

ARTS & NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR HEALTH IN THE MILITARY

THE ARTS: PROMISING SOLUTIONS FOR MEETING THE CHALLENGES FACING TODAY'S MILITARY – THEN AND NOW

*A Summary of Progress on the Recommendations Put
Forth in the National Initiative for Arts & Health in the
Military's 2013 Publication: Arts, Health and Well-Being
Across the Military Continuum – White Paper and Framing
a National Plan for Action*



Briefing Paper
prepared for the
National
Roundtable for
Arts, Health and
Well-being Across
the Military
Continuum

November 30, 2016
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Ft. Myer Officer's Club
Joint Base Myer-
Henderson Hall



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Introduction: Policy Impact of Arts, Health and Well-being Across the Military Continuum: White Paper and Framing a National Plan for Action

Background: Creating the Framework for Action

On November 15, 2012, a group of concerned and dedicated military, veteran, government, private sector and nonprofit leaders gathered at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC for the first **Arts & Health in the Military National Roundtable**. Hosted by Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith, VSA and the Kennedy Center, and co-chaired by Robert L. Lynch, President & CEO, Americans for the Arts and Anita B. Boles, Executive Director, Global Alliance for Arts & Health. the Roundtable served as the critical next step in the ongoing development of the multi-year [National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military](#).

The National Initiative was launched in January, 2012 based upon the groundbreaking success of the first **National Summit: Arts in Healing for Warriors**, hosted by Admiral Alton L. Stocks and held in October 2011 at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) and the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE). The 2011 Summit marked the first time the military collaborated with civilian agencies to discuss how the arts and creative arts therapies can address the key issues our military faces—from pre-deployment to deployment to homecoming. The goals of the National Initiative include working across military, government, private, and nonprofit sectors to:

- Advance the policy, practice, and quality use of arts and creativity as tools for health in the military;
- Raise visibility, understanding, and support of arts and health in the military; and
- Make the arts as tools for health available to all active duty military, Veterans, family members, and their caregivers.

The **2012 Roundtable** was charged with advancing these goals by making recommendations for a “blueprint for action” that would help ensure the availability of arts and creative arts therapy interventions for our service men and women, Veterans and their families, and integrate the arts as part of the “Standard of Care” in military and clinical environments (Military Treatment Facilities and Veterans Health Services) as well as programs in community settings across the country. Working sessions were held with experts and practitioners in the use of creative arts modalities around the key themes of **Research, Practice, and Policy**. With support from the David Rockefeller Fund, the results of these discussions were synthesized and published in [*The Arts: A Promising Solution to Meeting the Challenges of Today’s Military—A Summary Report and Blueprint for Action*](#) (Report from the 2012 Arts & Health in the Military National Roundtable, April 10, 2013)

The Blueprint and its framework formed the basis for the third National Initiative gathering in April of 2013. The [*National Summit: Arts, Health, and Well-Being Across the Military Continuum*](#), at Walter Reed Bethesda, brought more than 230 military/civilian leaders to consider the Blueprint, and provide additional recommendations for collective action. This dialogue resulted in the seminal report, [*Arts, Health, and Well-Being Across the Military Continuum - White Paper and Framing a National Plan for Action*](#) (Americans for the Arts, October, 2013)

CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGE:

Why the Issue of Arts across the Military Continuum is important to Military and Veterans Group Stakeholders and Policy Makers

- More than **two million U.S. troops** have been deployed in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF, War in Afghanistan), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation New Dawn (OND) since 2001. There have been **6,644 US fatalities** and more than **48,000 US wounded** in recent conflicts
- The nature of these conflicts is historically unprecedented—America’s all-volunteer force has endured **extended and multiple deployments, exposure to nontraditional combat** (e.g., use of improvised explosive devices) and **shortened time at home between deployments, which has taken a toll on both the service members and their families**
- While the combat death rate has decreased overall, there has been an **increase in the number of service members returning home who suffer from both physical and invisible wounds of war**, including loss of a limb, post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injuries and depression
- There are more than **22 million Veterans in the U.S.** today, the **majority of whom have served in the Vietnam era**, and many still suffering the lingering effects of TBI and PTS
- Collectively, the challenges confronting our military service members, Veterans, their families and caregivers require **more than the traditional medical model can solve**

How Can the Arts Help? A Summary of Findings



The National Initiative for Arts & Health in the

Military's Arts, Health and Well-Being across the Military Continuum—White Paper and Framing a National Plan for Action (Americans for the Arts, October, 2013) identified several areas where the Arts have demonstrated effectiveness, such as helping to sustain and promote troop force and family *readiness, resilience, retention*, and the successful *reintegration* into family and community life.¹

FOSTERING READINESS

National security—Stress adversely affects military readiness—a critical issue with implications for national security.

