

Caring for Veterans and Their Families



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In Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, about \$88 Million was spent on veteran medical care alone, apart from other civilian costs (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2021), but some veterans state that their health care providers do not understand the military culture, which makes them uncomfortable in seeking care in the private sector (Kiernan et al., 2016). The myriad of veterans' health concerns supports the need to increase awareness among civilian healthcare providers since they are routinely cared for in the civilian, military and VA healthcare system. Veterans come from a unique culture that teaches soldiers to be tough. Being a member of the military training can result in hidden barriers when veterans seek health care (Redmond et al., 2015). Veterans battle with invisible wounds and the hidden barriers of the military culture. While in service, members have been trained to embrace core values that have equipped them to be tough in the face of adversity. Some of these same values that are now embedded in them can result in hidden barriers when they seek health care. Caring for veterans as a unique population is paramount in enhancing veterans' health care. The steps to provide the identified nurse education about veteran care can enhance nurses' knowledge about the military culture in caring for veterans and their families. The purpose of this presentation is to give a brief report of the lessons learned from a previous research study and simple applications for health care professionals.

Biography:

Augustina Mushale is a retired Air Force Nurse who enlisted into the Air Force in 2002. One of her success stories happened when she signed up to serve our nation in November 2002 and was deployed with 386th Air Evacuation Wing in support of Operation Iraqi/Enduring Freedom from May-Sept 2007. She was selected to join the Air Enlisted Commissioning Program (AECPP), which allowed her to be commissioned as an officer in the Nurse Corps. She currently works as a triage nurse and an independent consultant. She is a published author and an international speaker who hails from Delta State, Nigeria.