



## UNITED STATES ARMY PUBLIC HEALTH COMMAND

### Public Affairs Office

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## Behavioral and Social Health Outcomes Program

### Mission

The Behavioral and Social Health Outcomes Program, or BSHOP, identifies and assesses psychological and social threats to Soldier health and combat readiness, and suggests ways the Army can prevent or reduce these threats. Experts in this program provide surveillance of behavioral health issues, currently focusing on the Army's uniformed personnel.

The BSHOP was created in 2008 in response to Army leader's concerns about suicide, post-traumatic stress, substance abuse and other potentially harmful behaviors.

BSHOP identifies Soldiers who are involved in negative behaviors such as suicide, homicide, alcoholism, and domestic violence and other forms of physical aggression, and examines risk factors that may contribute to these behaviors. This surveillance and analysis is reported to Army leaders and used to prioritize actions to address the factors that contribute to negative behaviors with the goal of preventing them or reducing their occurrence.

### Clients

The Behavioral and Social Health Outcomes Program addresses the needs of Army commanders and organizations, including Army medical leaders, treatment facilities and deployed units. The program focuses on population-based prevention. The program's staff cannot consult with individual patients.

### Structure and Organization

The Behavioral and Social Health Outcomes Program is one of four programs in the Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance Portfolio at the Army Institute of Public Health. The AIPH is a subordinate organization of the U.S. Army Public Health Command. All of these organizations are located at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. The USAPHC is a major subordinate command of the U.S. Army Medical Command.

### BSHOP's Capabilities

- Surveillance—Assess Army organizations for emerging trends in behavioral and social health epidemiology and consider their implications for behavioral health policy, programs and research. Through its surveillance, BSHOP assesses social factors that influence individual and population health.
- Response—Provide behavioral health epidemiological consultation capability to the Army to include worldwide, short-notice deployable consultation.
- Information sharing—Serve as the Army's center of excellence for psychological health and social outcomes epidemiology, working to establish a basis for preventive action.
- Programmatic development and evaluation—Provide expert consultation to the Army as it develops and implements evidence-based, effective approaches to maximizing the psychological and social health of our Soldiers, families, organizations and communities in the Army.

### BSHOP's Top Initiative

- Epidemiological consultations—With short notice, experts in this program travel to Army installations or unit locations at the request of commanders to gather data and assess events within a specific community where behavioral health issues occur at unusual levels.
- Suicide surveillance—Using the Army Behavioral Health Integrated Data Environment, or ABHIDE, data repository, BSHOP identifies Soldiers who have been hospitalized for suicidal behavior or committed suicide, and correlates behavioral factors that are contributors. This surveillance and analysis is reported to Army leaders and used to prioritize actions to address the factors that contribute to harmful behaviors and suicide.



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### **BSHOP's Partnerships**

The program supplements its expertise with multidisciplinary public health experts within USAPHC and establishes working partnerships with other federal organizations, including the Defense Centers of Excellence, Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center, U.S. Army Forces Command and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.

### **BSHOP's Contributions**

The Behavioral and Social Health Outcomes Program serves as the Army's comprehensive public health program for behavioral and social health. BSHOP is uniquely positioned to bring to MEDCOM an unbiased look at the internal/external factors that may lead to behavioral health issues. Experts in this program are the link between the medical community and the individual Soldier. They strive to be honest brokers of data—providing unbiased research and reporting to determine the contributing factors to suicide, post-traumatic stress, substance abuse and other behavioral health issues

Through management of the ABHIDE data repository, experts have access to the most comprehensive suicide registry in the world. Initiated in 2008, the ABHIDE is a registry of all Army (Active-duty and Reserve component) suicides and suicidal behaviors from 2001 forward, incorporating information from more than 30 military, medical and personnel databases. ABHIDE data supports analysis and reporting on suicidal behavior to Army organizations and installation/medical command stakeholders.

Since its inception, the BSHOP has conducted 12 behavioral health EPICONS. Examples of EPICONS that BSHOP has conducted include reviews of a brigade whose members were alleged to have committed violent crimes after a recent deployment, a survey of the contributing factors to a suicide spike at an installation hosting deploying units, and an assessment of behavioral risk factors at an installation that experienced an increase in domestic violence and violent crime. EPICONS have also been conducted for other services, since BSHOP's capabilities are unique in the DOD.

Through these EPICONS, BSHOP has conducted targeted population-based assessments in response to urgent or emerging issues within units/installations/commands to examine multiple measures to identify risk factors for behavioral and social health issues and recommend potential mitigating strategies.

Experts in this program enjoy a unique public health opportunity at the forefront of the study of the behavioral and social factors that influence health. An ultimate goal of BSHOP is to assist in the broader effort to prevent or mitigate behavioral health outcomes such as suicide, violent crime or substance abuse. The BSHOP leverages its skills and expertise to decrease the impact of behavioral health issues throughout the Army, and enhance psychological health and well-being of the force.