Understanding Homelessness among Post-9/11 Era Veterans through Administrative Data: Past Findings and Future Directions

Stephen Metraux, PhD

Using Administrative Data for Program Evaluation and Research: Recent Successes and Next Steps

U.S. Census Bureau

Washington DC

November 1, 2016

Homelessness and Post 9/11-Era Veterans

"We're beginning to see, across the country, the first trickle of this generation of warriors in homeless shelters," said Phil Landis, chairman of Veterans Village of San Diego. "But we anticipate that it's going to be a tsunami."

[Eckholm, *New York Times* 2007]

More Background…

"As the national housing crisis deepens, these numbers may be just the beginning. Iraq and Afghanistan veterans are already turning up on the streets much faster than other generations of veterans, often within 18 months of coming home. And over time, the signature wounds of the current conflicts—psychological wounds and traumatic brain injuries—may contribute to higher rates of homelessness."

(Williamson & Mulhall; 2009)

IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN
VETERANS OF AMERICA
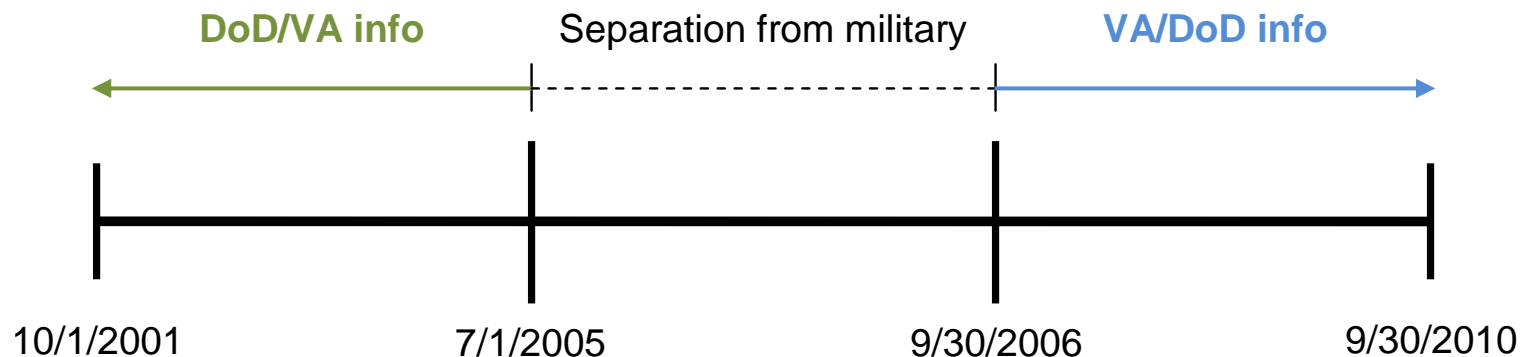
| RESEARCH AND PRACTICE |

Risk Factors for Becoming Homeless Among a Cohort of Veterans Who Served in the Era of the Iraq and Afghanistan Conflicts

Stephen Metraux, PhD, Limin X. Clegg, PhD, John D. Daigh, MD, Dennis P. Culhane, PhD, and Vincent Kane, MSS

LC Database

- A population of all (~ half million) service members discharged from active military service during July 1, 2005–September 30, 2006

  – Details from 10/1/2001 to 9/30/2010

  – Over 50 files from DoD and VA sources

  – Continued longitudinal follow-up

DoD/VA info	Separation from military	VA/DoD info

| 10/1/2001 | 7/1/2005 | 9/30/2006 | 9/30/2010 |

Key Findings

- 5-year adjusted incidence rate of 3.7% (5,694 of 310,685 Veterans)

- OEF/OIF deployment associated with a higher risk for subsequent homelessness (OR=1.3)

- PTSD associated with higher risk for homelessness only in OEF/OIF deployed veterans (OR=1.2 [men] & OR=1.6 [women])

- Pay grade had strongest association with homelessness (44% in lowest pay grade accounted for 72% of homeless)

- 18% diagnosed with some type of behavioral health disorder comprised 44% of homeless

JAMA
The Journal of the American Medical Association

RESEARCH LETTER

Military Misconduct and Homelessness Among US Veterans Separated From Active Duty, 2001-2012

Misconduct-related separations from the military are associated with subsequent adverse civilian outcomes that are of substantial public health concern.[1] We investigated the association between misconduct-related separations and homelessness among recently returned active-duty military service members.

