

## BACKGROUND

- A healthcare needs assessment survey is a systematic approach to ensure a health service uses its resources to improve the health of its population in the most efficient way.
- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) conducts a regular needs assessment survey of VA enrollees. However, these VA surveys do not capture the needs of over 9 million veterans ineligible to receive VA benefits, representing nearly half of all US veterans.

## OBJECTIVE

- To capture the needs and attitudes towards pain, mental health and general healthcare services for all US military veterans and their children residing in Southern Illinois

## METHODS

### Study Design

- Observational study that used a quantitative survey to collect information

### Inclusion Criteria

- Respondents who are US military veterans who resided in Southern Illinois at the time of survey completion

### Survey

- 59-question survey was conducted which contained survey items that assessed needs for and access to general health, pain and mental health services.
- Display posters with links to the survey were sent to barbers, bars, churches, ministries, tattoo parlors, VFW halls and American Legion halls in addition to being posted on social media

### Study Measures: Dependent Variables

- Primary Outcome:** identified potential gaps in access to health services and needs for Southern Illinois veterans and their dependent children

### Study Measures: Independent Variables

- Age, race, marriage status, education level, county of residence, number of dependent children, prior branch of service, discharge status, current health insurance provider, service entry prior to 11 Sept 2001

### Data Analysis

- Descriptive statistics including means, percentage, and standard deviations were used to describe sample population

## CONCLUSIONS

- Access to general health and pain services were identified as key areas for improvement
- Provider mistrust could potentially limit use of mental health services
- High number of respondents with dependent children indicates pediatric healthcare should be considered a priority for veteran's health programs

## RESULTS

Figure 1: Demographic Information

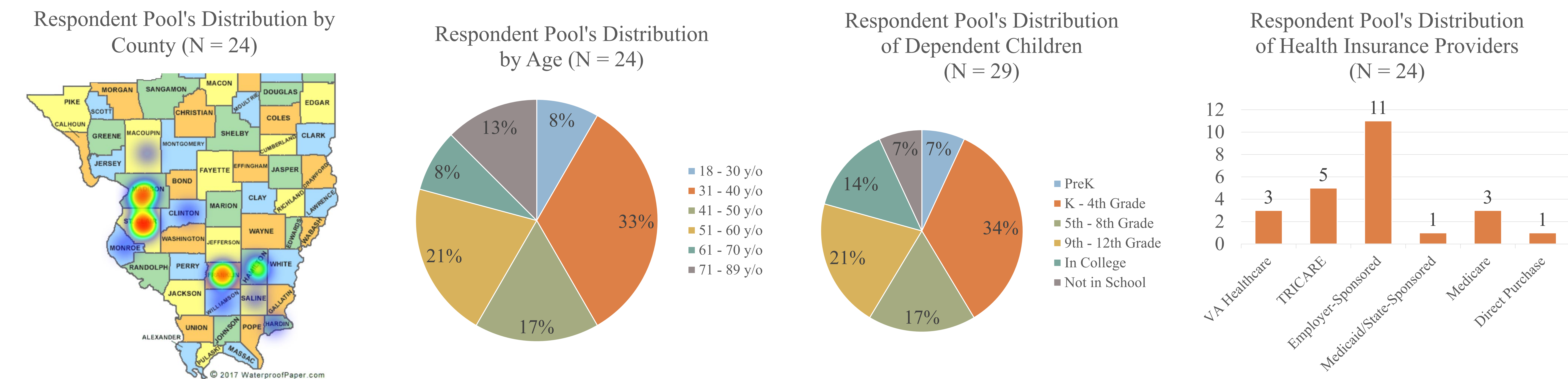


Table 1: Responses to Questions on General Health Needs (N=22)

	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Somewhat Agree N (%)	Neither Agree nor Disagree N (%)	Somewhat Disagree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)
Within the past 90 days I experienced a medical issue that required or likely required the attention of a medical professional.	5 (22.73)	7 (31.82)	1 (4.55)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (27.27)	3 (13.64)
Within the past 90 days my child experienced a medical issue that required or likely required the attention of a medical professional. (N=16)	2 (12.50)	2 (12.50)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (43.75)	5 (31.25)
It is difficult to get an appointment to be seen for medical issues when I try to make one.	4 (18.18)	3 (13.64)	3 (13.64)	3 (13.64)	1 (4.55)	6 (27.27)	2 (9.09)

Table 2: Responses to Questions on Pain Needs (N=24)

	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Somewhat Agree N (%)	Neither Agree nor Disagree N (%)	Somewhat Disagree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)
Within the past 90 days I have experienced pain that has affected my ability to perform daily activities.	3 (12.50)	5 (20.83)	7 (29.17)	0 (0)	1 (4.17)	4 (16.67)	4 (16.67)
I am not likely to seek medical attention for pain that limits my ability to perform daily activities because I prefer to handle it on my own.	0 (0)	9 (37.50)	5 (20.83)	0 (0)	5 (20.83)	4 (16.67)	1 (4.17)
It is difficult to get an appointment for the treatment of my pain when I try to make one.	4 (16.67)	4 (16.67)	2 (8.33)	4 (16.67)	1 (4.17)	8 (33.33)	1 (4.17)

Table 3: Responses to Questions on Mental Health Needs (N=24)

	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Somewhat Agree N (%)	Neither Agree nor Disagree N (%)	Somewhat Disagree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)
Within the past 90 days I have had concerns regarding my mental health.	1 (4.17)	3 (12.50)	2 (8.33)	3 (12.50)	1 (4.17)	5 (20.83)	9 (37.50)
I am not likely to seek medical attention when I have concerns regarding my mental health because I prefer to handle it on my own.	3 (12.50)	2 (8.33)	3 (12.50)	4 (16.67)	2 (8.33)	7 (29.17)	3 (12.50)
I am not likely to seek medical attention when I have concerns regarding my mental health because I do not trust the medical professional(s) assigned to my care.	1 (4.17)	4 (16.67)	5 (20.83)	3 (12.50)	1 (4.17)	4 (16.67)	6 (25.00)
It is difficult to get an appointment for concerns regarding my mental health when I try to make one.	2 (8.33)	3 (12.50)	1 (4.17)	8 (33.33)	1 (4)	7 (29.17)	2 (8.33)