SRM Toolkit: Veterans Day Drop-in Article

This Drop-in Article can be featured on a blog, on your website, or in a newsletter to share important facts about Veterans, their potential risk for suicide, why providers may need some additional support, and how the Suicide Risk Management Consultation Program (SRM) can help. To post this article, copy/paste the text out of the Word document.

3 Ways Mental Health Providers can #BeThere for Veterans in 2020

The uncertainty of this year has brought increased challenges to those serving Veterans, especially for those providing mental health care. Whether you work with Veterans in VA or in the community, this difficult time may have created increased feelings of isolation, loneliness, sadness, fear, or anxiety.

As expert clinicians and researchers supporting VA’s [Suicide Risk Management Consultation Program](https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/consult/index.asp) – known as SRM – we know you care deeply about your patients and their well-being. This Veterans Day, to honor those who served our nation, we explain three ways you can [#BeThere](https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/support/be-there) and provide the care Veterans need and deserve.

**1. Understand that each Veteran has unique experiences from their military service.**

Every Veteran has a unique story and experience from their military service, which make them resilient but can also present challenges for them. Many factors can increase the risk for Veteran suicide including trauma, traumatic brain injuries, chronic pain and stress from relationships, jobs, or homelessness. Symptoms such as sadness, hopelessness, feeling like a burden, isolation, and insomnia can be warning signs that a Veteran is high risk for suicide. Understanding their experiences and health care needs helps guide treatment and recovery.

**2. Access free consultation, training and resources.**

When treating Veterans at risk for suicide, remember there are many free resources available to help guide your treatment decisions. You can [request a free consultation](https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/consult/request-a-consult.asp) with SRM about a wide array of topics including suicide risk assessment, management of suicidal behaviors, documentation strategies, lethal means safety counseling, conceptualization of high-risk cases, postvention, and more.

**3. Prioritize your self-care journey.**

The work you do is rewarding and yet, it can be challenging at times. To continue to provide effective treatment, it is important to be able to identify personal challenges, recognize vulnerabilities, and foster balance. Self-care is a necessary practice to maintain physical, emotional and psychological health. You can access [SRM’s free monthly lecture series](https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/consult/tools-and-training.asp#lecture-series), [postvention resources](https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/postvention/) and more to [help manage your stress and reduce burnout.](https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/consult/sharpen-your-skills.asp)

From treating complex care needs to quick questions about resources related to suicide prevention, all providers treating Veterans at risk for suicide can request free resources, training and consultation by sending an email to [srmconsult@va.gov](mailto:srmconsult@va.gov).

To learn more about how the SRM program benefits both Veterans and providers, [click here.](https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/consult/learn-how-srm-helps.asp#video)

SRM is a [Rocky Mountain Mental Illness Research Education Clinical Centers (MIRECC)](https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/index.asp) program supported by VA’s [Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/index.asp).