

“Mental health care experience in the Mexican armed forces”

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Abstract

The Mexican Armed Forces comprise the National Defense Secretariat and the Navy Secretariat (SEMAR). Their mission is to use the power of the Federation for national defense, contribute to internal security, undertake civic actions and social works that advance the progress of the country, protect people's assets in the event of disaster, and reconstruct the areas affected, in accordance with the Political Constitution, the laws that derive from it and international treaties. Personnel admitted to the Armed Forces as military personnel (soldiers and marines) are Mexicans by birth recruited through a continuous system and evaluated prior to admission as regards their bodily, and mental, and physical health skills. Once on active duty, they undergo an annual assessment. In recent years, in SEMAR this annual medical examination has specifically included aspects of mental health to determine the effect of the functions performed by military personnel on the former. We present a review of our experience about various mental disorders such as suicidal behaviors, post-traumatic stress disorder and affective and psychotic disorders in navy personnel.