

*The Give an Hour Provider Recruitment Toolkit is designed to provide valuable resources and insight on how to encourage licensed mental health professionals to volunteer with Give an Hour. The guide will help you spread the word about our efforts and promote the organization within your own communities. We welcome your ideas and your creativity in the provider recruitment process. If you have a suggestion for other ways that we can promote Give an Hour, please let us know. We are happy to hear from you.*

## Step One: Education

**The first step in helping raise awareness of Give an Hour's network is to ensure you have a complete understanding of our mission, process and programming.** *Give an Hour staff are available to answer your questions, as they arise.*

Please be sure that you feel comfortable answering the following questions before beginning your outreach.

- **What is Give an Hour?**

*We believe that within our communities we have the resources to address many of the challenges that face our society. These challenges, such as trauma during military service, being a victim of crime, or living through a natural disaster, often result in emotional pain and suffering. Our aim is to improve the mental health and emotional wellbeing of all persons.*

*Give an Hour's mission is to develop national networks of volunteers capable of responding to both acute and chronic conditions that arise within our society. By harnessing the skill and expertise of volunteer professionals, we are able to increase the likelihood that those in need receive the support and care they deserve.*

*Give an Hour harnesses the skill, expertise, and generosity of volunteer mental health professionals to provide no-cost mental health care to those in the veteran and military communities, those affected by natural disasters such as the California wildfires, and man-made disasters, such as mass shootings.*

- **How can licensed mental health professionals serve in the network and what are the requirements of serving?**

*Licensed mental health professionals carrying malpractice insurance can provide in person, virtual or phone therapy support. In addition to serving clients with insurance, providers in the network commit to serving a pro-bono client as well. Clients come to Give an Hour's website and providers agree to keep their profile up to date, and to always respond to inquiries from potential Give an Hour clients, even if they are unable to serve them. More answers are available here: <https://giveanhour.org/give-help/licensed-provider-information/#providerfaq>*

- **Is there ever a cost to providing/receiving care through Give an Hour?**

*No. There is no cost to participate as a provider in the Give an Hour network. It is important to note that participating mental health professionals agree to see, or be available to see, a pro-bono Give an Hour client, regardless of insurance. Providers treat clients the same as any other client in their practice.*

- **How can a provider get involved with Give an Hour if they do not (or cannot) provide direct counseling services?**

*Licensed providers who are unable to offer clinical care may also volunteer in a myriad of ways with Give an Hour. Outreach events, consultations and education opportunities are some examples. For those who are currently working to complete their full licensure – Give an Hour welcomes your supervisor to join and assign appropriate clinical cases to you.*

- **How does an individual receive Give an Hour services? Are there any qualifications?**

*Give an Hour's website has a provider search feature where a client can research available providers in their state.*

*Nationally, Give an Hour serves any era and any discharge status of military and veterans, as well as their loved ones. There are no other qualifications for this care, other than having served or loving someone who has served in the military.*

*Regional or state initiatives have allowed Give an Hour to expand our provider volunteerism to serve additional populations in need. Typically, these projects are grant funded and specific. For more information regarding special population projects in your area, please email [info@giveanhour.org](mailto:info@giveanhour.org).*

- **What is the Campaign to Change Direction®? What is emotional literacy?**

- *In 2015, GAH launched the Campaign to Change Direction, a collective-impact effort focused on changing the culture of mental health. The Campaign to Change Direction is a simple public health initiative that seeks to educate everyone about the Healthy Habits (to ensure self-care) and the Five Signs of Emotional Suffering that indicate that someone is in emotional pain and needs help: Personality Change; Agitation; Withdrawal; Decline in Personal Care; and Hopelessness. <https://giveanhour.org/culturechange/>*

## **Who can engage with Give an Hour?**

- **Licensed Mental Health Professionals:** Licensed mental health professionals provide no cost counseling to individuals, couples and families, and children and adolescents through face-to-face, telephonic, and video counseling. In addition to direct counseling services, our volunteer mental health providers work to reduce the stigma associated with mental health by participating in the [Campaign to Change Direction](#). Our network of generous volunteer mental health professionals allows Give an Hour to become part of the solution to a national concern. Give an Hour providers are offered the opportunity to participate in multiple programs, receive free continuing education, and receive tools for their current practice. Mental health professionals interested in giving an hour to help those who currently serve, veterans, and their families should visit our website ([www.giveanhour.org](http://www.giveanhour.org)) and register.
- **Community Organizations:** Community Organizations, large and small, are often the direct connection for outreach and care in specific geographic locations. These organizations don't have to be directly mental health related- often they support populations or situations in which someone may need mental health support. For example, domestic violence shelters or disability rights associations. Ensuring that community organizations are connected with Give an Hour resources expands our

ability to partner for success, even if that organization does not have mental health professionals to serve in the network.