- Stress not only affects servicemembers *after* they have experienced a trauma. Stress is a daily part of military life.
- How servicemembers deal with stress before trauma determines outcomes after a traumatic event.
- Arts interventions offer tools for coping with stress, and help build life-long coping mechanisms.

Navigating common transitions—Common transitions, such as enlistment, training, or deployment, have an impact on individuals' cognitive and behavioral outcomes.

- The arts can help build resiliency pre-deployment and for the deployed, including strengthening family bonds.
- Family members who participate in arts activities in a group session with other family members feel less isolated and receive the extra benefit of informal support from others in a similar situation.

RESILIENCE

Combating psychological and physical trauma—Servicemembers returning from conflicts often experience psychological and physical traumas, including post-traumatic stress (PTS), traumatic brain injuries (TBI), and depression.

- A growing body of evidence indicates that providing service members and veterans with opportunities to express themselves and share their stories can help them cope with PTS, TBI and depression.
- Expressive arts therapies can help individuals sleep better, lessen their depression and anxiety, improve their impulse control and concentration, and can serve as a protective factor in suicide prevention.
- As part of *Environmental Enrichment (EE) therapy*, the arts encourage visuo-spatial, cognitive, social, and skilled motor exploration which enhances neuroplasticity; improves recovery of function; increases brain resilience to injury; and reduces stress and anxiety.

RETENTION

Encouraging treatment when needed—About half of service members or veterans who need treatment for mental health conditions hesitate to seek it.

- Servicemembers may fear the stigma associated with mental health issues or believe that receiving mental health treatment might jeopardize their careers, especially for those concerned with obtaining or maintaining a security clearance. In a RAND Corporation study of returning service members from Iraq and Afghanistan, more than one-third reported that they believed their coworkers would have less confidence in them if they found out they had sought help.
- Individuals also may avoid seeking treatment because of the treatment itself. Some may worry about the side effects of medication. For others, the exposure-based therapies typically used to treat PTS operate in stark contrast to the individual's desire to avoid circumstances that might trigger the trauma.
- The arts can address one of the reasons a service member or Veteran might avoid seeking treatment. Unlike exposure-based therapies, when using the arts, individuals can experience and/or express their thoughts and feelings without necessarily having to talk about or directly confront the trauma, if they are not ready.

¹ For a full list of citations and references, download *Arts, Health and Well-Being—White Paper and Framing a National Plan for Action* at: www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org

REINTEGRATION

Aiding in the transition from military to civilian life—One of the most difficult experiences is the transition from military to civilian life.

- Approximately 14 percent of service members returning from Iraq or Afghanistan meet criteria for depression. Yet, depression is often not considered a combat-related injury.
- Left untreated, depression can increase the chance of risky behaviors (such as drug or alcohol abuse or addiction), damage relationships, cause problems on the job, make it difficult to overcome serious illnesses, or can even lead to suicide.
- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reports that while the relative number of veterans who die by suicide has decreased slightly since 1999, the absolute number of veterans who have taken their lives continues to increase. Two-thirds of veterans who take their lives are 50 years or older. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, as many as 349 active service members committed suicide in 2012, compared to 301 in 2011 and 298 the year before.
- Arts interventions can be a form of *behavioral activation (BA)*—the systematic scheduling and monitoring of pleasurable or reinforcing activities—which can have significant antidepressant effect. Dopamine, the body's feel-good chemical, is released when an individual is engaged in active or passive pleasurable activities (e.g., painting, listening to music). BA has been found to be at least as effective as pharmacotherapy when treating severely depressed patients.

What Can Be Done? Framing a National Plan for Action



The White Paper recommends several strategies in the areas of **research, practice and policy** of specific interest to military, veterans and family support groups that, when undertaken in collaboration with the civilian sector, can improve access to the arts as tools for health, healing and well-being across the military continuum. Summarized below, these actions include:

Research

Researchers can be encouraged and supported to investigate how arts programming and creative arts therapies have an impact—physically, emotionally, economically, educationally—across the military continuum.

