A hermeneutic phenomenological exploration of women British Army veterans who experienced more than one trauma and their lived experience of transition and post service support Authors Kenyon, T.L.



### **Key themes Methods** Introduction Aim: Recruitment phase Interview phase Data analysis phase Identity Transition Support To conduct an in-depth exploration of the 7 women Army veterans Sought ethical approval. Braun and Clarke's (2006) lived experience of women British Army were interviewed. thematic analysis: Culture Lack of veterans who have experienced more than Military Digital flyer distributed via 1. Familiarisation of the data shock support Interviews consisted of 2 Woman one trauma and who have made the social media. 2. Creating initial codes awareness topic areas: transition from the British Army to civilian Veteran mental health 3. Searching for themes transition experiences, Civilian life and the post transition support on charities were approached. Lack of veterans support post Student 4. Analysing themes roles leaving the British Army. support discharge. 5. Defining and finding for those **Objectives:** themes Questions were based on Van with Uncertainty Work 1. To understand what existing research 6. Writing the report. Manen's (1990) four lifeworld C-PTSD suggested about the transition and support existentials: lived body, Reflexive practice diary was lived space, lived time and of women Army veterans via the scoping kept. Family Loss Stigma lived relationships. study literature review.

# 2. To explore the transition and support experiences of women British Army veterans.

A scoping review revealed current views on women veterans' transition to civilian life are described as 'feeling underprepared for civilian life', 'living two lives' and having difficulty 'coping with PTSD symptoms' (Burkhart, 2015). When leaving the Army, it is thought that seeking support is a sign of 'weakness' (Brunger et al., 2013).

### eferences

Burkhart, L., & Hogan, N. (2015). Being a Female Veteran: A Grounded Theory of Coping With Transitions Social Work in Mental Health, 13(2), 108–127. <u>https://doi.org/10.1080/15332985.2013.870102</u>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77–101. <u>https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa</u>

Brunger, H., Serrato, J., & Ogden, J. (2013). No man's land: The transition to civilian life. Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research, 5(2), 86-100. doi:10.1108/17596591311313681

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# **Preliminary results**

Jessica "...there's other women out there, and yeah, they feel totally alone because there are so few as being female veterans, that we don't really feel seen."

Joanna "...I have to say my transition had to happen with my identity, so I had to kind of become the student nurse first..."

Nicole "I left the army and there was no sort of check-in afterwards to say 'oh how are you getting on? Are you alright?' I was gone, there's no longer military, so it's no longer thought about."

## **Conclusion**

A scoping review was used to search in breadth and depth for existing research. This revealed a lack of research within women Army veteran transition and support. Therefore, semistructured interviews with 7 women Army veterans were undertaken. The interviews identified key themes including identity, transition experience and support.

The impact of this research is to improve current support and create an awareness. Benefit: the ambition to increase an understanding and insight into this population and their experiences of transitions. Limitation: results cannot be generalised to the general population.

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