

TRAUMA-INFORMED AND PEER-SUPPORTED CARE FOR VETERANS WITH PTSD

A REVIEW OF 4 RESEARCH ARTICLES EXPLORING HOW TRAUMA-INFORMED AND PEER-SUPPORTED INTERVENTIONS, COMPARED TO STANDARD CARE, AFFECT MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES IN VETERANS WITH PTSD.

What I discovered

Veterans with PTSD often avoid traditional mental health care. Trauma-informed and peer-supported approaches help reach these veterans and improve their mental health, quality of life, and willingness to engage in care.

What is Known

- Veterans face real barriers to care: stigma, long distances, distrust of providers, and military culture that values self-resilience.
- Peer support improves engagement, quality of life, and coping
- Trauma-informed care reduces care rejection and aggression in veterans with dementia and PTSD.
- Telephone motivational coaching by fellow veterans improves PTSD symptoms, depression, and self-care in rural veterans.
- Community-based peer mentorship lowers PTSD symptoms, especially in veterans with severe symptoms.
- Veterans respond better when care comes from someone who “speaks their language”.

What is Not Known/Future Research

- There is very little research on trauma-informed and peer-supported care for veterans overall.
- Most existing studies are small piolts, lack control groups, or have high dropout rates.
- Samples are mostly white, male veterans - little is known about female veterans, veterans of color, and LGBTQ+ veterans.
- Long-term outcomes are unclear.
- More research is needed on which peer support models work best, for whom, and in what settings.

Implications for Nursing Practice

- Screen for trauma and PTSD given the opportunity.
- Use trauma-informed communication: offer choice, biuld safety, avoid surprises.
- Respect military culture and honor the veteran’s lived experience.
- Advocate for peer support programs in my workplace.
- Build trust through consistency, patience, and follow-through.
- Remember: how care is delivered matters as much as what care is delivered.