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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VA Northern California offers free support to survivors of military sexual trauma

SACRAMENTO — As part of its annual campaign during [Sexual Assault Awareness Month](#) in April, the VA Northern California Health Care System (VANCHCS) is working to increase awareness about the impact of military sexual trauma (MST) and VA's free supportive treatments.

“Sexual assault is not a women’s issue; it’s a crime that can happen to anyone,” said Dr. Catherine Novotny, MST recovery coordinator at VANCHCS. “Veterans who experienced MST don’t have to heal alone. No matter how long it’s been, VA is here to help.”

Every April, VANCHCS joins the nation in recognizing Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) and highlighting recovery support for those who may be suffering. The goal is to reach former military service members who may not know VA resources exist or if they are eligible to use them. [Eligibility for VA MST treatment](#) is broader than for most other VA health care services. Veterans do not need to have reported the incident when it occurred or have documentation to receive care.

In 2021, VANCHCS provided MST-related treatment to 2,409 Veterans across Northern California. VANCHCS general mental health teams provide individual and group therapy and referrals for national VA MST residential programs. Veterans can also access web and [app-based](#) recovery tools and attend [video appointments](#) from home.

Northern California Veterans who would like to learn about VA support may call 925-372-2554 or visit www.va.gov/northern-california-health-care/programs/military-sexual-trauma-care. Information about VA's national MST-related services is available at www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome.

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