- **Individuals seeking care:** Individuals who are seeking care are referred to as “clients” by Give an Hour. These individuals often come to GAH through direct referral with partner organizations, word of mouth or visiting the website ([www.giveanhour.org](http://www.giveanhour.org)). A client can expect that they can go to our website, search for a list of available providers, submit a referral and be contacted within 5 business days. **Clients find Give an Hour through web searches, community organizations, outreach by students, providers, and non-licensed volunteers and specific partnerships.** *It is just as important to help share the word about Give an Hour so clients find care, as it is to help recruit providers.*

## Step Two: Identifying Your Outreach Network

Whether you are a licensed professional, a student, a community leader, or a concerned citizen; you know your media, your local businesses, and your community calendars the best! **A good place to start is by asking yourself “where can I find mental health professionals to connect with in my community?”** This may differ for each individual but not effort is too large or small! Providers in the network most commonly identify that they learn about the opportunity to serve with Give an Hour from their affiliation with their mental health association, so that may be the best place to begin.

Below is a sample list of places to consider when recruiting mental health professionals:

- Local chapters of mental health associations
- Mental health agencies
- Meet ups or networking events for professionals, or on a topic related to mental health
- Support agencies for those recovering from mental illness
- Local private practices (big and small)
- The internet: resource lists, therapy referral networks and social media

**If you do not have a network to reach out to, do not worry!** Give an Hour staff have additional options for ways you can help with provider recruitment.

## Step Three: Raising Awareness

Now that you have learned or refreshed your memory of the basics of Give an Hour and identified your network, it’s time to start reaching out! Below are some optional wording and ideas for you to use. Creativity and additional ideas are ALWAYS welcome, just reach out to our team for additional assistance.

### In Person or Via Phone:

Give an Hour’s research shows that the second largest source of new providers joining the network is colleagues and word of mouth. In that light, anytime you can discuss Give an Hour or serving in the network is one step closer to helping us achieve our goals. Offering to present to private practices, going to mental health conferences and discussing Give an Hour, attending small networking meetings where mental health professionals will also be attending; these are

all excellent places to talk about Give an Hour. Remember, even telling ONE person can potentially provide over **\$4,800** of free care to someone in need.

**Phone Sample:** *I'm calling in support of a nonprofit mental health organization called Give an Hour. Give an Hour provides mental health services to military personnel and their families. Do you have just a minute for me to tell you more about what we do?*

*During times of peace and war, our service members, veterans and their families are on the front lines; managing and supporting the extraordinary needs of our nation. For each one of them, this service looks different, regardless, their resiliency and adaptability defines their experiences. As you know, the United States has been at war for over nearly two decades' now. Thousands of thousands of young men and women have gone into harm's way to serve this nation, and many, many have come home bearing the unseen wounds.*

*Some have taken their lives, turned to drugs and alcohol, or given up hope. Our government cannot meet all of the needs of these heroes. We at Give an Hour are committed to helping military families, who have given so much. This requires the help of dedicated, caring, mental health providers who are willing to donate one hour of their time each week to help those who are affected by current and previous wars.*

*Providers may choose to use that time for one on one counseling, or participate in many of our initiatives serving military in their community. There is a desperate need for more providers in your area, and we hope you will consider joining our network of nearly 4,500 providers nationwide. If you would like, I can send you a follow up email, one time only, with additional information on the organization- where you can learn more and pass on to others who may be interested. I am also available now to talk more, but I know your time is valuable.*

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### **Via Email:**

Sometimes, the opportunity arises to share about Give an Hour to an individual, or a group of individuals in email. It is important to remember that while we are passionate about our work and the impact providers can make, we do not want to overly solicit email group lists or individuals. Give an Hour recommends one to two emails per group or list per six months, to ensure we don't over saturate individuals with unwanted messages.