- **Support a broad research agenda.** Current federal interagency efforts to invest in and broaden the arts and health research agenda in the military should be expanded. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods should be supported and expanded to include military families and caregivers.
- **Conduct a needs assessment and benchmark research.** A comprehensive needs assessment can determine and address needs, or “gaps,” between current conditions and desired conditions, or “wants.” Identifying best practice will help both old and new programs and services determine what and where improvements are needed.
- **Promote linkages and information sharing.** Researchers need to share what they are doing with others and create linkages in their areas of expertise. Military researchers would benefit from collaborations with creative arts therapists, artists in healthcare and arts groups to measure the impact of arts participation and engagement.

Practice

Arts and health programs and services are present in military treatment facilities, veterans hospitals, and communities across the nation, yet many from the military and veteran community who could benefit from such services are not receiving them.

- **Person and family-centered for life.** Arts and health experiences in the military are most effective when they are person-centered, family-centered, and cover the entire lifespan.
- **Arts at every stage—from healing to wellness.** Artists and performers, artists in healthcare, and creative arts therapists offer multiple kinds of experiences at varying levels of engagement along a healing continuum—from treatment to distraction to stress reduction to pain relief to remembering a sense of self to regaining hope.
- **Access for all.** Members of the National Guard and the Reserves and their families have special challenges as they lack the support structure that living on or near a military base can provide. The arts can help bridge issues of isolation. With its close ties to the community, the Guard is often more accessible to collaborations.

Policy

Military and veterans policies must reflect arts programming and creative arts therapies services for the true integration of arts and health programming to occur across the military continuum.

- **Formal recognition.** Arts should be formally recognized as part of military and veteran healthcare systems. Comprehensive policies for the arts and creative arts therapies can be put in place to promote the physical, emotional, and overall health of the force as early as in enlistment to help assure military readiness.
- **Strategically placed.** Policies should position arts and health programs and services advantageously within the system in order to support patient- and family-centered care, staff well-being, and transitioning the patient to post-medical center lives. Locating creative arts therapists within physical therapy, occupational therapy, rehabilitation medicine, or behavioral health departments would allow them to be able to plan thoughtful interventions based on assessment that would be part of treatment plans.
- **Adequately resourced.** Congressional backing and legislative action can provide a federal mandate for the development and implementation of arts initiatives, e.g. designating funding through the **Department of Defense, TRICARE, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs** for demonstration projects for Veterans and active military to access cost-effective creative arts in healthcare treatment and programming.

Benchmarking Progress: Achievement

towards the White Paper Recommended Outcomes

Since the first roundtable for the National Initiative for Arts and Health in the Military (NIAHM) in November 2012 and the publication of *Arts, Health and Well-being Across the Military Continuum: White Paper and Framing a National Plan for Action* (“the White Paper”) the following year, significant changes in policies and practices have begun to achieve the objectives and recommendations outlined to advance the arts in health, healing, and healthcare for military service members, Veterans, their families, and caregivers. The White Paper specified 17 recommendations, of which 9 are completed or in progress, representing substantial advancement on this work in just over three years. These recommendations, and the progress made towards achieving them, include:

- ★ **Develop training programs for artists and performers, artists in healthcare, arts coordinators, and healthcare providers.** The VA “Arts in Healing Pilot Project” was launched in 2014 as a direct outcome to the recommendations put forth in the 2012 Blueprint for Action. The pilot project began with six mental health and community living center systems located in the VA’s VISN3 (Veterans Integrated Services Network) comprising the NY/NJ area. Conducted as a partnership between Americans for the Arts and the Office of Patient Centered Care & Cultural Transformation at the Veterans Health Administration, Johnson & Johnson, and the National Center for Creative Aging, the pilot was designed to help facilities better incorporate the arts, creative arts therapies, and humanities into VA Patient Centered Care planning. Based on its success, the project is continuing in 2016 with the launch of two arts and humanities training meetings hosted by the OPCC&CT in Texas and California and the on-boarding of 14 additional sites across the country located in Arkansas, California, Georgia, North Carolina, North Dakota, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Texas. The learnings and trainings will be developed into tools for VA healthcare providers, and include a facility self-assessment for the arts; an evaluation toolkit; and a Program Guide for engaging with community partners, program development strategies, program examples, and strategies for budgeting and fundraising.



