In 2017, SWAN conducted a comprehensive survey to evaluate the mental wellness needs of military women. To view the full results of the survey go to www.servicewomen.org.

Survey Demographics: 1,295 Participants

Survey Participant Status
- Retired: 22% (290)
- Active: 17% (225)
- Veterans: 61% (809)

Officer/Enlisted Demographics
- Officer: 18% (234)
- Enlisted: 76% (997)
- Both: 6% (85)

MENTAL WELLNESS

Have you ever been told by a professional clinician that you have a depressive disorder, including depression, major depression, dysthemia, or minor depression?
- Yes 60.89% (738)
- No 39.16% (475)

Have you ever been told by a professional clinician that you have a mild, moderate, or severe stress injury (sometimes called post traumatic stress disorder)?
- Yes 51.15% (621)
- No 48.85% (593)

What specifically about military service most positively or negatively impacted, or is impacting, your mental health? (963 answered)
- Military sexual trauma or sexual abuse: 30%
- Sexual harassment: 11%
- Combat deployment: 9%
- Sexism or gender discrimination: 8%
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

During focus and working group sessions military women came up with the following recommendations for improving the mental wellness of their community.

- Provide gender-specific mental wellness assessments with feedback and recommended care options during transition and demobilization activities. This will benefit both women and men. (DOD)
- Develop women-specific transition and demobilization services. Service women have a very different experience of deployment and transition and programs must be tailored to meet women’s specific needs. (DOD)
- Increase access to appropriately trained counselors/therapists in DOD and the VA. Access is often slow, inconsistent and of variable quality. Many therapists have not been trained in how to handle cases of harassment and sexual assault. (DOD and VA)
- Provide funding for alternative therapies like meditation, yoga, massage therapy, acupuncture, etc. Many military women pay out of pocket costs for therapies that they find to be more effective than traditional approaches which rely almost solely on counseling and medication. (DOD and VHA)
- Establish social support groups/networks for military women. (VA/VSO/MSO)
- Improve resource access via a single, cross community resource site. (DOD/VA/MSO)