

# WOUNDED WARRIOR PROJECT® WOMEN WARRIORS INITIATIVE

## SURVEY & ROUNDTABLE FINDINGS



Women represent the fastest-growing population in both military service and the veteran community. In greater numbers than ever, women are stepping up to serve in new, critical, and formidable roles contributing to our nation's national security. But while they are consistently and impressively breaking down barriers, women warriors still experience unique challenges and gaps in care during their transition to civilian life and beyond.

**Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) developed the Women Warriors Initiative to better understand, empower, and advocate for these women warriors who have served our nation.**

The following statistics represent the nearly 5,000 women warriors who provided feedback and shared their experiences through the Women Warriors Initiative survey or roundtable discussions.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

AVERAGE AGE	41
CURRENTLY MARRIED	44%
HAVE CHILDREN	71%
ARE SINGLE MOTHERS	49%

### VA HEALTH CARE & SERVICES

Nearly all women warriors reported using the VA – most using it as their primary care provider. However, less than half felt their needs were being met by the VA.

**64%** OF THOSE USING THE VA AS THEIR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER SAY THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED CHALLENGES ACCESSING THE CARE THEY NEED, INCLUDING:

- ★ Appointment availability
- ★ Poor-quality care
- ★ Services needed are not offered
- ★ Finding or funding childcare during appointment time

### MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

**73%** EXPERIENCED SEXUAL ASSAULT OR HARASSMENT WHILE IN THE MILITARY

**38%** OF THEM HAVE SOUGHT OR RECEIVED TREATMENT AT VA

**Women warriors recalled experiences such as:**

- ★ Recurrent denials of disability claims related to MST
- ★ Re-living the trauma every time they repeat their story due to provider turnover
- ★ Failed persistent attempts in accessing timely, effective MST-related care

### EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION



WOMEN WARRIORS REPORT HIGHER LEVELS OF EDUCATION THAN THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS, BUT LOWER RATES OF EMPLOYMENT.

**57%** HAVE EARNED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER

**12%** ARE NOT EMPLOYED BUT ARE LOOKING FOR WORK

### CHALLENGES DURING TRANSITION

The most commonly reported challenges during transition were:

- ★ Mental health issues such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression
- ★ Financial stress
- ★ MST-related mental health issues

### IDENTITY & ISOLATION

After experiences with sexual trauma and mental and physical injuries, some women warriors have trouble identifying and connecting with civilians or fellow veterans.

**89%** SAY THEY FEEL ISOLATED FROM OTHERS

**52%** HAVE STRONG CONNECTIONS WITH FEMALE VETERANS

**45%** HAVE STRONG CONNECTIONS WITH MALE VETERANS