VA Patient Centered Care

Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation

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Arts in Healing

Art in the healing environment is not a new practice, however, the way VA is currently focusing on the influence art has on medical outcomes is. Recently, the Veterans Health Administration, VA NY/NJ Veterans Healthcare Network (VISN 3), the Americans for the Arts, Johnson & Johnson and the National Center for Creative Aging joined together and held a national Arts in Healing Symposium. The purpose of this symposium was to expand and collaborate with community partners to foster Arts in Healing. Arts in Healing is not limited to just visual arts like painting, drawing and photography. Healing arts also include music, writing, and other forms of self expression. Watch this brief video to discover one Veteran's story about how art has made a positive impact on his life.

While arts in health care can be experienced through both structured and non-structured settings between therapists and patients, art in the health care environment can also be discovered in the way buildings and patient rooms are designed. The San Francisco VA Medical Center has developed a new program, *Community Integration Through Creativity*, that have advanced Veterans' skills in theater, digital media, music, visual arts and dance with the help of established professional artist/contractors in the community.

And to provide more background for the San Francisco VAMC program, each year, VA holds a National Veterans Creative Art Festival. This program fosters art therapy programs at all VA facilities throughout the country and allows for the skill development and healing for all participating Veterans artists. Learn more about the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival or browse the photo gallery.

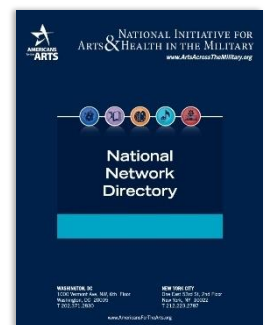
VA is not unique in it's desire to increase the amount and type of art in the healing environment. The non-government organization, The Americans For the Arts, recently published a report titled, *The Arts: A Promising Solution to Meeting the Challenges of Today's Military - A Summary Report and Blueprint for Action*. The report was produced with the intent to stimulate more conversation about arts in healing and provide a framework to further develop the art as an option for integrative health services for the men, women, and their families in VA and other military hospitals around the country.

Incorporate family-centered arts programming at all stages of military service and beyond.

- ★ In partnership with Art2Action and the University of South Florida’s Office of Military Partnerships, the NIAHM fourth **National Summit: Reintegration and Resilience—The Role of the Arts in Recovery, Transition & Transformation across the Military Continuum** will take place February 2 – 5, 2017 in Tampa, FL. The Summit will focus on the artistic processes and practices that aid in successful veteran reintegration and support family and caregiver roles in recovery. For the first in NIAHM history, the 2017 gathering will include a festival of original performance works by, for and about veterans, organized and curated by Art2Action. Titled the **R&R Arts Festival: From Recovery to Regeneration**, this ground-breaking event will help to place veterans’ stories—and the work of artists engaged in creation with them—at the center of the cross-sector convening, designed to bring more than 200 military, veteran, and civilian practitioners, researchers and policy makers together to share knowledge, learn new skills and help inform a nationwide vision for increasing access to the arts and creative arts therapies for all of America’s military service members, Veterans, their families and caregivers.

Establish an online presence to promote information sharing, collaboration, and samplings of interactive arts experiences.

- ★ NIAHM’s website, www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org, includes a wide array of research and multimedia information, including reports and videos from [past National Summits](#), as well as the [National Network Directory](#), a free resource to connect those working to support military service members, Veterans and their families through the arts. NIAHM also hosts a [Facebook group](#) to allow ad hoc sharing of information and arts experiences, as well as networking of events and opportunities.



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www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org

Featured from the National Initiative Directory



The Armed Services Arts Partnership (ASAP) empowers veterans, service members, and military family members to re-enter and thrive in their communities through arts classes and performances. ASAP focuses on promoting artistic expression, skill-development, and camaraderie through six- to twelve-week classes in stand-up comedy, improv, creative writing, and music. ASAP then partners with local colleges, arts organizations, and performance venues to continue the artistic and personal growth. ASAP provides participants with transferable life skills, a renewed sense of purpose, healing benefits, and stronger ties with communities through the arts. [Read more...](#)

Promote the inclusion of the arts and creative arts therapies in national health and military strategic agency and department plans and interagency initiatives.

- ★ As specifically recommended in the White Paper, the Federal Interagency Task Force on Arts and Human Development, led by the National Endowment for the Arts, has expanded to incorporate military and veterans’ issues by including the VA Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

Increase policies that provide for the support of creative arts therapists within the Department of Defense and Veterans Administration.

