

MOBILE VET CENTER (MVC) TO VISIT – Mesa Lands College



Event: Mobile Vet Center (MVC) will be in the Town of Tucumcari, NM for Veteran Outreach

Date: Thursday, January 17, 2013.

Time: 10:00AM - 2:00PM.

Location: Mesa Lands Community College.

Who is Invited: Open to all Veterans, their families, and the general public.

Event Sponsor: Amarillo Vet Center
3414 Olsen Blvd., Suite E
Amarillo, TX 79109

Event Purpose: Provide education about Readjustment Counseling Service offered at Vet Centers. All War Zone Vets qualify for counseling services. War Zone Vets with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or Military Sexual Trauma may receive care at any Vet Center or MVC. We provide 3 Humanitarian visits to Non-War Zone Vets for information and referrals. Certain families of active duty service men and women who died while on active duty may qualify for bereavement services. We provide individual, group, and family counseling.

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READJUSTMENT COUNSELING SERVICE IS AVAILABLE TO RETURNING VETERANS

HISTORY

The Department of Veterans Affairs-Readjustment Counseling Service, or Vet Center for short, offers free counseling to returning veterans and their families in dealing with the effects of war. This program was established in 1979 to deal with the disorder of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD as commonly referred to. The disorder is not new, but the name is. In the past it was known by other names for instance it was called "Soldier's Heart" during the Civil War, by WWI, it was re-named "Shell Shock," during WWII, "Battle Fatigue," Korean War Veterans were diagnosed with "War Neurosis," and Vietnam Veterans were initially labeled with "Vietnam Syndrome."

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

PTSD may occur after a person has been exposed to trauma in which the person experienced or witnessed an event that involved death, serious injury, or mass destruction. This can include events that occur in war; natural disasters; and acts of terrorism, crime, or abuse. For veterans, in particular, stressful traumatic events include: combat zones, peacekeeping missions, training accidents, disasters, medical emergencies, and sexual assaults. These events cause the survivor to react with intense fear, helplessness, hopelessness, and horror.

SYMPTOMS OF PTSD

Symptoms of PTSD include, but are not limited to:

- Recurrent, intrusive, and distressing thoughts about the event.
- Recurrent dreams, nightmares (also known as "night-terrors") about the event(s).
- Flashbacks (a sense of reliving the event.)
- Distress caused by reminders of the event (sights, sounds, smells.)
- Alienation from family and loved ones.
- Isolation and avoidance of people and places.
- Emotional numbing and pushing family members away mentally.
- No sense of future and turning to self medicating with alcohol, drugs, or food.
- Survivor's guilt (surviving when other did not –or- behaviors required for survival.)
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep.
- Anger and rage at self and others.
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering details of the event(s).
- Hyper vigilance –or- survivalist behavior.
- Exaggerated startled response (usually to loud noises.)

The latter symptoms are the beginning stage and will be enhanced by life stressors such as finance, employment, or family problems. The Vet Center and other parts of the Department of Veterans Affairs stand ready to provide needed assistance to veterans of all wars; especially the newly completed Iraq War and current Afghan War.

All returning combat veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan have access to free health care from the VA for 5 years from the date of separation which bypasses the normal rules that require determinations of Service-Connected injuries or income levels. The eligibility for counseling services for the Vet Center services are free for war-zone veterans and their families.

VET CENTERS

The Vet Center offers Readjustment Counseling Service in the form of individual; group; and marriage and family counseling. Veterans are provided referrals for benefits assistance. Substance abuse counseling, information, referral, and liaison with community agencies to get the care veterans need. Bereavement counseling is offered to parents, siblings, spouses and children of Armed Forces personnel who die in the service to our country. Also eligible are family members of Reservists and National Guardsmen who die while on federally activated duty. Military Sexual Trauma (MST) is another service offered. MST services range from sexual harassment to the extreme cases of rape and is gender neutral. All Vet Center Staff respect the privacy of all veterans and hold in strictest confidence all information disclosed in the counseling process. No information will be communicated to any person or agency without the written consent except in necessary circumstances to avert a crisis (Privacy Act of 1974.)

MOBILE VET CENTERS

The Mobile Vet Center (MVC) in Amarillo, Texas is one of fifty MVCs used currently throughout the United States. Each MVC is staffed with a technician/driver and 1 MVC Counselor which makes it convenient to provide community education about Vet Center services and bring Readjustment Counseling Service closer to Veterans within the broad geographical community. It is a 38-foot motor coach which has 2 spaces to conduct confidential counseling with private doors and a small waiting room. The MVC has a broad coverage area to include the entire Texas Panhandle, the Oklahoma panhandle, and 3 North-Eastern Counties of New Mexico. It offers most of the services found at Vet Centers; however, the MVC's primary focus is on outreach. MVCs can also be used in support with VA hospital or clinics in the coverage area to provide routine medical services, but can also be converted to support emergency medical missions such as hurricanes and other natural disasters.