how to talk with the Veteran in their lives about their decision to seek care. Call center responders provide referrals, information, and support in **initial** calls and **follow-up** calls. A portion of callers receive **coaching** by masters or doctoral prepared coaches over a series of calls.

**Purpose:** The project examined the success in the development of outreach and success in eliciting calls from our target audience. We also examined initial evidence of success in supporting a cohort of N = 165 callers receiving coaching who were helping Veterans seek mental health care. The program evaluation study period extended from October 2014 - June 2015.

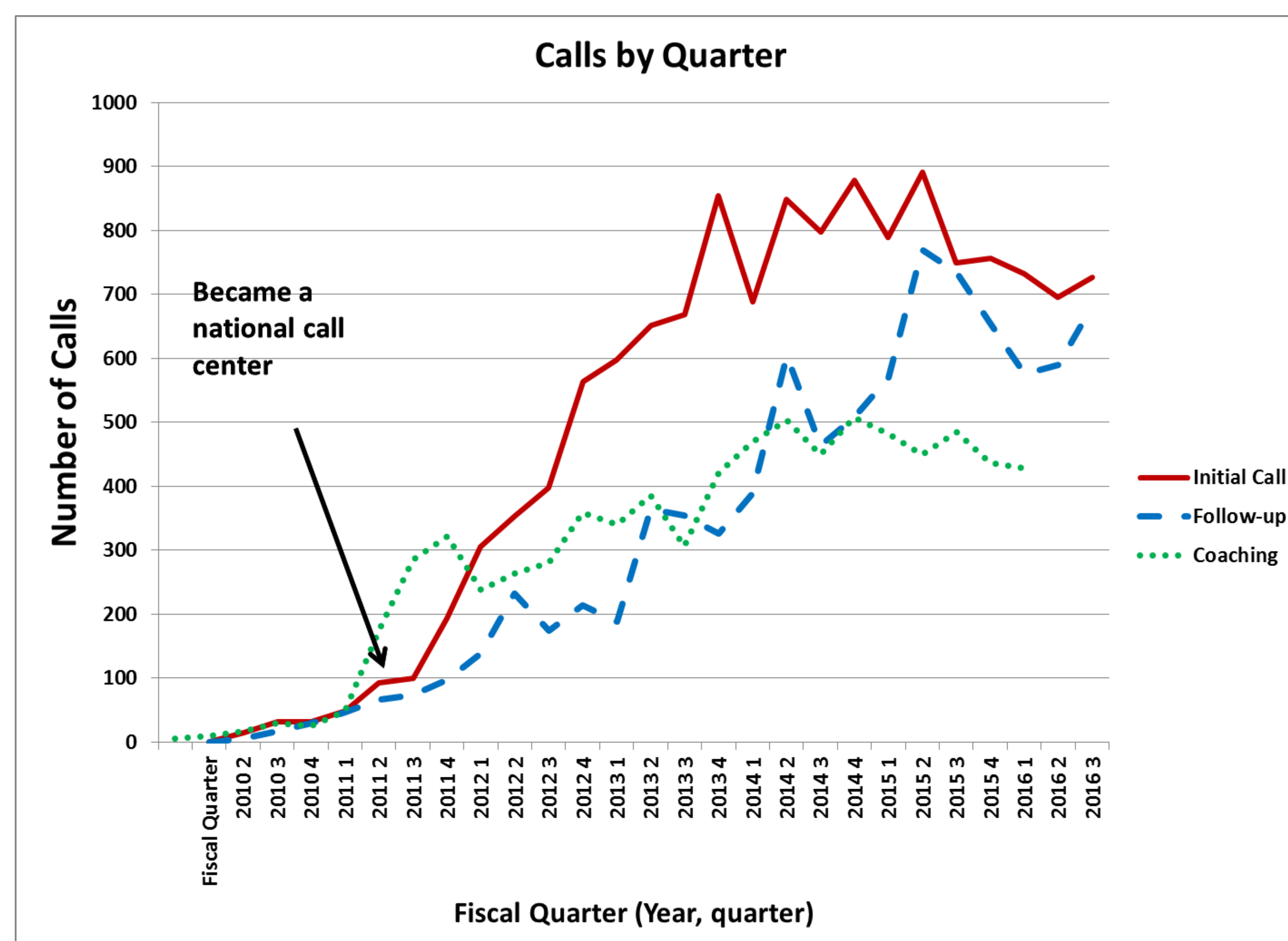
**Branch of Veteran about whom the caller was concerned** — Army (45%), Marines (22%), Navy (13%), Air Force (10%), Coast Guard (1%)

