

Editorial

Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Refocus on Military and Veterans within Academic Communities



Stephen McGhee DNP, MSc, PGCE, RNT, RN, VR, FNAP, FFMRCISI, FAAN
Guest Co-Editor



Dianne Morrison-Beedy, PhD, RN, CGNC, FFMRCISI, FNAP, FAANP, FAAN
Editor-in-Chief

Post 9/11 there was much focus on an often-overlooked population – those enlisted in the military and those who have served. We began to recognize that many of these men and women, and their families, faced unique challenges to academic, physical, emotional, and mental well-being, as well as re-integration into civilian life. We are now two decades after this horrendous event and the military engagements that followed. Somehow, our focus on the needs and contributions of this population has fallen off the radar – in essence, out of sight, out of mind. However, as we bring to you this special issue which highlights some fine work focused on military and veteran’s health in academic communities, recent events that are rapidly unfolding may again direct this population back into the spotlight.

Recent conflicts have shown that the nature of war is very different from the wars of the previous century. Non state actors, asymmetrical warfare, and the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) are frequently used strategies by non-friendly forces. Both the physical and psychological aftermath of serving in a conflict zone



has been highlighted in the media and academic literature. However, the end of the military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan has seen a reduction in both media and governmental support for those who have served on operations. Although many countries have a Veterans Day or Armistice Day, we see that populations can quickly become disconnected from the veteran population.

I would like to say thank you to the Editor-in Chief (EIC) of Building Healthy Academic Communities (BHAC) for unwavering support for the military and veteran community. The creation of this special edition clearly demonstrates the journal's mission of supporting academic communities who may be out with an academic setting and keeps military and veteran issues in the healthcare conversation. I feel very privileged and humbled to be the Guest Co-Editor for the military and veteran's special edition. As a retired British Army officer who is a veteran, I fully understand both the positive and negative impacts on those who have served.

This special edition gives the reader an outstanding insight into current nursing research and practice innovations designed to support our military and veteran population. Many of the accepted manuscripts have been written by colleagues who are both nurse educators and veterans. Nurse educators are in a unique position with a depth of insight that allows them to drive change and innovation aligned to the overall wellbeing of the military and veteran population. Current examples of how nurse educators who have served in the military can drive change include developing new and innovative educational initiatives, dissemination of scholarly work in journals and at conferences, and by being involved in the health policy decision making process. Moreover, bringing their experienced voices to the table across academic communities is critical but even more so is our ability to listen to what they have to say.

To all who are currently protecting our country and all who have served, we express our gratitude this U.S. Veteran's Day November 11, 2023, and every day.