Objectives

- Describe unique risk factors for PPD in military women and military spouses
- Compare the rates of PPD in military vs civilian populations
- Understand both barriers and facilitators for care of PPD in the military population
What are the Numbers?

- 3.5 million total military personnel, with more than 1.3 million active duty military members

![Pie chart showing the distribution of military personnel by service branch.]

The Average Soldier

- Rank: E4 (Corporal/specialist)
- Age: 22
- Time in Service: 4 years
- Base Pay: $1978.50/month
- Education: high school graduate
- Marital status: Married with two children
- Race: 60% white/40% ethnic minority
- Gender: 85% male/15% female
- Average Work day: when the mission is complete

San Diego

- San Diego is home to the nation’s largest concentration of military personnel
- There are more than 100,000 active duty service members in San Diego. These active duty service members are split roughly evenly between the Navy and the Marine Corps. The largest installations are:
  - Marine Corps Air Station Miramar
  - Marine Corps Base and Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton
  - Naval Base Point Loma
  - Naval Base Coronado
  - Naval Base San Diego
- San Diego is home to 60% of the ships in the fleet of the U.S. Navy, and 1/3 of the active duty force of the U.S. Marine Corps
What is Military Culture

• “Duty, Honor, Country”
• The military emphasizes discipline and hierarchy, prioritizes the group over the individual, uses specific ceremonies and symbols to convey meaning and culture
• Military law requires commanding officers and those in authority to demonstrate virtue honor, patriotism and subordination in all that they do

Military Family Stats

• Across the DoD Active Duty and Selected Reserve population, 2,875,977 family members, including spouses, children, and adult dependents.
• Defined as military spouses and dependents (age 22 or younger)
• Military spouses tend to be under 35 and are largely female (1)
• Military families relocate 10 time more often than civilian families on average, every 2 or 3 years (4)
• Service members are more likely to be married at a younger age and have young children at home compared to their civilian counterparts (5)
• Multiple and prolonged deployment also has an effect on spouses, with 36.6% of women having at least one mental health diagnosis compared to 30% of women whose husbands were not deployed

Military Culture Stressors

• Frequent moves
• Location/social isolation/change in health care providers
• PTSD/TBI
• Lack of control
• Deployments
• Deployed parent reintegration
• Duty
Terms

- Predeployment: the period between receiving military orders stating that the service member must deploy and leaving
- Deployment: period of time when active duty member sent to a location for duty to which the family cannot travel, ranges from 4 to 18 mos (Gaige)

Military Culture Stressors

- Recent/upcoming deployments
  - Lack of control/when will it happen?
  - Living without partner
  - Single parenting
  - Concerns regarding child care
  - Fear for welfare and safety of self/partner
  - Potential lack of emotional support from partner

- Location: San Diego is expensive!
- Isolated (away from family and support system)
- Frequent/recent moves
  - Move 2-4 times more than civilian families
  - Move further distances than civilian families
  - Contributes to spousal unemployment
Military Culture: Barriers

Detection
- Higher rate of non-disclosure due to career concerns/fears

Treatment
- Loss of follow up due to frequent moves
- “army strong” attitude and potential refusal of care

Military Help vs Hinderance

- Military lifestyle can both be a help as well as a hindrance.
- Individuals are usually located away from family of origin and have to continuously re-develop friendships.
- Military has a close knit form of support, and relationships with other military families become a support network.
- Military culture provides sense of job-security that civilians families may not have.
- Military also provides health care regardless of rank/social status.
- Numerous civilians’ organization such as Operation Special Delivery, offer free labor coach/doula support to mother’s whose husband are deployed at time of delivery.

Incidence and Severity of Postpartum Depression Among Military Beneficiaries

- Women receiving care at Fort Knox
- Screen with EPDS >10, score higher than 0 on question #10
- OB/GYN and pediatrics
- 18 month period, 1877 screens and 1043 women
Incidence and Severity of Postpartum Depression in Military Beneficiaries

Incidence and Severity of Postpartum Depression Among Military Beneficiaries

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Incidence and Severity of Postpartum Depression Among Military Beneficiaries
The Armed Forces Surveillance Study examined rates of perinatal depression as well as suicidality in active duty women and dependent spouses.

