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## **Cohen Veterans Network Tackles Rising Suicide Rate Among Military-Affiliated Women with New Toolkit for Clinicians**

*Developed with support from Face the Fight®, new lethal means safety counseling toolkit addresses unique suicide prevention needs of women veterans and service members*

**STAMFORD, Conn., Aug. 19, 2025** —Cohen Veterans Network (CVN), a national not-for-profit network of mental health clinics for post-9/11 veterans, service members and their families, today announced the release of a new training toolkit focused on lethal means safety—an essential component of suicide prevention—for clinicians working with women veterans and service members. The innovative resource, titled “[Lethal Means Counseling for Military-Affiliated Women: A Toolkit for Mental Health Clinicians](#),” is informed by the latest research, and developed with support from Face the Fight. This vital resource is available to the field at no cost.

Currently, there are more than 2 million women veterans in the United States, with women representing the fastest-growing segment of the veteran population. Women veterans face suicide rates 92 percent higher than those of civilian women. In 2022, veteran women were over 144 percent more likely to die by firearm suicide than their non-veteran peers. Additionally, suicide is one of the leading causes of death among women currently serving in the military.

“Suicide is a critical issue among military-affiliated women, yet their distinct risks and experiences are often overlooked in clinical practice and training,” said Dr. Tracy Neal Walden, Chief Clinical Officer at Cohen Veterans Network. “Through strategies grounded in both evidence-based practices and clinical experience, our new toolkit enables providers to offer more effective and personalized care. This initiative embodies our steadfast commitment to bolstering the mental health and safety of military families.”

The Lethal Means Counseling Toolkit was created based on an in-depth Gap Analysis conducted by the CVN Institute for Quality (CVN-IQ), the research division of CVN. The analysis was conducted in response to concern over the rising suicide rate among women veterans and active duty service members, with firearms cited as the most used method. It identified critical gaps in meeting the unique suicide prevention needs of military-affiliated women. These insights shaped the toolkit’s design, which provides gender-informed, evidence-based guidance to empower clinicians and improve care. The toolkit includes a training module on gender-sensitive practices, mock client video interactions, and guided questions to foster active learner engagement.

The toolkit builds on CVN’s highly attended training series, “*From Hesitation to Help: A Collaborative Approach to Lethal Means Safety Conversations in Clinical Practice*,” which drew participation from over 1,000 mental health professionals. This training equipped clinicians with tools to incorporate lethal means

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safety counseling into their practice, emphasizing collaborative strategies and a deeper understanding of the societal and cultural factors that shape these conversations.

“We’re extremely proud of the work and expertise that Cohen Veterans Network brings in support of Face the Fight,” said Justin Schmitt, AVP of Corporate Impact at USAA, which established Face the Fight alongside founding members Reach Resilience and the Humana Foundation. “This toolkit will provide another method to empower clinicians to deliver the specialized care that our women veterans and service members need and deserve.”

Since 2016, CVN has cared for over 88,000 clients and provided more than 790,000 clinical sessions. Women account for nearly 32 percent of the network’s active duty and veteran clients—more than double the national proportion of female veterans. The network treats a wide variety of mental health concerns including depression, anxiety, military transition challenges, adjustment issues, PTSD, anger, grief and loss, family issues, relationship challenges, and children’s behavioral problems. Care is available through the network’s 22 [Cohen Clinics](#) serving 20 states in-person and via CVN Telehealth, face-to-face video therapy.

#### **ABOUT 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 at [cohenveteransnetwork.org](https://cohenveteransnetwork.org).

#### **ABOUT FACE THE FIGHT**

Launched in 2023 by founding partners USAA, Reach Resilience and the Humana Foundation, Face the Fight has made strides by bringing together a like-minded coalition of organizations to help reduce veteran suicide through a multi-pronged approach that includes charitable giving, public education and awareness. Face the Fight is committed to supporting every veteran, regardless of their unique needs and challenges, and aspires to dramatically reduce veteran suicide. [wefacethefight.org](https://wefacethefight.org).