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Study: Sexual Misconduct Increasing Among Military

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Veterans Affairs Psychologist Carolyn Allard Co-Authored Study On Military Sexual Trauma

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SAN DIEGO -- A local psychologist has exposed the alarming increase of sexual misconduct among the military.

Carolyn Allard, a psychologist with the Veteran's Affairs Department, said she knew men and women in the military were being subjected to military sexual trauma, or MST, but she never realized the full extent.

"One in five women report experiencing MST when they come to the VA and one in 100 men report experience with MST," she said.

Allard co-authored a new study for the June issue of the Journal of Trauma and Disassociation.

"What's really alarming is if you factor the unreported number of men and women this is happening to," she said.

The study revealed 24 percent of women and 1 percent of men reported some sort of MST, which ranges from inappropriate comments to physical assault. However, if the unreported number is factored in, it jumps to 80 percent of women and 30 percent of men have had experience with MST.

Of the 48,000 veterans who were screened at the end of fiscal year 2010, more than 3.2 percent reported some form of MST. That is almost a full percentage point higher than the national average outside the military.

"The good news is that we can take the findings of this study and move forward towards better reporting and more important treatment and prevention, which the Department of Defense is fully committed to," said Allard.

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