8.2% rates of postpartum depression in military studies and 0.2% risk of suicidality (Dw, et. al, 2013).

Military obstetrics and gynecology has examined prevalence of postpartum depression, but this is usually to study the correlation of postpartum depression as it relates to deployment of active duty spouse (Levin, et al, 2015; Smith et al., 2010; Spooner, Rastle, & Elmore, 2012).

All these studies found that there was increased likelihood of perinatal depression when an active duty service member deployed during pregnancy (Hobrecht, Millegan, Leventis, Crescichelli, & McCay, 2008; Smith et al; Spooner, Rastle, & Elmore, 2012).

Additionally, two separate studies went further to determine if postpartum depression (in correlation with spouse deployment) led to increased risk of antenatal complications such as preterm birth and small birth size (Spieker, 2012; Tarney, et al., 2015).

Cases

I am 38 weeks pregnant with my third baby. I am a Navy veteran and my husband is being deployed immediately after I deliver. I had postpartum with both of my pregnancies so I am really concerned. I have an 18mo old and a 3yo and wasn’t expecting to be on my own right away with a newborn but I know that is how the military is. It is very stressful preparing. Also, I worry about when my husband gets back he won’t even know our baby.

Cases

I am a marine and I have suffered with PTSD. My wife gave birth 2 months ago and we moved shortly after the birth. We have no support here. My wife has felt very depressed since the move and is feeling more hopeless. I am worried about her.
Cases

• I am 24 weeks pregnant and I am due on June 15. My husband is scheduled to deploy on June 20th. I was wondering if I should ask my OB to induce me on the 15th if I have not delivered yet so my husband can be with me when I deliver and meet the baby before he deploys.

Cases

• My wife had our daughter two months ago. We are both in the Navy. She has been very depressed and I have to force her to eat and she has not been sleeping. I am very worried about her but when I bring up her trying to get help she gets very angry and says that it will ruin her military career.
Barriers and Facilitators to Treatment of Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorder in Military Spouses

Research Aims

1. To identify barriers and facilitators to the treatment of perinatal mood and anxiety disorder in military spouses.
2. To identify how mental health treatments can be tailored to meet the needs of military spouses.
Research Designs and Methods

- Focus groups consisting of military spouses and their spouses
- Recruitment through clinician referral
- MFT's, PHA members, Naval Med Center OB/pediatric social workers, Naval Center PPD support group
- UCSD and USD IRB approval
- Guided Interview Format

Inclusion Criteria

- Women with a diagnosis of perinatal mood and anxiety disorder (postpartum depression, perinatal panic, OCD)
- Women ages 20-45
- Married to an active duty military member
- English speaking
- Currently in treatment with psychotherapist and/or psychiatrist

Exclusion Criteria

- Medical illness that prevents the ability to sit comfortably for an hour
- Psychotic or severely mentally ill
Preliminary Data

• Demographics
• Themes, subthemes

Future Research

• Feasibility
• Future directions for research
• Interventions
• Specialized IOP track

May 6, 2016 was declared Military Spouse Appreciation Day

• “Enduring separation and relocation, heartache and anticipation, military spouses demonstrate a strength reflective of the spirit of our Nation. The spouses of our men and women in uniform bear the burden of sustaining their families, caring for children and offering comfort and support while their loved ones are away.”
  - President Obama
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Cynthia Donaldson Connelly, PhD, RN, FAAN is the Scholars Professor and Director of Research at the University of San Diego Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science Beyster Institute for Nursing Research

Anya Morgan, LVN, MA, psychiatric nurse practitioner student at University of San Diego Hahn School of Nursing and Health

Melanie Miley and Jennifer Hernandez, Program Lead and Community Service Representative at UCSD Medical Center, Psychiatry Specialty Clinics