### **Sample Email:**

*Mental Health affects the lives of every person in the world. In America, we know our veterans and military are on the front lines; managing and supporting the extraordinary needs of our nation. Service members, active, and reserve are being asked to answer their nation's call to service. Military families and service members enter various cycles of service, to include training, schooling, deployments, reintegration, and transition. Of those who have left military service, a Pew Research Center survey found that a plurality of all veterans (43%) say they had a "very easy" time readjusting to their post-military lives, and 29% say re-entry was "somewhat easy." But an additional 21% say they had a "somewhat difficult" time, and 6% had major problems integrating back into civilian life.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/12/08/the-difficult-transition-from-military-to-civilian-life/>

*Give an Hour™ is a national nonprofit that provides mental health resources and services; reaching and connecting to veterans, military and families who may not otherwise qualify for, or seek care. Give an Hour's network of providers donate one session per week of no cost mental health care, although not all providers have a client all year long.*

*As a national organization, we are seeing extraordinary service, flexibility, innovation, responsiveness and action in communities every day. Give an Hour understands the critical need for community-level support serving those who serve and remains a leader in mobilizing a network of mental health providers to bridge the gap in access to care for military, veterans and their loved ones. Mental health professionals are essential to helping our service members, veterans, and loved ones express their emotional needs and navigate creation of activities that help them build their sense of safety and decrease feelings of anxiety and isolation and we need your support to continue to serve.*

*To learn more about serving as a licensed provider in the Give an Hour network, visit <https://giveanhour.org/give-help/>*

*Share. Join. Help. Give an Hour providers are changing lives.*

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## **Submitting Article(s):**

Local newspapers or online blogs are great places to write an article about your experience with Give an Hour, or about the need for organizations that provide free mental health support. To help you get started, we have developed a few standard articles for your use, but feel free to create one of your own. We do ask that any time you are working with media entities, you let us know so we can amplify the work you are doing in our national network.

### **Sample Article:**

#### ***Give an Hour Recruits Mental Health Professionals***

*Give an Hour, founded in 2005, has created a network of volunteer mental health professionals pledging an hour a week of their services, free of charge, to members of the military—including active duty, reserve, and guard, veterans, their families, and their communities. Give an Hour offers an important option for the men, women, and families who serve our country by providing services in the community at no cost. And, there is no limit to the number of sessions one can receive; help is available for as long as it is needed.*

*Give an Hour's supplements the mental health services provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs and includes specific initiatives to reach rural veterans and Reservists. In 2016, Give an Hour has expanded regionally to support additional populations.*

*Give an Hour's services expand beyond those groups who are typically eligible to receive mental health benefits, including parents, siblings, and unmarried partners who are often affected by a loved one's military service.*

*Give an Hour's mental health professionals provide services including one-on-one counseling, consultation with other organizations about the mental health issues affecting those who serve, presentations at community gatherings and reintegration events, and trainings in local*

communities. Providers choose how they "give their hour" in a way that fits their passion. We ask our providers to volunteer one hour per week for one year in order to provide continuity of care for these deserving families.

The approximately 4,500 licensed mental health professionals working with Give an Hour have contributed over 300,000 hours in support of our troops and their families, and the demand continues to increase daily.

Volunteer mental health providers include psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, pastoral counselors, and other mental health professionals.

While no additional training is required, Give an Hour also offers a variety of free training opportunities and gives providers the opportunity to interact with one another, to share information about their experience, and to seek feedback and additional resources.

### **Immediate Help Needed in {Insert State}**

There is a shortage of mental health professionals available to provide critical services in {Insert State}. We are asking all mental health professionals to join in this effort. If you are currently licensed, please visit our website [www.giveanhour.org](http://www.giveanhour.org) to sign up for our national network and to learn more about our organization and initiatives.

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## Story Sharing

In addition, Give an Hour hosts a "Stories" page for individuals to share their personal experiences using or participating in the network. We invite you to share your story in the way that is most meaningful for you, and we will post and share as well!

- <https://giveanhour.org/shareyourstory/>

## Talking Points

Below is a list of talking points to help you discuss Give an Hour, the importance of our volunteer providers and the need in the military community.

