

Female Force Readiness Clinical Community

Quarterly Recap | FY21 (November 2020 – January 2021)



The Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) Office of Women's Health (OWH) developed this Recap with the purpose of highlighting current initiatives, updates, decisions, and discussions which took place during the previous three months. We will regularly disseminate the Recap to the Female Force Readiness Clinical Community (FFRCC), sub-community boards, working groups (WGs), and clinical community members to increase visibility and communication on matters pertaining to women's health.

BUMED OWH Updates

Embedded Women's Health Provider Pilot

The OWH established a pilot program at Naval Station Norfolk and Naval Station Mayport to embed a women's health provider at the waterfront. As of 01 February 2021, 217 patients were seen by an EWHP and an estimated 242 duty hours were saved through access to the embedded provider. Ninety-four percent of patients described the EWHP as their most convenient care setting and the average score of patients' comfort with the provider and confidence in the provider's women's health knowledge is 4.94 out of 5.0.



Photo of CDR Katie Schultz, [Embedded Women's Health Provider](#) taken by Seaman Ariana Torman

Women's Health Website

In collaboration with the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC), the OWH developed a [Women's Health Webpage](#). This webpage offers patient and provider resources developed by the OWH and FFRCC as well as relevant Navy and Marine Corps policies. These resources are organized into subject-matter-based categories (e.g., contraception, nutrition, mental health, etc.) to provide increased access to women's health education. Check it out and share with your community!

Women's Health Readiness Assessment

To collect insights into barriers to female readiness and gaps in the provision of women's healthcare, the OWH designed and executed a comprehensive [Women's Health Readiness Assessment](#). In this Assessment, the OWH spoke with 59 Navy and Marine Corps leaders and operational healthcare providers to uncover ways in which female force readiness can be improved to increase the readiness and deployability of the total force. The findings will guide Navy Medicine to develop and pilot solutions to better equip front-line providers to support service women's deployability and remove barriers that service women may face when fulfilling their medical readiness requirements.

KEY INFORMATION

MilSuite

The following link can be used to access the Navy Medicine FFRCC milSuite site, as well as various sub-community sites: <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/navy-medicine-womens-health-community>

Key Points of Contact BUMED OWH:

CDR Catherine Luna

Female Force Readiness Advisory Board (FFRAB) Chair:

CDR Shari Gentry

FFRAB Vice Chair:

CDR Monica Ormeno:

Mental Health Sub-Community Board (MHSCB) Chair:

CDR Francine Segovia

MHSCB Vice Chair:

LCDR Ashley Clark

Neuromusculoskeletal Sub-Community Board (NMSK SCB) Chair:

CDR Michael Arnold

Family Planning Sub-Community Board (FPSCB) Chair:

CDR Candace Foura

Female Force Readiness Clinical Community

Quarterly Recap | FY21 (November 2020 – January 2021)



CLINICAL COMMUNITY UPDATES

I. FFRAB

- The FFRAB oversees three WGs focused on resource development and process improvement. The Command Climate Survey Question Development (CCSQD) WG submitted 14 agree/disagree Likert Scale questions and 4 short answer questions for inclusion within the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute's (DEOMI) Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS).
- The Women's Health Education for Line Leadership (WHELL) WG finalized the Leadership Guide for line leaders to increase their understanding of pertinent women's health issues and female medical readiness requirements.
- The Women's Health Training Toolkit (WHTT) WG is currently developing a 'Toolkit' to include curriculum and content for individual operational medical units to host educational and engaging trainings on women's health and female force readiness.

II. MHSCB

- The MHSCB developed two resources on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), a provider handout including IPV indicators, screening questions, actions providers can take, and the IPV reporting processes, as well as a flowchart of the IPV reporting options for patients.
- The Cultural Competency Training WG is in final stages of developing a Guide for operational providers to convey the importance of cultural competency to force readiness.
- The Mental Health Provider Survey was designed to assess mental health provider knowledge of and willingness to treat female-specific mental health concerns. The survey went live in October 2020 and closed 31 January 2021. Survey results will be used to inform future training decisions and educational opportunities for active duty Navy Medicine mental health providers. The Survey Team is now in the data analysis phase of the project.

