

NAVY SEAL FOUNDATION

COMMUNITY SURVEY OVERVIEW

2024

NSF's Community Survey Objectives

- Shape and prioritize existing programs to be most effective
- Develop new programs based upon emerging requirements from the community
- Learn any misunderstanding about the organization or the support we provide

2024 EOY Survey

FOCUS ON BRAIN AND MENTAL HEALTH

This survey was distributed November 2024 to NSW community members

AD SEAL	AD SEAL Spouse
AD SWCC	AD SWCC Spouse
AD NSW Support	AD NSW Support Spouse
Veteran SEAL	Veteran SEAL Spouse
Veteran SWCC	Veteran SWCC Spouse
Gold Star	

All responses anonymous and confidential

Feedback Summary

Barriers to Accessing Care

- DoD restrictions limit treatment options and access to alternative therapies.
- The VA is perceived as ineffective, treating NSW personnel the same as Fleet service members, and lack of brain health resources.
- Stigma and fear of job loss prevent individuals from seeking care.
- Training and deployment cycles make it difficult to prioritize well-being.
- Financial burdens and lack of awareness about available resources hinder access to care.
- Uncertainty about where to seek help, with some only aware of mandatory pre-retirement screenings

Knowledge & Awareness Gaps

- 68.67% of respondents report personal or spousal experiences with service-connected cognitive or mental health challenges.
- Over 50% of respondents rate their understanding of brain health challenges at 7 or below.
- Many express a need for better education on brain health and mental well-being.

Feedback Summary

Call for Specialized & Alternative Treatments

- Increased demand for anxiety and OCD specialists, EMDR, Somatic Experiencing (SE), trauma therapy, and TBI care.
- Recognition of Operator Syndrome.
- Calls for greater acceptance of alternative treatments, including psychedelics.
- Concerns over glioblastoma prevalence among NSW personnel and potential exposure risks.

Support for Families & Community Connections

- Family members express frustration with service members not seeking mental health support.
- Desire for more events exclusively for operators, fostering connection between AD and veterans.
- Need for better long-term support for Gold Star families.

Q1

How are you associated within the NSW Community?

AD SEAL- 13.32%	AD SEAL Spouse- 12.83%
AD SWCC- 3.21%	AD SWCC Spouse- 2.26%
AD NSW Support- 5.28%	AD NSW Support Spouse- 1.89%
Veteran SEAL- 36.79%	Veteran SEAL Spouse- 5.09%
Veteran SWCC- 4.91%	Veteran SWCC Spouse- 0.57%
Gold Star- 13.96%	

Q2

On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your overall understanding of the brain health challenges (such as traumatic brain injuries and PTSD) faced by NSW service members? If you rate your answer at a 7 or below, please tell us how you could best learn about these health challenges.

RATING	%
10	8.91%
9	10.47%
8	26.36%
7 or below:	54.26%

Q2 cont'd

Examples given of best way to learn:

Research articles	Webinars (open to AD, veterans, spouses, caregivers)	Peer discussions
In-person Seminars (open to AD, veteran, spouses, caregivers)	Newsletters or informational emails	Visual aids
Podcasts	Paper handouts	Continuing education for the service member while AD

Q3

Have you, or your spouse, experienced or currently experiencing any cognitive or mental health challenges (e.g., memory loss, headaches, mood changes, anxiety) that are service-connected?

YES: 68.87%	NO: 22.26%
Prefer Not to Say: 3.96%	N/A: 4.91%

Q4

What circumstances have prevented you, or your spouse, from seeking brain and/or mental health care?

The general consensus suggests significant barriers to accessing proper care and support in addressing brain and mental health needs. Veteran participants shared there was inadequate treatment available from the VA. For active duty, time constraints due to training, deployment cycles, and low manpower can make it difficult to prioritize medical appointments around work. Respondents expressed frustration over being medically treated as a Navy Fleet service member would, despite their unique NSW service-related challenges. The high cost of care and uncertainty about where to seek help further complicate access to necessary resources.

Q5

If you, or your spouse, sought medical care for brain and/or mental health, where was the care provided?

Responses included:

NICoE, Home Base, Naval Hospitals- Portsmouth/Balboa, NSW Command, Tulane Center for Brain Health, The Headstrong Project, WAR-P, Shepherd Center, Cortex Initiative, VA hospital, Intrepid Centers, IETP at Palo Alto, private civilian providers through Tricare or out of pocket expenses

Q6

How confident do you feel in accessing mental health support through the Navy SEAL Foundation or related organizations?

Very confident: 30.75%	Not confident: 11.32%
Somewhat confident: 31.13%	N/A: 4.91%
I was not aware these services were available: 21.89%	

Q7

What types of brain and mental health services do you feel are most needed in the Naval Special Warfare community?

