**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

**Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention**

**Sexual Assault Awareness Month Toolkit**

**Sample Newsletter/Blog Post Content**

**MST Survivors Need All of Us**

We honor and support our nation’s Veterans all year round. But each April, [Sexual Assault Awareness Month](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/mst) provides an important reminder for all of us to renew our commitment to Veterans with wounds we cannot see: survivors of military sexual trauma.

Military sexual trauma, or MST, is a term used by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to refer to sexual assault or sexual harassment experienced during military service. Service members of every era, branch, gender, and sexual identity have survived MST. The experience can affect survivors’ [physical and mental health](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome/index.asp), sometimes even many years after the incident, leading to depression, sleep issues, anger, and isolation, among other challenges.

**You can make a difference for MST survivors this April.**

Delivering the message, “You’re not alone: VA is here for MST survivors,” VA will be conducting outreach to MST survivors and their families, friends, and supporters throughout April.

You can help by sharing information [about MST](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome/index.asp) with others. All of us have a hand in making sure every Veteran knows about VA’s range of [services for mental and physical health conditions related to MST](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome/index.asp), available free of charge. Eligibility for MST-related care is expansive, and no documentation of the MST is required. Veterans do not need to have reported the experiences at the time it occurred, to have sought care within a certain time frame, or to have applied for service connection.

To learn more, Veterans who have experienced MST may contact their [local VA medical center](https://www.va.gov/find-locations/) and ask to speak with their primary care physician or the MST Coordinator, a professional who specializes in connecting survivors with the care and services that are right for them.

Find resources and materials you can share during Sexual Assault Awareness Month at <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/mst>.