

# West Virginia Treatment Provider Shares New Insights on Why Veterans Need Coordinated Care

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A local West Virginian rehab, Hope for Tomorrow, released a new article discussing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance use in veterans. Written for other professionals who work with veteran populations, the article focuses on clinical realities rather than theory, and on what unfolds when trauma and substance use intersect outside of textbooks.

The article begins with a familiar experience for many veterans. Coming home does not always mean finding peace.

For many, it means carrying ?invisible wars: trauma, pain, and often, substance use.? While systems of care frequently divide mental health treatment from addiction treatment, the article explains that these experiences are ?deeply intertwined.? Around 8% of U.S. veterans experience PTSD at some point (4.8% managing PTSD currently). Among veterans with PTSD, more than one in five are also living with a substance use disorder, meaning this overlap is common.

The article emphasizes that veterans with co-occurring PTSD and substance use disorders need coordinated care that accounts for trauma, mental health, and medical needs together, not in separate silos that leave gaps in coverage.?Veterans carry exposures and burdens that are unique to military life and amplify risk for co-occurring PTSD and substance use. As a result, referral partners must remain alert to this intersection, not just as an ?add-on,? but as a frequent baseline in veteran populations.?

The piece explains how trauma alters the nervous system over time. ?Trauma rewires the brain, the body, and the way a person copes.? Alcohol, opioids, benzodiazepines, or stimulants may begin as attempts to calm anxiety, numb intrusive memories, or get a few hours of sleep. Over time, the article notes, ?What begins as survival can slowly turn into dependence,? and that dependence often worsens the symptoms it was meant to relieve.

This is why the article is clear about the treatment approach. ?Because these conditions amplify each other, separating their treatment rarely works.? Addressing substance use without treating trauma leaves the root problem untouched. Treating trauma without addressing substance use often leads to relapse or stalled progress. The article argues that recovery is more durable when trauma, addiction, and mental health are treated together through a single, coordinated plan.

The article also outlines why veterans face increased risk for co-occurring disorders. Combat exposure, moral injury, chronic pain, sleep disruption, and the strain of transitioning out of military life all raise vulnerability. Stigma around seeking mental health care and limited access to specialized programs, especially in rural areas of West Virginia, further complicate access to appropriate treatment.

Early recognition can change outcomes. The article describes emotional signs such as hypervigilance, withdrawal, guilt, anger, or emotional numbness. Behavioral signs may include using substances ?to sleep,? ?to feel normal,? or ?to stop thinking,? along with secrecy, irritability, missed appointments, or declining performance. Physical signs often include sleep deprivation, chronic pain, fatigue, headaches, tremors, weight changes, or sudden health decline. When these patterns co-occur, the article urges professionals to look beyond isolated symptoms and consider a dual diagnosis.

The quality of the referral, or the way a veteran is referred, is highly significant. ?Veterans and their advocates need more than just a phone number,? the article states. It adds that ?Strong referrals significantly increase the likelihood that a veteran will not only enroll, but also that they will stick with the treatment.? The article emphasizes referrals that include service history, medical conditions, current medications, psychiatric background, substance use patterns, and available supports, paired with follow-up that maintains continuity through treatment and re-entry.

Hope for Tomorrow?s Veterans Program specializes in the complex relationship between substance use and mental health conditions in West Virginia. Their program accepts veterans with co-occurring PTSD and substance use disorders, medical challenges, and prior treatment setbacks.

To refer a veteran or learn more, contact Hope for Tomorrow at 877-679-8162.

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For more information about Hope For Tomorrow-Point Pleasant, contact the company here:Hope For Tomorrow-Point PleasantCristina Villalon(304) 902-8532beckley@myhopefortomorrow.com3471 Ohio River Rd Point Pleasant WV 25550

## **Hope For Tomorrow-Point Pleasant**

*Hope for Tomorrow's Beckley facility stands as a beacon of hope and healing in the heart of West Virginia, offering a comprehensive range of addiction treatment services designed to support those on their journey to recovery from drugs or alcohol.*

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