



## Relias Spotlight Series

November 2020

Greetings Providers,

Welcome to the November edition of the Optum Idaho **Relias Spotlight Series** — a series devoted to providing you with access to **free, easily accessible, and CEU-eligible** online education about topics that are of most importance to behavioral health providers, like you, across the state.

### **Military service members – those who serve!**



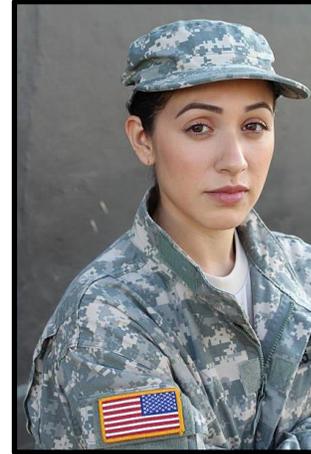
Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is often associated with military service but really, can affect anyone. Triggered by experiencing or witnessing a terrifying or dangerous event, PTSD comes with symptoms that include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event. Often individuals may temporarily have difficulty adjusting to and coping with life

after the event. For Military service members who are also tasked with reintegrating from military to civilian life, PTSD symptoms can be magnified.

Posttraumatic stress disorder (or PTSD) is becoming more commonly diagnosed, partly as a result of the numbers of military personnel returning from extended tours of war, and partly as a function of increased understanding and identification of delayed reactions to traumatic experiences. It is well-known that veterans die by suicide each day, and it is these statistics that illustrate the importance of mental health awareness and training for healthcare professionals working with the veteran population.

### **There is good news – effective treatments help!**

PTSD can be treated; it does not have to be a lifelong diagnosis. With treatment, individuals can feel safe again, and live happy, productive lives. In particular, research supports trauma focused psychotherapies—or treatment focused on helping individuals process the memory of the traumatic event or its meaning— as the most effective treatment for PTSD; in cases where necessary, medication management has also proven to be effective.



### **Evidence-based treatment recommendations**

Trauma-focused psychotherapies that are endorsed by the Veterans Administration as being the most effective include:

- Prolonged Exposure (PE), a type of exposure therapy which teaches a person to gain control over negative emotions, involves talking about the trauma, and gradually encourages the person to face things they have avoided since the trauma.
- Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), a trauma-focused cognitive therapy, teaches a person to recognize and reframe negative thoughts, involves talking about the trauma, and also focuses on processing traumatic memories through written accounts.
- Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), a form of psychotherapy, helps individuals to reprocess memories and make sense of their trauma with the assistance of bilateral stimulation, or back-and-forth movement or sound.



On your screen is a list of courses that will help you enhance your understanding of the roots and origins of trauma as well as the role of resilience in trauma and will help you to develop strategies for self-care when working with traumatized populations. These courses also offer up-to-date research in the field which will give you

the tools you need to accurately diagnose and effectively treat PTSD in adults.

### Courses

- [Addressing Substance Use in Military and Veteran Populations](#)
- [Best Practices in Trauma Specific Treatment](#)
- [Common Mental Health Conditions in Veterans](#)
- [Overview of Trauma Disorders in Adults for Paraprofessionals](#)
- [Posttraumatic Stress Disorder](#)
- [Trauma and Substance Use](#)
- [Trauma and the Brain](#)
- [What Does Becoming Trauma-Informed Mean for Non-Clinical Staff](#)
- [Identification, Prevention, and Treatment of Suicidal Behavior for Service Members and Veterans](#)

The season to be thankful has arrived and we give thanks for all that you do for our members.

The Optum Idaho Education and Training Team