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Cohen Veterans Network Announces Grant from Face the Fight® to Enhance Suicide Prevention Efforts for Military-Affiliated Women

CVN to conduct new research and develop evidence-informed suicide prevention and lethal means safety training for clinicians serving women veterans and service members

Stamford, CT., Nov. 21, 2024 – Cohen Veterans Network (CVN), a national not-for-profit network of mental health clinics for post-9/11 veterans, service members and their families, announced today that it has been awarded a grant from [Face the Fight](#) to conduct research related to improving suicide prevention efforts for military-affiliated women. The project aims to close the gap between research and practice with several key deliverables, which will be made available to the field at no cost. The effort is being led by the Cohen Veterans Network Institute for Quality (CVN-IQ), which uses research and innovation to advance the mental health field, in partnership with CVN’s Clinical Programs team.

Suicide among military-affiliated women is a critical issue. Military women are significantly more likely than civilian women to employ firearms in suicide attempts and suicides. In fact, in 2021, the firearm suicide rate among veteran women was 281.1% higher than non-veteran women. Over the past two decades, firearms suicide deaths among veteran women have increased 14.7%.

"Suicide rates among military-affiliated women are significantly higher than those of their civilian counterparts and continue to climb," said Dr. Tracy Neal-Walden, Chief Clinical Officer at Cohen Veterans Network. "Thanks to Face the Fight’s support, we have an opportunity to address the unique needs of these women. Our findings will help us identify solutions to enhance the effectiveness of our training and intervention strategies to reduce suicide risk in this target population."

The project team will first conduct a gap analysis to identify gaps in services, the scientific literature, and between current knowledge and practice by interviewing subject matter experts, followed by a comprehensive literature review. They will then create and implement an evidence-informed suicide prevention and lethal means safety training module, provided via virtual and asynchronous formats, for clinicians treating military and veteran women. Lastly, the team will launch a public awareness campaign to inform and educate the military community on the issues of suicide prevention and secure storage of lethal means.

"Through this initiative, we aim to bridge the gap between research and clinical practice, offering innovative solutions to enhance mental health care for military-affiliated women," said Dr. David Linkh, Director of CVN-IQ. "By leveraging evidence-based strategies, we are committed to developing impactful tools to help advance the field."



CVN treats a significant number of women veterans and service members. Among the network’s veteran clients, women make up nearly 35%. This percentage is more than two times the proportion of female veterans in the United States. Military-affiliated women, including veterans and current service members, comprise approximately 20% of all CVN clients.

“Face the Fight is proud to collaborate with Cohen Veterans Network to tackle the urgent issue of suicide among military-affiliated women,” said Justin Schmitt, AVP of Corporate Responsibility at USAA, which founded Face the Fight. “Our goal is to deliver essential resources and support to women who have served our country, ensuring their mental well-being and safety are prioritized.”

Since its inception in 2016, CVN has treated 77,000 clients and provided over 670,000 clinical sessions. The network treats a wide variety of mental health concerns including transition challenges, depression, anxiety, PTSD, adjustment issues, anger, grief and loss, family issues, relationship problems, and children’s behavioral problems. In addition to therapy, CVN provides comprehensive case management services that support clients with stressors such as unemployment, finances, housing, and more. Care is available through the network’s 22 [Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinics](#), serving 20 states in-person and via CVN Telehealth, face-to-face video therapy.

ABOUT COHEN VETERANS NETWORK

Cohen Veterans Network (CVN) is a 501(c)(3) national not-for-profit philanthropic organization for post-9/11 veterans, active duty service members and their families. CVN focuses on improving mental health outcomes, operating a network of outpatient mental health clinics in high-need communities, in which trained clinicians deliver holistic evidence-based care to treat mental health conditions. It was established in 2016 by philanthropist Steven A. Cohen with a commitment of \$275 million to build the network. Learn more about CVN at cohenveteransnetwork.org.

ABOUT FACE THE FIGHT

Launched in 2023 by founding partners USAA, Reach Resilience and the Humana Foundation, Face the Fight has made strides by bringing together a like-minded coalition of organizations to help reduce veteran suicide through a multi-pronged approach that includes charitable giving, public education and awareness. Face the Fight is committed to supporting every veteran, regardless of their unique needs and challenges, and aspires to dramatically reduce veteran suicide. wefacethefight.org

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