### About Give an Hour

- Give an Hour's mission is to develop national networks of volunteers capable of responding to both acute and chronic conditions that arise within our society, beginning with the mental health needs of those who serve and their families.
- Give an Hour currently has volunteer providers nationwide—in all 50 states, and the District of Columbia.
- Give an Hour's network of mental health professionals includes psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, marriage and family therapists, licensed professional counselors, pastoral counselors, psychiatric nurses, and substance abuse counselors.
- Give an Hour serves military, veterans, and loved ones nationally; however, specific state and regional projects are beginning to serve additional populations.
- Give an Hour's services include individual, marital, and family counseling, as well as

treatment for post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injuries, substance abuse, depression, anxiety, grieving, and more.

- The match between therapist and client is made online through the Give an Hour website, [www.giveanhour.org](http://www.giveanhour.org). Potential clients search for providers by zip code. Listings include information about specialty or expertise, such as grief counseling, marital therapy, or substance abuse, as well as willingness to participate in telephone sessions or video counseling in the event that in-person meetings are not feasible.
- Give an Hour verifies that all providers are licensed in their state.
- Give an Hour's website contains information for visitors about what to expect during counseling sessions and how to choose a counselor. For therapists, there is information on a variety of topics, including military culture, as well as training opportunities for treating post-traumatic stress and other conditions.
- Give an Hour's goal is to supplement rather than supplant the psychological services the military offers. GAH's services complement Department of Defense and Veterans Affairs healthcare delivery by serving veterans and military families seeking care outside the current system, those no longer eligible for healthcare provided by the DOD or VA, and non-eligible siblings, parents, partners, and other loved ones.

### Why GAH Providers Matter

- Mental Health Professionals are experts in their areas of care. Whether providing instruction, outreach, or therapy services, mental health professionals who are involved in their community change lives. Furthermore, volunteering can enhance the career of newly budding professionals by expanding your skills and network.
- In response to rates of suicide, the CDC released a bundled public health approach as a technical package, employing seven broad, evidence-informed strategies to focus on suicide prevention activities that have been found to effectively impact risk and protective factors surrounding. These public health strategies to prevent suicide include: strengthening economic supports, strengthening access and delivery of suicide care, creating protective environments, promoting connectedness, teaching coping and problem-solving skills, identifying and supporting people at risk, and lessening harms and preventing future risk. Give an Hour network of providers enhance most, if not all, of the recommended CDC strategies.
- Giving time to underserved community members enhances lives; not only the person being served, but everyone they come in contact with in the future. Quality therapy builds families, individuals and communities; enabling employment, stability and reintegration into society.
- Moreover, advocating for mental illness and giving back to the mental health community can be extremely powerful for providers, families, and patients. Mental health professionals even say that their therapeutic and outreach work helps to strengthen their own mental health recovery.
- Providers who do not offer therapeutic services are just as valuable to the network as those who do. Providers working to address and treat mental health conditions before they cause individual suffering advocate for prevention services, early identification, and intervention of symptoms, and plans of action to hopefully stop the progression of mental illness.

- Giving to others can also help protect your mental and physical health. It can reduce stress, combat depression, keep you mentally stimulated, and provide a sense of purpose. While it's true that the more you volunteer, the more benefits you'll experience, volunteering doesn't have to take a huge amount of time out of your busy day. Giving in even simple ways can help those in need and improve your health and happiness.
- Through Give an Hour, mental health professionals are able to offer military spouses' in behavioral health the opportunity for supervision; therefore, ensuring the next generation of mental health professionals are competently trained to continue the work.
- "As therapists, for most of us, the dream is of connection. We spend years teaching ourselves to understand more deeply, observe more keenly, and connect more fully with our clients. I wonder about what it would look like if we found ways to branch out, and start doing small things to build a more mental health friendly culture, and spaces that can engage with individuals and families, therapeutically. I wonder what it would look like, if every city, every state had a place where people in distress could walk in, and trust to be really listened to, for as long as they needed it, and to know they could afford ...high quality therapy."<sup>2</sup>