- ★ In collaboration with the Department of Defense, the National Endowment for the Arts Military Healing Arts Partnership first piloted creative arts therapy programs at the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE) Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. The program uses an integrative healthcare model that incorporates creative arts therapies at the core of integrative care to treat service members with mild traumatic brain injury and associated psychological health conditions. Following the pilot, the program was successfully replicated at the NICoE Intrepid Spirit-One Satellite at the Fort Belvoir Community Hospital Brain Wellness Center in Virginia. On October 25, 2016, the NEA and DoD announced the expansion of the partnership into [Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network](#). Thanks to a major Congressional appropriation in FY2016, Creative Forces is expanding ten additional clinical sites, and increasing access to therapeutic arts activities in their local communities for military members, veterans, and their families. The program is also investing in research on the impacts and benefits of these innovative treatment methods. The NEA is providing funding for creative arts therapists, including, but not limited to, art and music therapists, creative writing instructors, as well as program support at these locations. The NEA is creating an online toolkit and resources to help communities understand how to support service members, veterans, and their families through arts programming. This includes guidance on how to build deeper connections across civilian and military populations. Americans for the Arts is working with the NEA to provide administrative support for Creative Forces.

Encourage increased public and private sector funding for program development, implementation, and evaluation, and bringing successful programs to scale.

- ★ Public funding for this work has expanded at the Federal level through program allocations specifically focused on arts for the military community and Veterans at the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), as well as at the state level through established programs at the state arts agencies, including California, North Carolina, Texas and Oklahoma, and developing ones in Virginia and Hawaii.
- ★ **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).** In fiscal year 2016, Congress appropriated a \$1.928 million budget increase for the NEA, specifically allocated to expand the Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network.
- ★ **National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).** In April, 2014, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) launched a new agency-wide initiative to encourage humanities programs that focus on the history, experience, or meaning of war and military service. [Standing Together: The Humanities and the Experience of War](#). The initiative recognizes the importance of the humanities in helping Americans to understand the experiences of service members as they return to civilian life. NEH provides support to projects that explore war and its aftermath through advanced research in the humanities, public programs that promote discussion and understanding of the experiences of Americans affiliated with the armed services, whether active duty or veterans, and that have clear potential to

Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network

As of October, 2016, five new clinical sites (in addition to Walter Reed and Fort Belvoir) have joined Creative Forces. The Network now includes:

- National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE), Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland
- NICoE Intrepid Spirit-One Satellite at the Fort Belvoir Community Hospital Brain Wellness Center, Virginia
- Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) – Anchorage, Alaska
- Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton – Oceanside, California
- Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune – Jacksonville, North Carolina
- Fort Hood – Texas
- Madigan Army Medical Center – Tacoma, Washington

In addition to the clinical sites, The NEA is also working closely with its network of state, local, and regional arts agencies and nonprofit partners in each state or region where clinical sites are located to develop community-based arts programs that allow patients and their families to continue exploring art practices as part of their healing process.

involve the nation's Veterans and their families. In addition, NEH's 56 state and territorial humanities councils have received grants to develop programs that reflect the interests of local communities. These grants are intended to create a national network dedicated to engaging diverse communities, groups and individuals, civilian and military, in dialogues that further mutual understanding and respond to the varied needs of Veterans who have sacrificed to serve the nation.

- ★ Private funding specifically for NIAHM activities has included support from the David Rockefeller Fund for development and distribution of the White Paper; support for National Summits (2011 – 2015) from Cigna and the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation; and Johnson & Johnson, which has provided substantial multi-year support to the VA Arts, Health & Well-being Pilot Project.

Support bringing together local arts communities with service members, veterans, and their families.

- ★ Local arts agencies are among the growing number of supportive service organizations that are encouraging the development of relationships and partnerships between the military and veteran communities, and local artists and performers, artists in healthcare, and arts organizations.
- ★ In its recent Local Arts Census, Americans for the Arts asked more than 4,500 respondents a series of questions about how and whether they are currently serving or responding to their local military and veteran populations needs through the arts. 26% of the respondents who said they were are using the arts to help returning military personnel reintegrate into family and community life, and engage with military and veteran constituencies through their own arts programming, their partners or grantees.

Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County – Fayetteville, NC

Fayetteville, NC is home to one of the nation's largest military communities, and the city's Arts Council aims to embrace all active-duty, retired, Veteran, and family members, as well as the city's high concentration of military-affiliated residents and visitors. The Arts Council facilitates the Artists in Schools program for all Department of Defense schools on Ft. Bragg, collaborates with the Army Ground Forces Band, and partners with on-and off-post museums on relevant exhibitions. In 2011, the Council worked with all 100 North Carolina counties reaching 400 veterans, their families and community members to produce 51 pieces of public art for the North Carolina State Veterans Park in Fayetteville. The Council worked with artists who created service walls using military salvage materials to depict the core values of Commitment, Courage, Dedication, Heroism, Honor, Sacrifice and Service and provides continued support of the park that hosts over 50,000 visitors annually. Fayetteville's military and Veteran population are also deeply integrated with the local cultural industry, serving as board members, volunteers, musicians with the Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra, teachers at universities, performers with the Cape Fear Regional Theatre and more.

Local Arts Agency Support for Military and Veteran Communities by the Numbers

- 29 percent of LAA arts and military programs are done in partnership with other arts organizations, 25 percent with local military support groups, and 22 percent with VA facilities for military engagement programs.
- 66 percent of programs engage older veterans, 58 percent with military family members, and 50 percent with active duty service members. LAA arts programs are not only for returning service members and veterans, but also to families, and healthcare providers
- 54 percent have encountered challenges when trying to develop and/or fund arts programming for military constituencies. Opportunity areas include increased funding, and improved communication with servicemembers, veterans, and/or their families

ADDENDUM: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Americans for the Arts Resources

- ★ ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org
An online portal that houses information resources, multimedia presentations, publications, and other assets specific to the work of the Initiative and its partners, including the National Network Directory and calendar.
- ★ [The National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military National Network Directory](#)
The National Initiative for Arts and Health in the Military National Network Directory connects artists and organizations working to support military servicemembers, veterans, and their families through the arts. View the directory to access over 130 programs organized by state. [Submit your information to the Directory.](#)
- ★ [Arts Deployed: A Practical Guide to Support Arts, Health, and Well-Being across the Military Continuum](#)
A three-part webinar series from Americans for the Arts in partnership with the American Legion Auxiliary that focuses on how to start a dialogue in your community to use the arts to facilitate veteran healing and well-being.
- ★ [Arts, Health, and Well-Being Across the Military Continuum - Framing a National Plan for Action](#)
This 2013 white paper details a series of recommendations in the areas of research, practice, and policy that came out of two national convenings: The Arts and Health in the Military National Roundtable (November 2012) and the National Summit: Arts, Health, and Well-Being Across the Military Continuum (April 2013).
- ★ [The Arts: A Promising Solution to Meeting the Challenges of Today's Military—A Summary Report and Blueprint for Action](#)
This 2012 brief reflects the conversations of the 2012 Arts & Health in the Military National Roundtable and was developed to begin the conversation about collective action.
- ★ [Art in Service: Supporting the Military Community and Changing the Public Narrative](#)
This 2013 paper from AFTA's [Animating Democracy](#) program highlights how the arts can build awareness of military experiences, and contribute to cultural diplomacy, veterans' reintegration, and healing and wellness.
- ★ [Arts in Health: Strengthening Our Nation's Health Through the Arts](#)
This issue brief from AFTA's 2016 [Arts Advocacy Day](#) presents a list of proposed action for national strategies related to arts in health for all Americans, as well as for military service members and Veterans.

Other Resources

- ★ [Creative Forces: The National Endowment for the Arts' Military Healing Arts Network](#)
Administered by Americans for the Arts, Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network program places creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care at twelve national clinical sites and increases access to therapeutic arts activities in local communities for military members, Veterans, and their families. View the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-xEwSv9eyU>
- ★ [Arts in Healing at the VA – VA Patient Centered Care](#)
Art in the healing environment is not a new practice, however, the way VA is currently focusing on the influences art has on medical outcomes is. In 2015, the Veterans Health Administration, VA NY/NJ Veterans Healthcare Network (VISN 3), the Americans for the Arts, Johnson & Johnson and the National Center for Creative Aging joined together and held a national Arts in Healing Symposium to expand and collaborate with community partners to foster Arts in Healing. View "Discovering Arts in Healing at the VA" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4uxrFuyBmQ>.
- ★ [State Arts & Military Initiatives Strategies Sampler & Arts & Military Snap Survey Results](#)
This strategy sampler from the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) summarizes existing policy goals, services and relationships of state arts agencies and regional arts organizations working to support military and veteran populations through the arts. It also highlights programmatic issues and other challenges these agencies face in realizing their arts and military goals. NASAA's Arts & Military Snap Survey was a first step toward gaining a more comprehensive understanding of state arts agency and regional arts organizations' efforts to serve military and veteran populations.