

STRENGTH IN THE FACE OF STIGMA

Service members returning from deployment face many challenges, including the invisible wounds of mental health conditions.

Unfortunately, many service members believe there is a stigma to seeking care for their mental health needs. Much of this stigma is based on myth, not reality.

Some examples are:

- **Myth:** Seeking mental health will hurt your career.
- **Reality:** Seeking mental health care will ensure you get the appropriate care delivered by trained professionals, and help keep your career on track.

- **Myth:** You will lose the trust of your unit if you admit to mental distress.
- **Reality:** Your unit will trust you more once you seek help and receive care.

- **Myth:** Needing mental health care is a sign of weakness.
- **Reality:** It takes real strength and courage to admit you have a problem and seek help.

If you recognize any signs of a mental health condition in yourself, your family or a friend, speak up. The Military Crisis Line provides help for service members and their families. Confidential support is available by calling 1-800-273-8255. Military OneSource at www.militaryonesource.mil is another resource to help you find care.

Active duty service members may receive mental health care at any military treatment facility without a referral. Other TRICARE beneficiaries don't need a referral or prior authorization for the first eight visits. For more information on TRICARE's mental health coverage, go to www.tricare.mil/mentalhealth.

