

WWP News & Media: Veteran Group Outings, Charity Events, Helping Vets

## Wounded Warrior Project Launching New National Mental Health Care Initiative, Warrior Care Network

### **Groundbreaking Initiative Will Connect Wounded Veterans with World-Class Mental Health Care at Leading Academic Medical Centers Across the U.S.**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (June 2, 2015) – Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is launching a first-of-its-kind medical care network, Warrior Care Network™, to connect wounded veterans and their families with world-class, individualized mental health care. Warrior Care Network will increase access to quality care for two of the most commonly experienced wounds of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI). WWP and its Warrior Care Network partners will commit \$100 million over three years to ensure that thousands of wounded veterans do not fall through the cracks.

The four founding academic health care partners of Warrior Care Network are: Emory's Veterans Program at Emory University, Atlanta; the Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital Home Base Program; Operation Mend Program at University of California, Los Angeles; and Road Home Program at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. Warrior Care Network will expand regional outpatient programs and develop innovative two- to three-week intensive outpatient programs that will provide individualized care that is tailored to each wounded veteran and family member. Through this cutting-edge initiative, WWP and its partners plan to serve thousands of wounded veterans and family members over the next three years.

"The invisible wounds that our injured warriors struggle with every day have devastating long-term consequences on their health, yet too often they have difficulty seeking and getting timely and effective care for these conditions," said Jeremy Chwat, chief program officer at WWP. "We envision and seek to create a world where warriors who live with PTSD and TBI have access to the timely and quality care they need to recover, heal, and move forward with their lives."

According to WWP's Annual Alumni Survey results, 75.2 percent of respondents experience PTSD and 43.2 percent have incurred a TBI, and while the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to trying to meet this demand, WWP recognizes VA cannot heal the invisible wounds of war alone and intends to collaborate with area VA facilities and programs whenever possible.

This program will ensure that wounded veterans who are eligible for network care will not be denied access to state-of-the-art, patient-centered care due to their geographic location or inability to pay. The treatment programs will integrate behavioral health care, rehabilitative medicine, wellness, nutrition, mindfulness training, and family support. This partnership will grow to develop and share best practices that allow Warrior Care Network to deliver the highest-quality evidence-based care to wounded veterans and families at world-class medical facilities across the United States. Warrior Care Network expects to begin seeing patients by the end of the year.

Each academic medical center in Warrior Care Network has committed to providing culturally sensitive, comprehensive care; sharing best practices; coordinating care among sites; and developing and delivering upon measurable health care outcomes. WWP and the individual Network sites will recruit and educate wounded veterans about the resources available through Warrior Care Network, facilitate inter-facility collaboration, evaluate the effectiveness and scalability of the network, and coordinate services and share best practices in providing services to wounded veterans and family members across the country.

“Big problems need big solutions,” said Chwat. “Current programs are not adequate to meet the needs of this generation of warriors and their families, and Wounded Warrior Project is stepping up to ensure that warriors who are most at risk and in need of clinical support don’t fall through the cracks.”

### **About Wounded Warrior Project**

The mission of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors. WWP’s purpose is to raise awareness and to enlist the public’s aid for the needs of injured service members, to help injured servicemen and women aid and assist each other, and to provide unique, direct programs and services to meet their needs. WWP is a national, nonpartisan organization headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida. To get involved and learn more, visit [woundedwarriorproject.org](http://woundedwarriorproject.org).

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