

MEETING ABSTRACTS

THE HIDDEN BATTLE: CHALLENGES AND SUPPORT NEEDS OF CZECH MODERN WAR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Jitka Laštovková¹, Miroslav Barták¹, Benjamin Petruželka¹, Alexandra Petrů¹, Eva Fuchsová¹, Marcela Trávníčková², Pavlína Ďurišová², Radim Pekař², Petr Haška³, Petr Šabaka³
Presenting author: Jitka Laštovková (jitka.lastovkova@ujep.cz)

¹ J. E. Purkyně University, Pasteurova 3544/1, 400 96, Ústí nad Labem, Czech Republic

² University of Defence, Kounicova 156/65, 662 10, Brno, Czech Republic

³ Spiritual Support in the Army of the Czech Republic

The present paper sets out the findings from a research project investigating the needs of Czech modern war veterans, with a particular focus on the experiences and support needs of their families during and after foreign operations. The present study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from a questionnaire survey of veterans with qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews conducted with veterans, their family members, and professionals working with veterans. The results of the study indicate that participation in foreign missions is perceived as a significant threat to partner and family relationships. However, veterans rarely expect or seek support from military structures. The integration of family care and support into a comprehensive framework encompassing the pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment phases is further emphasised by the qualitative data. Veterans have identified challenges related to family relationships, particularly the maintenance of relationships with partners, children, and parents, as the most significant personal challenges they face during their military service. These findings contribute to the development of methodological materials and educational programs aimed at professionals supporting war veterans and their families. The project underscores the necessity for comprehensive, family-oriented care model within military support systems.

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