## Coaching Cases in Program Evaluation Sample (N = 165)

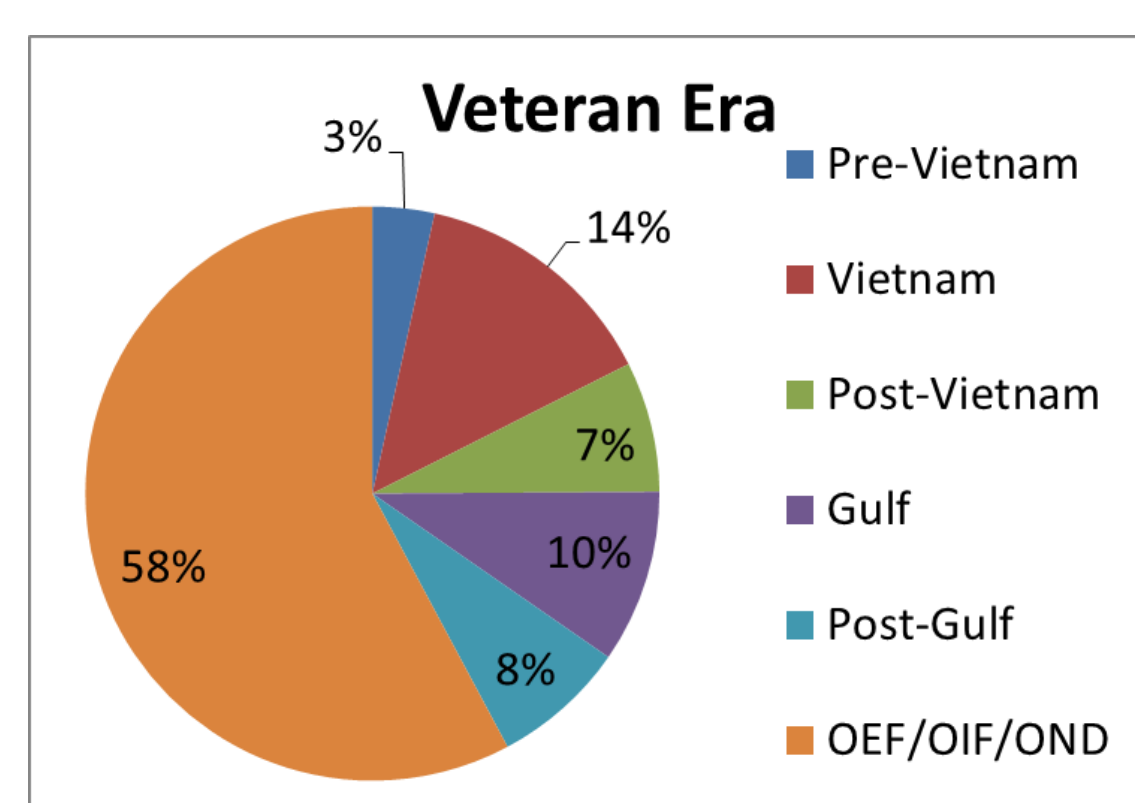
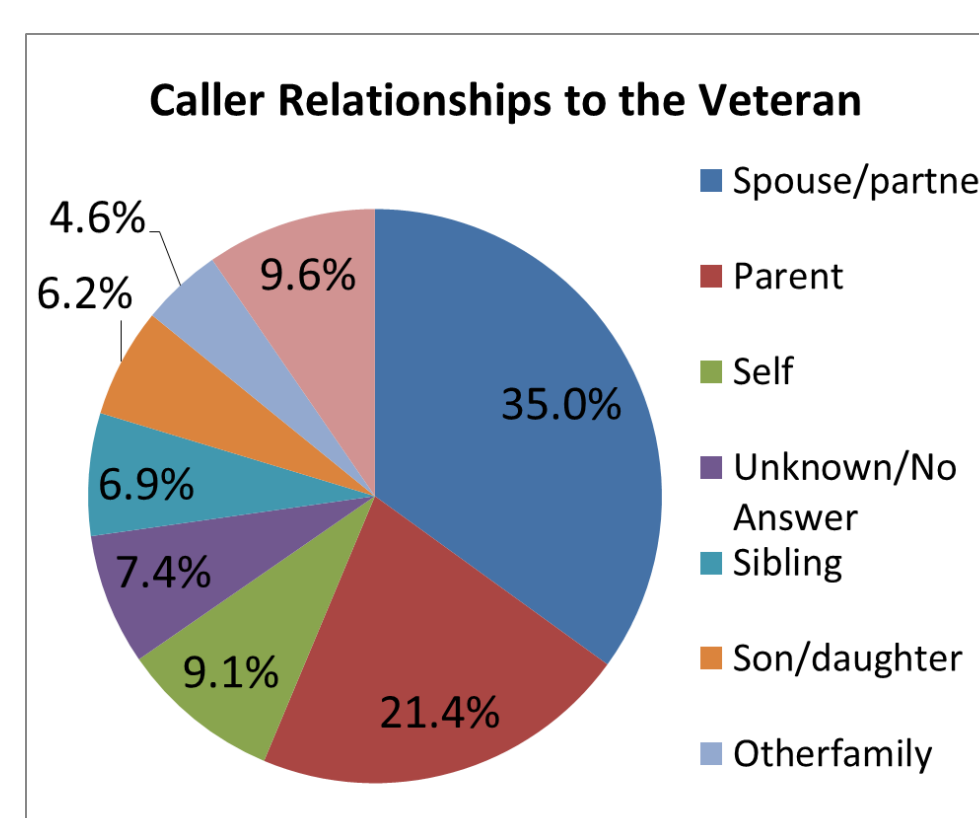
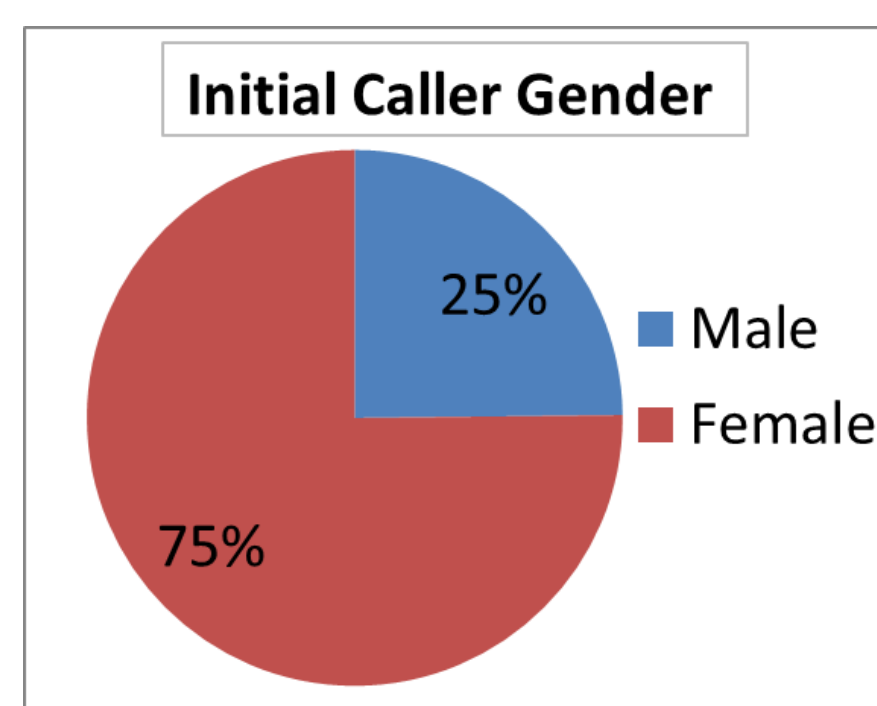
- Cases referred for coaching who had received at least 1 coaching call starting in October, November or December of 2014
- The evaluation period extended for six months after the initial call—Outcome: mental health treatment engagement (yes vs. no)
- M = 17 calls per caller

