

VHWC DISPATCH

May 2025

FOUNDATION

The VHWC brings together parties to build or expand pathways through which Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and their care partners optimize health and wellness outcomes.

CONTACT US

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CORE TEAM UPDATE

The month of May honors individuals for their service in the armed forces. Broadly, it is designated as National Military Awareness Month. Armed Forces Day was celebrated May 17, 2025, to pay tribute to those currently serving in the armed forces. Memorial Day is observed May 26, 2025, in honor of those who died while serving their country. We also acknowledge the care partners of those who serve. Military Spouse Appreciation Day was May 9, 2025, while Military Caregivers are also highlighted. An unforeseen scheduling issue preempted our planned Memorial Day event and this will be hosted at a later date. However, there are ample local events scheduled across the state. We encourage supporting and connecting with these in remembrance of those who gave their life in service.

May is also designated as Mental Health Awareness Month which brings dedicated programming to increase awareness and break the stigma of mental health. A recent series of presentations from [1 Degree of Separation](#) was offered in partnership with MVAA. These sessions focused on demonstrating supportive conversations with those experiencing depression. A set of five non-judgmental questions are recommended to better understand how to support yourself and others. More information and videos are provided on their website about the five questions:

1. What does your depression feel like?
2. What do others do that makes it worse?
3. What do others do that makes it better?
4. What do you do that makes it worse?
5. What do you do that makes it better?

One of VHWC goals is to disseminate opportunities for engagement and information benefitting those who served and their partners.

We rely on the VHWC network to share information with personal and professional networks. Thank you for sharing the newsletters and referring to the [website](#) for

**MILITARY
SERVICE?**

There may be benefits and resources available to help you through your current situation.

Call 1-800-MICH-VET or visit Michigan.gov/MVAA



updates. We encourage individuals to subscribe on the website to be sure they receive announcements directly.

We remain interested in welcoming ideas for expanding participation. Individuals who have an interest in joining the Advisory Council or want to explore ways to get involved with specific projects should contact us at ihp.vhwc@msu.edu. We plan to convene the Advisory Council in July to share updates on progress. This will provide the opportunity for the larger group to provide input, offer suggestions, insights, and help troubleshoot emerging barriers.

On behalf of the Advisory Council and Administrative Core Team, we honor all who have served and extend our gratitude for your dedication to our country. As we enter the Memorial Day holiday, please join in remembering the fallen.

UPDATES: 2025 PRIORITY AREAS

Thank you to those who have reached out to express interest in serving on the priority area groups. We anticipate distributing project ideas for each priority area soon. A review of our brainstorming summaries identified opportunities to support multiple priority areas through similar initiatives.

Housing Insecurity: Options include a multi-part transition support education series focusing on financial literacy and the relationship to stable housing. Also under consideration are community events to encourage landlord participation with veteran-related housing programs.

Oral Health: Staff are in the process of obtaining additional information from partner organizations regarding workforce issues and current initiatives in place to address these shortages. This information will be used to better inform potential projects.

Suicide Prevention: Options for a multi-part transition support education series focusing on factors to support resilience, facilitating connections to benefits and care, and identifying opportunities to establish social connections are under consideration. Tools and information for care partners would also be developed. A research project evaluating suicide deaths since 2000 would provide a state-based estimate to inform future work.

Transition: Developing a transition screener for use in all settings targeting multiple determinants influencing health and wellness. Considerations include options for a multi-part transition support education series focused on MI resources and supports and supporting multi-modal methods of dissemination (digital approaches, in-person, etc.).

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

Webinars:

We are happy to highlight the following webinar sessions.

- June 4, 2025, 12 pm - 1 pm EST, *Special Populations Grand Round: Post Traumatic Growth and Differing Responses to Trauma*, sponsored by the Michigan Center for Rural Health. Registration is available [here](#) and selected continuing education credit is available.
- SAVE THE DATE: July 14, 2025, 1 pm – 2 pm EST, *Veteran suicide risk and protective factors: Insights gained from structured suicide risk assessments in the Veterans Health Administration*, presented by Dr. Kevin Saulnier. Registration details are forthcoming.

We continue to seek partnerships with those interested in delivering online content on health and wellness topics of interest for veterans and care partners. Please reach out at ihp.vhwc@msu.edu to be included on the speakers bureau list. Be sure to include your contact information, topic(s) of interest, and identify “Speakers Bureau” in the subject line so we can follow-up.

Events:

- The Lansing Area Veterans Coalition is looking for volunteers to help plan and coordinate three upcoming events. Interested volunteers should email:
LansingAreaVeteransCoalition@gmail.com
 - Veteran Resource & Employment Fair – June, 2025
 - Suicide Prevention Training – September, 2025
 - HeroFest 2025 – Saturday, October 4, 2025.

We’re pleased to promote upcoming events through the [Resources and Events](#) tab of our website. Send details about events to ihp.vhwc@msu.edu and we will advertise through our website and list-serves. If you are looking for volunteers to help with events, we will share those requests with our networks to help fill gaps and boost engagement.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Subscribe at our website to make sure you receive the latest updates and information and share this content with your networks.
- Participate with Advisory Council or subcommittee activities.
- Volunteer your expertise: Whether you have ever served in the military, are a health care professional, community leader, or advocate, your input can make a difference.

“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.”

John F. Kennedy