III. NMSK SCB

- A NMSK SCB Tiger Team is developing a self-directed program to prevent hip and back pain in female Sailors and Marines. The Tiger Team created the exercise program with input from NMSK SCB members and athletic trainers. It offers three different levels of difficulty and the Tiger Team is finalizing video scripts for each exercise.

IV. FPSCB

- The FPSCB developed multiple resources to advance comprehensive family planning care, including guidance for providers on interventions to address breakthrough bleeding following insertion of a long-acting reversible contraceptive (LARC), clinical practice guidelines on safe extended-duration LARC use, and patient education tools on the safety of LARCs, contraception use for menstrual suppression, and accessing emergency contraception.
- The FPSCB is currently developing a resource to guide providers in supporting service members following a pregnancy loss as well as a resource with information for recruiters on the current Navy and Marine Corps policies surrounding birth control at boot camp.

**Upcoming
Meetings 2021**

FFRAB

- 22 February
- 15 March
- 19 April

MHSCB

- 18 February
- 18 March
- 15 April

NMSK SCB

- 03 March
- 07 April
- 05 May

FPSCB

- 04 March
- 01 April
- 06 May

Female Force Readiness Clinical Community

Quarterly Recap | FY21 (November 2020 – January 2021)



Active Duty Experiences of Command Support during COVID-19

The FFRAB will conduct virtual focus groups (Spring 2021) with service women to learn more about active duty female Sailors' and Marines' experiences of support during the COVID-19 pandemic. Focus groups are entirely virtual and information collected will be used to make recommendations to Navy and Marine Corps (USMC) leadership to improve retention of the active duty female population. If you, or someone you know, is interested in participating in the focus groups, email LT Dimberg at sierra.k.dimberg.mil@mail.mil. You must be a female patient or provider at NMC Portsmouth to be eligible.

Updated Policy on Breast Milk Storage

In an update to the Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) Publication 4-86, Food Service Management (signed 16 November 2020), breast milk storage in Food Service Refrigerators and Freezers aboard ships is now explicitly authorized. The policy update includes guidance surrounding requirements for storing breast milk, labeling procedures for safe breast milk storage, and how long breast milk can be stored aboard ships. To store breast milk in food storage, service women must 1) obtain a Food Service Medical Screening, 2) report any symptoms of illness to medical personnel, and 3) clearly label and segregate milk in a clear plastic bag. The instruction references the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for more information on breast milk [safety](#) and [storage](#) requirements.

Postpartum Return to Duty Guide

The OWH developed a Postpartum Return to Duty Transition Guide to share information on the physical and emotional recovery following childbirth, support resources for military families, returning to duty, and Navy and Marine Corps policies related to pregnancy and parenthood. This resource is on the FFRAB milSuite site [here](#).

MHS Pharmacy-Related Contraceptive Update

Medical Treatment Facilities (MTFs) will now dispense the full quantity of contraceptives ordered for a patient by her provider (up to a one-year supply in accordance with DHA PI 6200.02). If an adequate supply of the ordered contraceptive is not in stock, sites should consult with the patient about how she would like to proceed (e.g., partial fill until the balance can be ordered, wait for the full quantity to be in stock, adjust dispensed quantity and refills, etc.). If sites have issues, they should consult their Pharmacy POC.

Defense Health Board 2020 Report on Active Duty Women's Health

The 2020 Defense Health Board (DHB) Report on Active Duty Women's Health Care Services highlights the OWH, the Female Force Readiness Strategy, and the FFRCC as best practices among the Armed Forces. The report recognized the OWH for their work developing and executing a Female Force Readiness Strategy comprised of three tenets (health and wellness, culture, and education) encircled around six goals targeted to improve operational readiness, develop educated patient and provider populations, and deliver integrated care to female Sailors and Marines. The DHB report highlighted the FFRCC for providing a platform for Navy women's health leaders to collaborate and share resources to achieve the collective goal of advancing female force readiness.

Upcoming Women's Health Webinars

Women In Combat Summit: Forging the Future: How Servicewomen Enhance the Fighting Force
09-11 February 2021; Register [here](#)

DHA Clinical Community Speaker Series: Emerging Priorities in Women's Health
25 February 2021; Register [here](#)