## Engagement/Referral Strategies

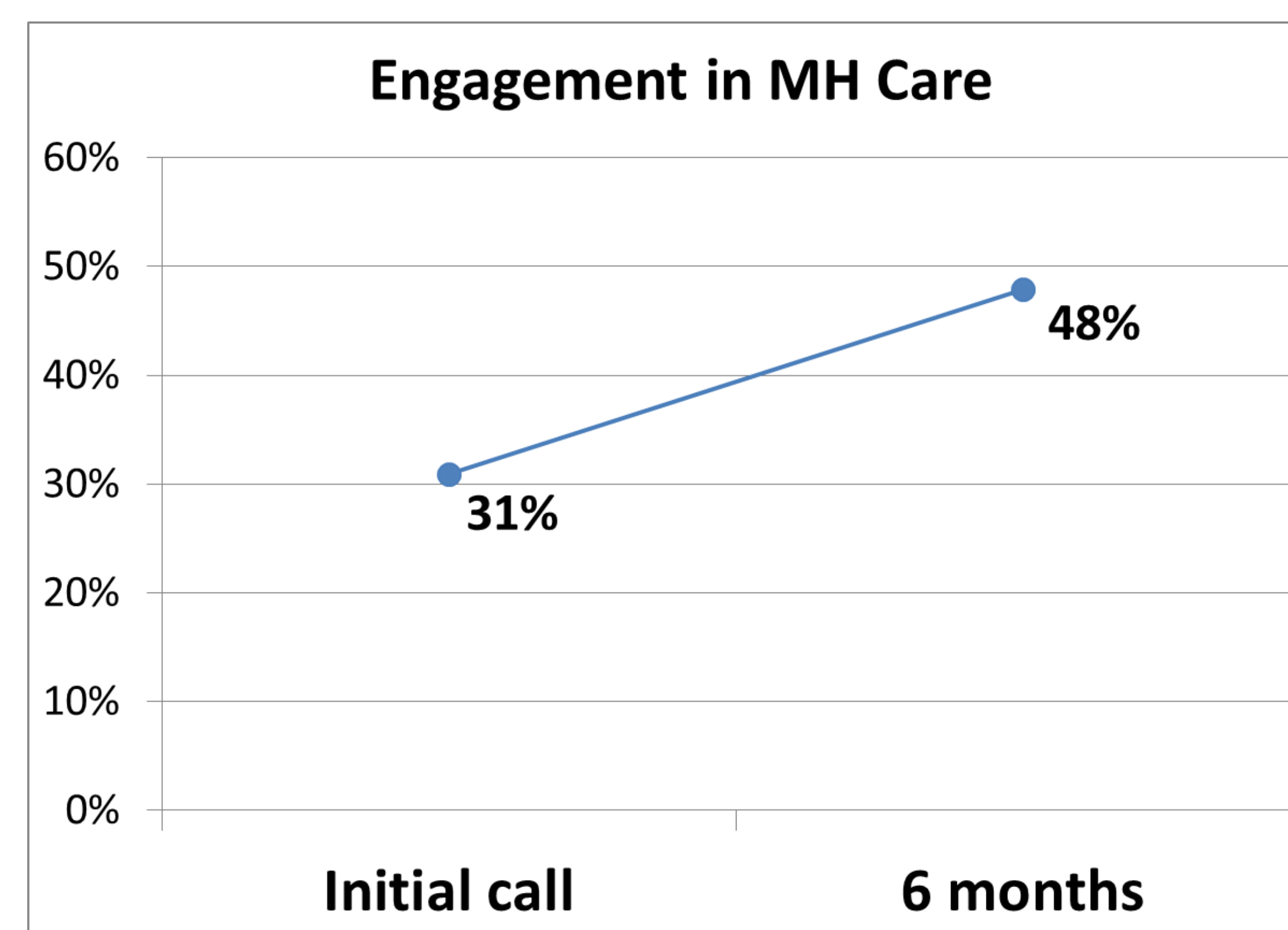
- Veterans Crisis Line referrals, 32.5%
- Internet (web sites, Google ads), 11.4%
- Other, 6/9%
- VA Staff referrals, 5.3%
- Direct referral from individuals, 2.9%
- VA Caregiver Support Line, 1.8%
- Printer materials, 0.8%
- Traditional and Social Media, 0.4%
- Missing (or source unstated), 37.8%



## Callers and Veterans



## Initial program evaluation data indicate moderate success in helping Veterans choose to seek mental health



Poster presentation at the Annual Convention for the Society for Behavioral Medicine, March 29, 2017.

Among those callers in our examination cohort receiving coaching (N = 165), initially 31% of Veterans were engaged in some type of mental health care; 6 months of coaching calls was associated with an almost 50% increase in Veterans' receiving mental health care (up to 48%), which was statistically significant ( $p < .0001$ ), using McNemar's test. Overall, 76.2% of the callers reported obtaining the service they "hoped for," 76.9% were "more hopeful," and 85.2% felt "more prepared to the help the Veteran."