

Free Resources for the Military Community to Address Alcohol Misuse

By the National Center for Telehealth & Technology

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash. — In observance of Alcohol Awareness Month in April, the National Center for Telehealth & Technology (T2) wants to raise awareness about alcoholism and to offer resources to help service members, veterans and their families identify, understand and get support.

AfterDeployment (afterdeployment.dcoe.mil) is a Defense Department program that helps service members, veterans and their families identify, understand and get support for behavioral health problems — including those with alcohol. It provides tools such as free, anonymous [assessments](#) that help people better understand their alcohol use, [videos](#) featuring real service members and veterans who got help, and [fact sheets, tips and articles](#) about post-traumatic stress, depression, sleep problems, and other topics in which alcohol misuse can become an issue.

“Our service members and veterans face a variety of challenges — such as difficulty sleeping, frequent life transitions, and occupational and life stress — and they may use alcohol to cope. Excessive drinking can impact relationships and the ability to fulfill duties, and cause financial and legal issues,” said Dr. Julie Kinn, clinical psychologist and deputy chief at T2. “During Alcohol Awareness Month and beyond, we want the military community to know that there are effective, trusted resources that can help.”

According to the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#), deployment during wartime, combat exposure and military culture are factors in developing substance abuse problems among military personnel. Among returning service members, post-traumatic stress disorder, sleep problems and traumatic brain injury are strongly associated with substance abuse and dependence.

AfterDeployment offers an [eLibrary](#) with information on different types of alcohol issues, common excuses from alcohol users and signs of abuse. There is also an [Alcohol Awareness Kit](#) — developed specifically for Alcohol Awareness Month — that can be used to organize alcohol awareness events at military installations. The kit includes promotional items and educational materials that can be ordered or downloaded from T2.

“It’s important that we all work together to raise awareness of alcohol issues in the military community to let people know that there are resources out there,” Kinn said. “AfterDeployment is a great place to start getting the help they need.”

To learn more about T2 and AfterDeployment, and to find additional resources on alcohol abuse prevention and treatment, visit <http://t2health.dcoe.mil> and <http://afterdeployment.dcoe.mil>. You can also follow AfterDeployment on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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