

# APA ADVOCACY UPDATE 2018

A View From Washington, DC

---

Heather O'Beirne Kelly, PhD  
Director, Military and Veterans  
Health Policy



# APA's Military & Veterans Health Policy Priorities

---

1. Promote mental health and well-being of military personnel, Veterans, and their families (focus on DoD and VA, but include civilian sectors when and where they intersect with military/Veteran populations)

- Prevent suicide in military/Veteran populations
- Promote use of evidence-based psychotherapies
- Ensure mental health promotion is included in transition period from active duty to Veteran status
- Promote health research relevant to military/Veterans
- Protect integrated care at VA and oppose privatization

# APA'S Military & Veterans Health Policy Priorities

---

2. Protect and expand scope of practice for DoD and VA psychologists; promote all psychologists as key providers and leaders in healthcare with military/Veteran populations

- Obtain prescribing authority for VA psychologists
- Obtain full Title 38 status for VA psychologists
- Fix Choice and TRICARE!
- Promote DoD and VA psychologists within larger military/Veteran healthcare space and train all psychologists as providers of effective, high-quality care to military/Veteran populations

# APA'S Military & Veterans Health Policy Priorities

---

3. Provide targeted support for subgroups of Military/Veteran populations with greater potential for mental health concerns

- National Guard/Reserve components
- Women servicemembers and Veterans
- Families of servicemembers and Veterans
- Wounded/disabled servicemembers and Veterans
- Veterans with other than honorable discharges
- Criminal justice-involved servicemembers and Veterans
- LGBT servicemembers and Veterans
- Student veterans on college campuses



# Range of Advocacy Activities

- Capitol Hill meetings/discussions with Members of Congress and their staff re legislation
- Capitol Hill briefings, Congressional hearings, private roundtables, PAC events
- Formal APA testimony to Congress
- Meetings at VA with VACO staff
- For APA members: lobby fly-ins, webinars
- Coalitions, consortia, nonprofits, National Academies studies
- Media engagement: film, print, social
- Capitalizing on issues in the news



# Capitol Hill Activities

- Hill Briefing on Science of Veteran Suicide
- Hill Briefing on Community Care
- Advocacy re: VA MISSION Act
- FY19 Appropriations Testimony and work with Members of Congress
- NDAA language requiring TRICARE report, removing Oath of Exit
- Arrington bill redesigning transition activities
- Roundtable on VA medical cannabis research
- OMB and Congressional meetings on VA research
- AVAPL Washington Week





# Working with the Administration and VA...

---

- Member of VACO Mental Health Stakeholders Group
- FOVA Hill briefings
- FOVA member research brief with head of ORD
- VA special purpose funds issue
- APA Monitor interview with then-Secretary Shulkin
- January 2018 Executive Order on transitioning servicemembers



