



# **New Mexico Veterans And Mental Health Issues**

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- MESSAGE WHEN TRYING TO CONNECT TO THE:

**NEW MEXICO VETERANS COUNSELING AND THERAPY PROJECT**

# NM Veteran Suicide Statistics

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According to the New Mexico VA Health Care System

New Mexico is ranked 4<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation for veteran suicide rate

1 veteran commits suicide every 4 days, or 75-90 veterans commit suicide per year

Source: Dr. Brenda Mayne, NMVAHCS report on DVS Suicide Prevention Discussion Part 2

# Are we doing enough?

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State Government Funding for Veteran Mental Health Care

According to the NM Legislature Website

There were 77 bills introduced that had anything to do with mental health.

Of those 77 bills, only two had any mention of veterans:

HB 2 - \$25,000 for Veterans Treatment Courts in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Judicial District

SB 277 - \$97,600 to DVS for Disabled Veterans

\$97,600 to DVS for homeless Veterans



# New Mexico Veteran Population

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According to the New Mexico Department of Veteran Services, as of January 2021

Total Veteran Population: 151,279

Vietnam Veterans: 53,251

Gulf War (including Post 9/11) Veterans: 63,703

According to the New Mexico Department of Veteran Services, as of January 2020

Total Veteran Population: 154,172

Vietnam Veterans: 53,017

Gulf War (including Post 9/11) Veterans: 62,094

Source: NMDVS Annual Report 2021 and 2020



# Programs for Veterans

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DVS is hosting online suicide prevention talks in cooperation with VA

Vet Centers are offering online appointments

Non-profits that once partnered with DVS to offer mental health services are disappearing

Horses for Heroes – Rick Iannuci – Santa Fe

Healing America's Heroes – Eddie Crain – Northern New Mexico

PMS – Statewide (qualifications must be met, insurance, VA benefits)

# What can you do?

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Over 115,000 of current 156,000 veterans are within the categories that MAY eventually need mental health services. Vietnam, Gulf War, and Post 9/11 veterans.

How much funding appropriated for Veteran's Mental Health in the past two years? 0

What is the cost of underfunding Veteran Mental Health? 75-90 New Mexicans

What can you do?

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall

Veteran Treatment Courts

Allow DVS to partner with nonprofit organizations who offer local services

Veterans need a voice on the NM Behavioral Health Collaborative



# Questions

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