



beconnected
service members • veterans • families • communities

Reaching Rural Veterans

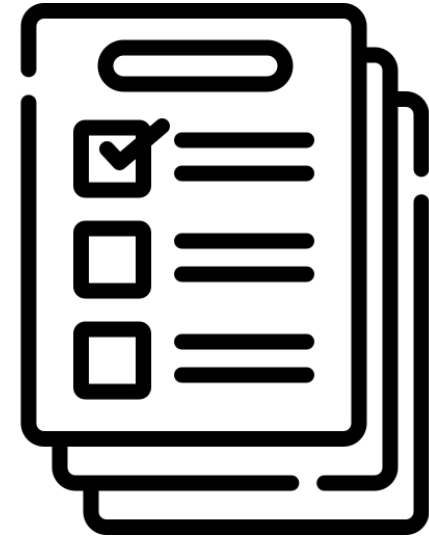
2021 Statewide Symposium

April 21, 2021

Photos courtesy of the U.S. Department of Defense



Welcome!



- Introductions in Chat Box
- Rural Projects
 - Rural Arizona Connects
 - COVID Community Support
 - BWF COVID Relief
 - Together with Veterans (TWV) Cohort
- Value of Be Connected Partnership in Rural Areas
- Panel Discussion

- Over **146,000** Veterans in Rural Arizona
- Top 5 counties with the **highest suicide rates** were in Rural Arizona (between 3-5 times higher than state average)
 - Gila (98.2 per 100,000)
 - La Paz (89.4 per 100,000)
 - Apache (83.6 per 100,000)
 - Mohave (75.2 per 100,000)
 - Yavapai (72.4 per 100,000)
- Over **65%** of Rural AZ Veteran Survey respondents reported a disability
- Over **60%** of Rural AZ Veteran Survey respondents are retired
- Over **40%** of Rural AZ Veteran Survey respondents are aware of Be Connected

- **Goal: Expand the Be Connected Program to Rural Arizona**
 - Assess interest from Critical Access Hospitals and Rural Health Clinics in partnering with Be Connected
 - Increase awareness of Be Connected in Rural Arizona
 - Train organizations and employees regarding service member/veteran needs.
- **Projected outcomes:**
 - Engage 9 CAHs and 15 RHCs with Be Connected.
 - Engage 20 Community Organizations with Be Connected.
 - Implement a coordinated Be Connected information dissemination campaign in the six targeted CAH communities.
 - Convene one online veteran community health event with each of the participating CAHs.
 - Create a resource guide mapping available services and describing the onboarding process that can be duplicated throughout the state.

- Engaged **10** Critical Access Hospitals
- Engaged **18** Rural Health Clinic
- Engaged over **20** community organizations
- Implemented **large-scale** Be Connected dissemination campaign
 - Magazine
 - Billboards
 - Materials at COVID testing locations
 - Be Connected resource guides distributed across **13** counties
- Outreached to **over 75,000 people** since January 2020
- Participation in **multiple** large-scale online events
 - First ever Community Mental Health Summit
 - Southern AZ Summit

Volunteer driver program to bring essentials to the veteran community (e.g. food, appts, etc.).

Current: COVID relief food insecurity project to identify food and transportation insecurities in veteran households in project areas.

- Served **118 households; 293 veterans & family members**, mostly in rural and tribal communities.
- **26.2%** reported need for ongoing food assistance.
- **36.4%** of those with recurring food needs reported consistent transportation insecurity.

Next: Partnering with local partners to serve the high-risk populations identified through the food insecurity effort and utilize volunteer drivers and navigators to facilitate connection between service providers and recipients.

Financial support to those impacted by COVID-19, focusing on rural and isolated communities

- Provided support to **519** service members, veterans and family members
- Of the 212 known demographics (not required during submissions), **93.4%** were tribal veterans.
- Wraparound support from Be Connected
- Main **topic areas** of need:
 - Water
 - Firewood
 - Vehicle payments
 - Rent payments
 - Utility bills
 - Food

*Together
With
Veterans*

Panel Discussion

Questions?

Thank you for joining!

With any questions, comments or information regarding the Be Connected program or partnership, please reach out:

Email

community@arizonacoalition.org

Be Connected Support Line

1-866-429-8387 (4AZ-VETS)

Website

www.arizonacoalition.org/partner