# Engaging with APA members around advocacy

---

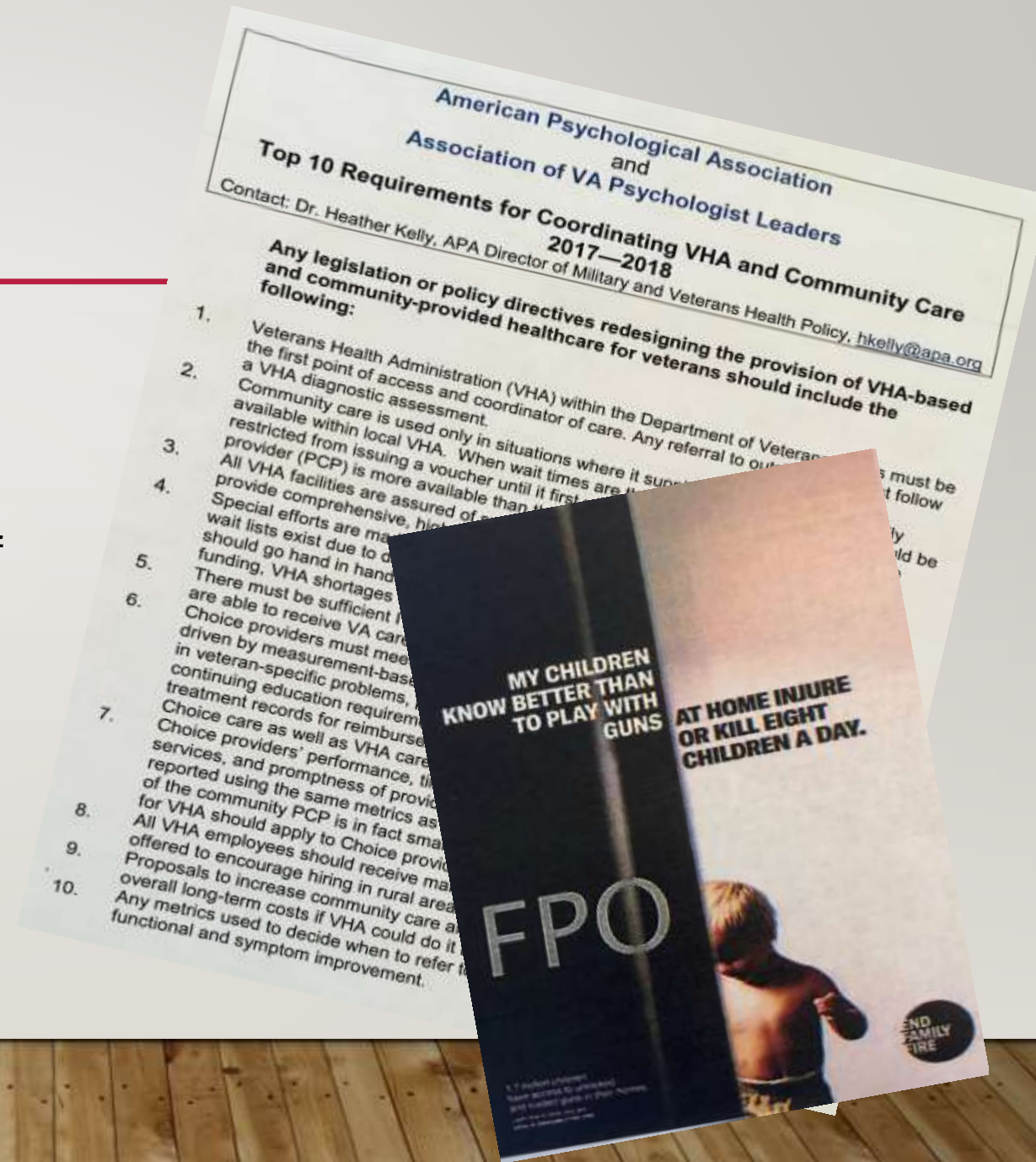
- Division 18/VA Section webinar
- AVAPL Washington Week events with VSOs and Congress
- Practice Leadership Conference workshop on working with military/veteran clients with Center for Deployment Psychology
- Monthly column in APA PracticeUpdate
- New column in Division 18 newsletter
- APA Convention (upcoming half day of service in San Francisco)





# Collaborations

- AVAPL, Division 18/VA Section, Division 19 (military)
- VSOs: SWAN summit, AMPA and Palm Center re Trans Ban
- Mil/Vet nonprofits: PsychArmor, Bush Center, Code of Support, TAPS, Elizabeth Dole Foundation, Armed Services Arts Partnership
- Academe: Military Family Research Institute, Combat PTSD Conference, National Academy of Science
- Others: Brady Campaign, RAND Corporation, Major League Baseball



# Media Engagement

---

- Film and TV: Thank You for Your Service, Served Like A Girl, Long Road Home
- Print: NPR, Pro Publica, Politico, The Wall Street Journal, and local papers
- Twitter!





# Upcoming!

---

- Always more on: privatization, TRICARE, RxP, Title 38, transition mental health & suicide prevention
- Hill briefing on Veterans & Opioids
- Campaign for Inclusive Care
- VetKids Coalition
- Sen. Gillibrand roundtable on gender dysmorphia
- Lethal Means Safety
- APA Convention
- Invictus Australia: focus on transitions





# Contact Heather

hkelly [@apa.org](mailto:hkelly@apa.org)

202.336.5932

@heatherkellyphd

