

ASK THE QUESTION

Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs
SAMHSA & DHHS

“Have you or a family member ever served in the military?”

The Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs and Department of Health and Human Services are partnering to “Ask the Question” to all individuals on intake of health care services. The goal is to increase awareness of state and federal benefits and services available to veterans regardless of their discharge status, era, or age. By doing so, more veterans will be able to receive and connect to potentially lifesaving services and resources.

WHY DO WE NEED TO ASK THE QUESTION IN THAT WAY?

Do not ask “Are you a Veteran?” It is paramount that the question be asked in a manner that allows all who have worn the uniform to feel included in the inquiry. Not everyone who has served identifies as a “Veteran” either because they do not feel comfortable with the term, their discharge status prohibits it, or because their service involved work with the National Guard or Reserves and they were never activated. This specifically worded question also allows family members to respond in the affirmative if their loved one is actively serving or if he/she falls into one of the above categories.

WHY DO WE NEED TO IDENTIFY EVERYONE WHO HAS EVER SERVED IN THE MILITARY AND THEIR FAMILIES?

Military service comes with many unique experiences and occupational exposures, most of which civilians will never have. Understanding the culture from which the individual may be operating, knowing about possible variables in their health, and in their family situation will allow the provider to deliver more effective, comprehensive, and culturally competent care or services. You might even connect them with benefits or services they did not know they were entitled to! Additionally, knowing about one's service allows us to show our appreciation for the sacrifices they have made.

WHEN THE ANSWER IS “YES”

Please follow the **Military Service Health History form**, and steps provided by the **ATQ Toolkit**.

Need a refresher? Forms? Resources? It's all here.

<https://veterans.nebraska.gov/askthequestion>

