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Cohen Veterans Network Launches Innovative Diversity Training Available to Mental Health Providers at No-Cost

USAA Grant Helped to Support CVN Training Development to Enhance Mental Health Care for Our Diverse Military Population

Stamford, Conn., January 18, 2022 – Cohen Veterans Network (CVN), a not-for-profit philanthropic organization that serves post-9/11 veterans, service members and military families through a nationwide system of mental health clinics, announced today the launch of an online training program focused on preparing military mental health providers to provide culturally sensitive care. The innovative program was created to enhance care and improve mental health outcomes for our military population. [Caring for Our Diverse Military Population](#) was developed with a grant from USAA.

Racial and ethnic minorities represent 43% of today’s military, while 6% of the military population identifies as part of the LGBT community. Because of this, it is more important than ever for clinicians to be able to meet the needs of clients from various ethnic, racial, gender, sexual orientation, and cultural backgrounds.

“We are thrilled to offer this important training to the mental health field to promote equity and inclusive care,” says Cohen Veterans Network President & CEO Dr. Anthony Hassan. “We are thankful to USAA for their continued support as we work to address issues relevant to our diverse client population and improve mental health outcomes.”

The self-paced, interactive training is available to mental health providers at no-cost. Participants can receive four continuing education credits (CEs) upon completion of the course. Providers are additionally invited to participate in a series of webinars focused on the training coursework for which they can receive one CE each. They are:

- **Affirmative Clinical Work with LGBTQ+ Clients: Reducing Internalized Stigma – Thursday, January 27, 2022 at 3 p.m. EST.** LGBTQ+ clients present for therapy with unique needs related to living in a society in which their lives and experiences are not the norm. One of the ways that this environment can impact LGBTQ+ people is through internalized stigma. This intermediate-level workshop will use a case example to demonstrate how cognitive behavioral therapy techniques can be applied to working with LGBTQ+ clients to reduce internalized stigma and its impact on mental health and well-being. Registration available [here](#).
- **Coping with Race-Based Stress and Racial Trauma - Thursday, February 24, 2022 at 3 p.m. EST.** Providers will be presented with resources and knowledge to recognize how race-based stress and trauma affects BIPOC veterans. Racial and ethnic disparities have been identified as a national problem by multiple national health agencies, which require unique and targeted interventions. At the end of this webinar, staff in attendance will begin developing the knowledge to assess and appropriately intervene with veterans experiencing race-based stress and trauma. Registration available [here](#).



Developed by subject matter experts, the training is the result of a survey conducted by CVN. The survey captured gaps in behavioral health services with regard to cultural competency as reported by members of the military, veteran and military family behavioral health consumers and clinicians. Based on the findings, this foundational training covers topics such as the history of diversity and discrimination in the U.S. military, the ADDRESSING framework, intersectionality, cultural humility, core concepts related to gender identity, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity, impacts of oppression and mental health disparities, culturally responsive treatment interventions, and repairing after microaggressions in the therapy room.

“Attention to the unique experiences of our clients matters. As therapists, it is imperative that we thoughtfully integrate considerations of culture and identity into our work with clients,” says Cohen Veterans Network Chief Clinical Officer Dr. Tracy Neal-Walden. “This training will help military mental health providers bolster their clinical skills and support their continued work in becoming more effective, culturally responsive therapists.”

The training includes a series of videos to further learning such as a role play between a clinician and a client, which illustrates how to effectively respond to microaggressions in therapy. It additionally incorporates journaling exercises designed for clinicians to deepen knowledge and engage in reflection.

“USAA is grateful for the work that Cohen Veterans Network is doing to ensure that new trainings are offered with inclusion in mind,” said Assistant Vice President of Corporate Responsibility at USAA Justin Schmitt. “Aligned with our commitment to serve military families, the new programming will better equip clinicians to offer tailored behavioral healthcare to our diverse military community.”

CVN serves all post-9/11 veterans, including the National Guard and Reserves, regardless of role while in uniform, time in service, discharge status or combat experience. Additionally, CVN treats the entire military family, including parents, siblings, spouses or partners, children, caregivers, and others identified by veterans and active duty military. Care is available for a variety of mental health challenges including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, adjustment issues, anger, grief and loss, family issues, transition challenges, relationship problems, and children’s behavioral problems.

Caring for Our Diverse Military Population is available at cohenveteransnetwork.org/cvndiversitytraining.

ABOUT THE COHEN VETERANS NETWORK

Cohen Veterans Network (CVN) is a 501(c)(3) national not-for-profit philanthropic organization for post-9/11 veterans, active duty service members and their families. CVN focuses on improving mental health outcomes, operating a network of outpatient mental health clinics in high-need communities, in which trained clinicians deliver holistic evidence-based care to treat mental health conditions. It was established in 2016 by philanthropist Steven A. Cohen with a commitment of \$275 million to build the network. Learn more about CVN [here](#).

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