

**Introduction**

- Clinical Problem – United States Veterans experience various life stressors such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, employment problems, traumatic brain injuries, physical health problems, social problems like divorce, and financial problems which could lead to alcohol abuse
- PICO - Among the United States Veteran population, is there a positive relationship in mental health disorders and alcohol abuse?

**Purpose**

- The combination of social and physical aspects affecting United States veterans may push as many as 13% of veterans toward drinking and drug use (NCADD, 2017).
- Having post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) increases the risk of individuals developing a drinking or drug problem (U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs, 2015).
- The service members who have had multiple deployments with combat are at risk for developing drug and alcohol problems (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2013).

**Methodology**

- With the use of University of North Dakota Harley E. French library and the Tomah VA Medical Science Library, search engines CINAHL, Psychiatry Online, and PsycINFO were utilized.
- Key words were “alcohol”, “abuse”, “veterans”; “motivational”, and “interviewing”; and “alcoholism”; “Carol” and “Rogers” and “theory”.
- Limitations were publication dates, evidence based practice and academic journals.

**Findings**

- According to the literature review, there is a significant relationship between alcohol abuse and mental health issues in U.S. Veterans.
- Risk factors for alcohol abuse in U.S. Veterans revealed in this literature review include: being male, divorced or separated, multiple deployments, being in Marines, Army, or National Guard, younger age, unemployed or low income, history of medical problems (chronic pain), history of traumatic brain injury, history of depression or other psychiatric condition, or a history of adverse childhood experiences.

**Clinical Practice Implications**

- Further research should be done on nurses feelings or attitudes toward veterans in treatment with alcohol abuse diagnosis
- Implications for nursing practice include that registered nurses should be trained to care for the vulnerable U.S. Veteran population who have diagnosis of substance abuse
- Research done on mindfulness revealed that it was effective for both staff and clients in treatment of traumatic brain injury and substance abuse patients
- One research article discussed findings of positive abstinence from alcohol with staff members utilizing motivational enhancement therapy as treatment for alcohol abuse

**References**

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, 2017. *Alcohol dependence, and veterans*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncadd.org/about-addiction/drugs/veterans-and-drugs>

National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2013. *Substance abuse in the military*. from: <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/substance-abuse-in-military>

U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs, 2015. *How common is co-occurring PTSD and SUD in veterans*. Retrieved from: [https://www.ptsd.va.gov/PUBLIC/PROBLEMS/PTSD SUBSTANCE ABUSE VETERANS.ASP](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/PUBLIC/PROBLEMS/PTSD_SUBSTANCE_ABUSE_VETERANS.ASP)