### Military Service Members and Mental Health

- In 2018 rates of suicide increased in the Active Component over the last five years, while remaining steady in the Reserve and National Guard during this same timeframe. However, suicide rates were consistent with rates from the past two years across all Components (Active, Reserve, and National Guard). From CY 2013 to 2018, the suicide rate for the Active Component increased from 18.5 to 24.8 suicides per 100,000 Service members. This increase was attributable to small increases in the number of suicide deaths across all Services. The suicide rates of the Reserve and National Guard remained steady across this same timeframe.
- The CY 2018 suicide rate for the Reserve, across Services and regardless of duty status, was 22.9 suicides per 100,000 Reservists. For the National Guard, the suicide rate, across Services and regardless of duty status, was 30.6 suicides per 100,000 members of the National Guard.
- Service members who died by suicide were primarily enlisted, less than 30 years of age, white, male, and died by firearm, regardless of Component.
- There are a number of common misconceptions about military suicide rates, which can often distract from critical conversations about how to prevent suicide in military populations. Beyond the common misconception that military suicide rates are much higher than the U.S. general population, other common misconceptions are that: 1) deployment increases suicide risk among Service members; 2) the majority of Service members who die by suicide had a mental illness; 3) removing access to one lethal means will cause someone at risk for suicide to replace it for another; and 4) talking about suicide will lead to suicide.
- While the DoD and civilian populations share challenges in preventing suicide, many factors found to increase risk for suicide are distinct to military populations as compared

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<sup>2</sup> <http://theshrinkingcouch.com/setting-up-your-own-practice-giving-back-to-the-community-an-interview-with-dr-alan-part-3/>

to civilian populations, including Veterans. Trends include relationship, financial, and legal/administrative problems within 90 days of suicide; ineffective life/coping skills; and reluctance to seek help and perceived stigma to engage in suicide care/treatment.

- Approximately 200,000 service members leave the U.S. military each year. The military environment is structured to provide for many fundamental needs such as housing, healthcare, employment, and community, while also providing a sense of identity rooted in what it means to serve the nation. As service members transition from the military community, they are faced with the challenge of finding new avenues for meeting these needs while also navigating a civilian community unfamiliar to them and often ill-equipped to receive them.

## Military Families

- Service members are more likely to be married at a younger age and have young children at home compared to their civilian counterparts.
- There are currently 1.2 million military children of active duty members worldwide. Nearly 80 percent of military children attend public schools throughout the United States.
- One third of school-age military children show psychosocial behaviors such as being anxious, worrying often, crying more frequently.
- Children in military families experience high rates of mental health, trauma, and related problems. About 30% reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks during the past 12 months. Nearly 1 in 4 reported having considered suicide.
- Military spouses tend to be under 35 and are largely female.
- Military spouses are at a unique disadvantage when it comes to finding gainful employment. Frequent moves among duty stations are riddled with complications and expenses.
- Almost half of male military spouse respondents reported working full-time, compared to just 27% of female military spouse respondents. Male and female military spouse respondents also differed substantially on the impact of family obligations on their career, with 50% of female spouses citing family obligations as a top career obstacle compared to 30% of male spouses.
- No matter their gender, nearly 35 percent of military spouses who do work require professional licenses to maintain their status as doctors, lawyers, or mental health professionals, for example. Those licenses often don't transfer across state lines—a major issue considering military families are 10 times more likely to have moved across state lines than nonmilitary families.
- Bereavement experts report that for each active duty military loss, an average of 10 people are significantly impacted. In the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, an estimated 68,360 family members have been significantly impacted.
- Among the biggest concerns for active-duty spouses was stress: More than half said they experienced more stress than usual and reported feeling nervous, anxious or on edge in the past two weeks.
- More than a third expressed feelings of sadness, depression or hopelessness. Almost half of the spouses of E-1-E4 service members reported loneliness as a common problem. And although 39 percent of spouses said they used other spouses as a source

of support, 38 percent said they are unlikely to reach out to another military spouse because they either don't know another spouse or they lack opportunity to connect with other spouses.

### **Social Media Outreach:**

Visit our online sites to collaborate and share. Let us know if you have information you would like us to share as well! If you make your own post, and would like us to help amplify your message, email [info@giveanhour.org](mailto:info@giveanhour.org)

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GiveanHour>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/GiveAnHour>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/nonprofitgiveanhour>