Traumatic Brain Injury: 76.23%	PTSD counseling: 62.83%
Access to alternative therapies: 62.83%	Cognitive Rehabilitation: 60.0%
Trauma therapy: 47.17%	Peer support groups: 40.38%
N/A: 3.21%	Other: 21.7%

Q7 cont'd

“Other” feedback included:

Substance Use Treatment	Operator Syndrome	More Veteran Events	Neuroendocrine treatment
Adaptive sports	Acupuncture	Suicide Prevention	Psychedelic therapy
Education on NSW Challenges	HBOT- Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy	Mentorship for other NSW community members	SGB- Stellate Ganglion Block
Chiropractic Care	Faith Counseling	More Spouse Programs	Equine Therapy
Art Therapy	Stem Cell Therapy	Red Light Therapy	Community Care for Veterans
Outdoor Recreational Opportunities	Family/Child Mental Health Therapy	Natural Medicine	Hypnosis

Q8

Are you familiar with the wellness initiatives offered within the NSF's Whole Warrior Health Program?

(Ex: Recovery equipment, Virginia High Performance (VHP), Warrior Fitness Program (West), benevolence requests through Warrior Care Program- Care Coalition, Home Base- ComBHaT program, The Headstrong Project, art therapy, service dog support, NSF's Impact Forum, NSF Huddle, Thought Leaders Symposium, etc.)

Yes, I've participated: 21.89%	No, I am not familiar: 46.23%
Yes, but I have not participated: 29.06%	N/A: 2.83%

Q9

If you, or your spouse, have received brain and/or mental health services supported by NSF, how would you rate the quality and impact of those services?

(Ex: benevolence requests through Warrior Care Program- Care Coalition, counseling, cognitive rehabilitation, Home Base- ComBHAT program, The Headstrong Project, art therapy, Virginia High Performance (East Coast), Warrior Fitness Program (West Coast), etc.)

Very helpful: 20.75%	Somewhat helpful: 7.36%
Not helpful: 1.32%	N/A: 42.26%
I have not sought care supported by NSF: 28.3%	

Q10

What additional services or resources could the Navy SEAL Foundation provide to better support your, or your spouse's mental and brain health?

Responses included:

Education through sharing videos or published clinical studies, handbook of exercises recommended by VHP, cognitive rehabilitation, substance use treatment, increased events in major cities other than San Diego/VA Beach, alternative therapies, collaboration with NSW Commands on latest brain and mental health research, ketamine treatment, nutrition education, more events that incorporate both AD and veteran SEAL/SWCC, service dog, hot/cold contrast therapy, an advocate to assist with monitoring health status, marital counseling, music therapy, more information on NSF programs and support, animal-assisted therapy, spouse education events, family therapy

Q11

How important is it for you and your family to have access to transition services, including mental health support, as part of retirement or separation from active duty?

Very important: 70.19%	Not important: 2.08%
Somewhat important: 12.08%	N/A: 15.66%

Q12

Are you concerned for your, or your spouse's, teammates in any of the following ways?

Traumatic Brain Injury: 62.08%	Depression: 59.43%	Marriage Resilience: 53.02%
Anger Management: 51.13%	PTSD: 50.19%	Family Resilience: 47.55%
Substance use: 41.7%	Severe Anxiety or Paranoia: 38.49%	Suicidal Ideation: 32.45%
Financial Hardships: 27.36%	N/A: 17.36%	Other (asked to specify): 6.42%

Q12 Cont'd

“Other” feedback included:

Operator Syndrome	Transitional Support
Dependent Trauma or Grief Counseling	Cognitive Rehabilitation
Service-connected Autoimmune Disorders	Service-connected Cancer
Impact of Service on Lifestyle	Peer Support
Physical Health	Maintaining Meaningful Employment Post-service

Q13

What is your preferred way of receiving updates and information about NSF programs and services?

Email: 81.99%

NSF App: 7.55%

Text: 6.79%

In-person events or meetings: 1.51%

Social media: 1.32%

Phone call: 0.94%

NPS Question

**How likely is it that you would recommend the NSF
to a friend or colleague?**

Answer method: 0-10 sliding scale

NPS SCORE

How is NPS score calculated? $\% \text{ Promoters} - \% \text{ Detractors} = \% \text{ NPS}$

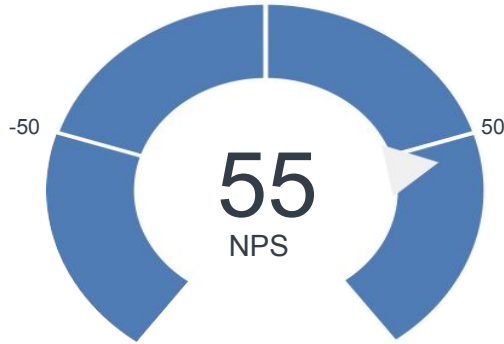
Response	Score	Description
Promoters	9-10	Loyal enthusiasts who will stay with your company and urge their friends and colleagues to do the same
Passives	7-8	Satisfied but unenthusiastic customers who can be easily wooed by the competition
Detractors	0-6	Unhappy customers who have the potential to damage your brand

Various Ratings

NET PROMOTER SCORE (NPS) ANALYSIS



NSF'S 2024 NPS Score Results



NPS Analysis:
GREAT

Detractors	Passives	Promoters
15%	15%	70%
78	80	372