Adi V. Gundlapalli, MD, PhD, MS
Jamison D. Fargo, PhD, MS
Stephen Metraux, PhD
Marjorie E. Carter, MSPH
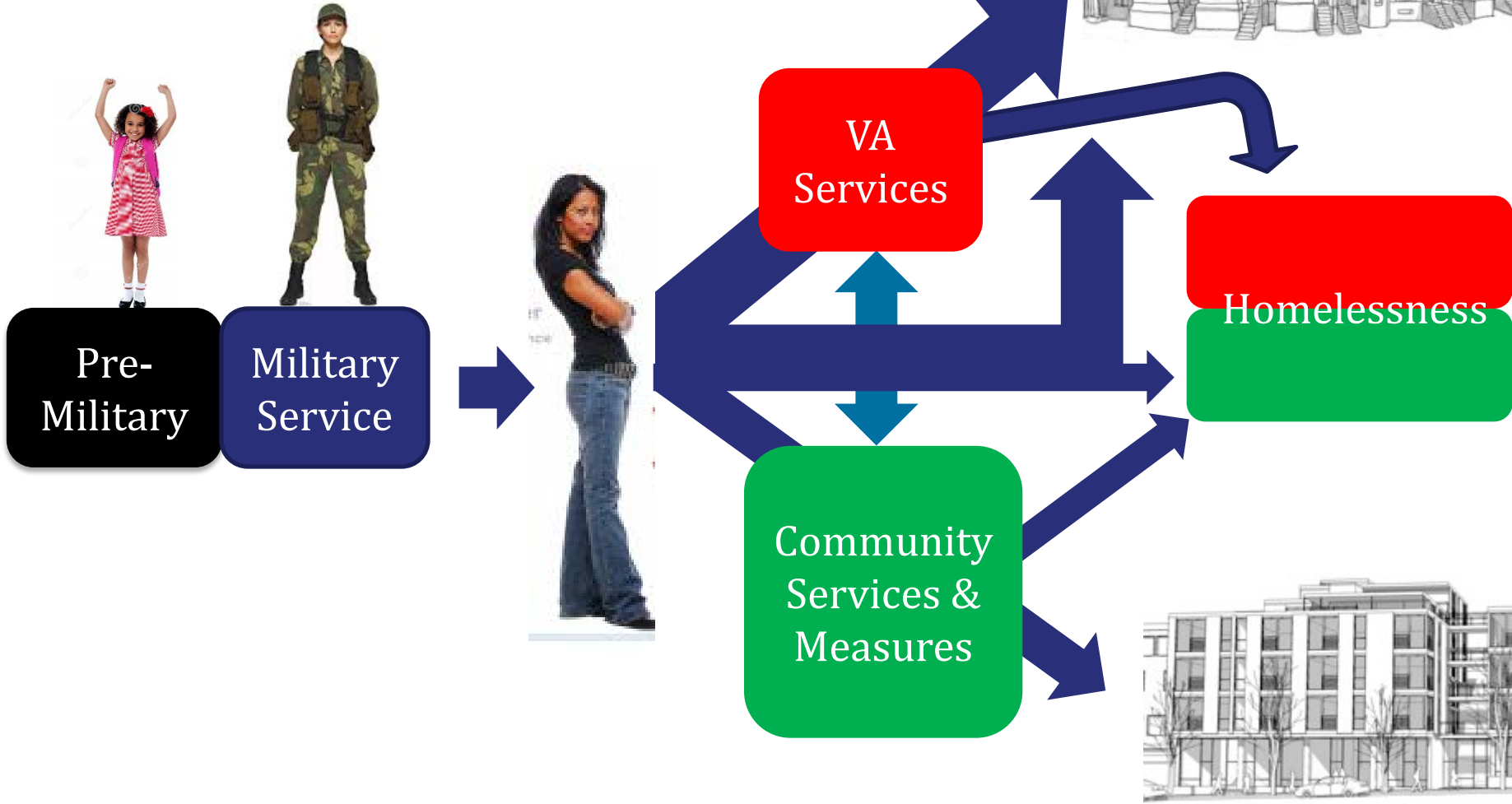Matthew H. Samore, MD
Vincent Kane, MSW
Dennis P. Culhane, PhD

DATA

- Department of Defense OEF/OIF/OND "Roster File"
- VHA Homeless Services Records & Indicators

KEY FINDINGS

- 448,290 active-duty service members separated between 2001-12
- 2.1% overall homeless over 5 years (n=3,441)
- 5.6% (n = 24 992) separated for misconduct represented:
  - 20.6% of all veterans who were homeless at 5 years (n = 709)
  - a 6.3 adjusted odds ratio for misconduct discharge
  - a 9.8% 5-year incidence rate

Data-based Model

Challenges

Data access

Bureaucracy & Legal Hurdles

Confidentiality and Identifying Info

Coordinating data

Ad hoc processes

Data storage and management logistics

Validation

Identifying Veterans At-Risk for Homelessness

- Pre-requisite for homelessness prevention

- Devil is in the efficiency

- Universe of VA data on new enrollees

- Apply predictive analytics procedures

- Assess risk differences over geography and time

- Incorporate:
  - Community shelter data
  - DoD health care data

Healthcare for Reentry Veterans Evaluation

- Evaluate HCRV's ability to facilitate successful community integration after incarceration
- HCRV vets compared to non-HCRV vets and non-veterans (based on VA, Census & state DOC data)
- Outcome data for/from:
  - healthcare (VA);
  - reincarceration (DOCs & local jails);
  - homelessness (local HMIS);
  - earnings & employment (Census);
  - higher education (National Student Clearinghouse)
- Issues of matching logistics and data coordination

Conclusion

- Past findings

- Conceptual Framework

- Future Directions