

RCW 43.60A.100 Counseling services—Veterans, including national guard and reservists. The department of veterans affairs, to the extent funds are made available, shall: (1) Contract with professional counseling specialists to provide a range of direct treatment services to state veterans, including national guard and reservists, with military-related mental health needs, and their family members; (2) provide additional treatment services to Washington state Vietnam veterans for posttraumatic stress disorder, particularly for those veterans whose posttraumatic stress disorder has intensified or initially emerged due to war or combat-related stress; (3) provide an educational program designed to train primary care professionals, such as mental health professionals, about the effects of war-related stress, trauma, and traumatic brain injury; (4) provide informational and counseling services for the purpose of establishing and fostering peer-support networks throughout the state for families of deployed members of the reserves and the Washington national guard; (5) provide for veterans' families, a referral network of community mental health providers who are skilled in treating deployment stress, combat stress, posttraumatic stress, traumatic brain injury; and (6) offer training and support for volunteers interested in providing peer-to-peer support to other veterans. [2018 c 45 § 1. Prior: 2017 c 192 § 2; 2017 c 185 § 2; 1991 c 55 § 1.]

Findings—2017 c 192: "The legislature finds that:

(1) Veterans are national heroes who have made great sacrifices in their lives for the protection of our nation;

(2) Due to the relatively high number of military installations in our state, as well as the standard of living in our state, many veterans choose to live in Washington;

(3) Many veterans have a need for support services, including peer-to-peer counseling services. Some veterans need to talk about their experiences with combat, deployment, or other situations experienced during their time in the military. Often, there is no person better prepared to speak with a veteran about his or her experiences than another veteran;

(4) In 2009, the state of Texas created an award winning peer-to-peer counseling network, called the military veteran peer network. On a voluntary basis, veterans elect to receive specialized training about the facilitation of group counseling sessions. After receiving their training, the volunteers create peer-to-peer support groups in their local communities;

(5) Veterans living in Washington would benefit from a program that is similar to the military veteran peer network." [2017 c 192 § 1.]

Findings—2017 c 192: See note following RCW 43.41.460.