



# Caring4WomenVeterans App

## *User Manual*



**VA**  
HEALTH  
CARE

Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

# User Manual

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# Overview

Whether you are a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or non-VA clinician, the Caring4WomenVeterans mobile application (App) gives you information to help you address the unique physical and mental health issues that affect women Veterans. Women Veterans have health care needs that differ from both male Veterans and the general female population. Because many women Veterans seek health care outside of the VA network, it is important that both their VA and non-VA providers have the resources necessary to provide informed and comprehensive care. The Caring4WomenVeterans App offers facts and statistics about women Veterans' health, an overview of common issues, questions to guide your conversations with your patients, tips to help patients transition to civilian life and links to additional resources.

While the App is meant to provide you with comprehensive and targeted information regarding the specific health care needs of women Veterans, the information it contains is not a substitute for clinical judgment.

This App is available for iOS, Android and Windows operating systems, and is supported by these Internet browsers:

1. Internet Explorer 9 and higher
2. Safari 7 and higher
3. Firefox 24 and higher
4. Google Chrome 30 and higher

The following User Manual provides an in-depth, step-by-step guide for using the Caring4WomenVeterans App.

# The Basics

## Getting to know the screen

When you access the Caring4WomenVeterans App, you will first see the Home screen, which gives you an overview of the information available in the App. There are five tabs on the Home screen that also appear along the bottom of the screen with abbreviated names:

- **About Women Veterans (About WV)** – Statistics, trends and historical context about women Veterans
- **What to Ask (To Ask)** – Details about the information you can obtain from asking specific questions about service history and a list of suggested topics
- **Common Veteran Issues (Vet Issues)** – Conditions and challenges specific to service era, suicide, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Military Sexual Trauma (MST)
- **Transition to Civilian Life (Transition)** – Common challenges women Veterans face and resources that can help
- **Additional Resources (Resources)** – Tools, links and information for you and your patients

You can access these categories by tapping the tab either on the Home screen or at the bottom of the screen. You can get to any section of the App at any time by tapping the tabs along the bottom of the screen. You can also revisit the Home screen at any time by tapping the **Home** tab in the upper right corner of your screen, or return to the previous screen you were viewing by tapping **Back**.

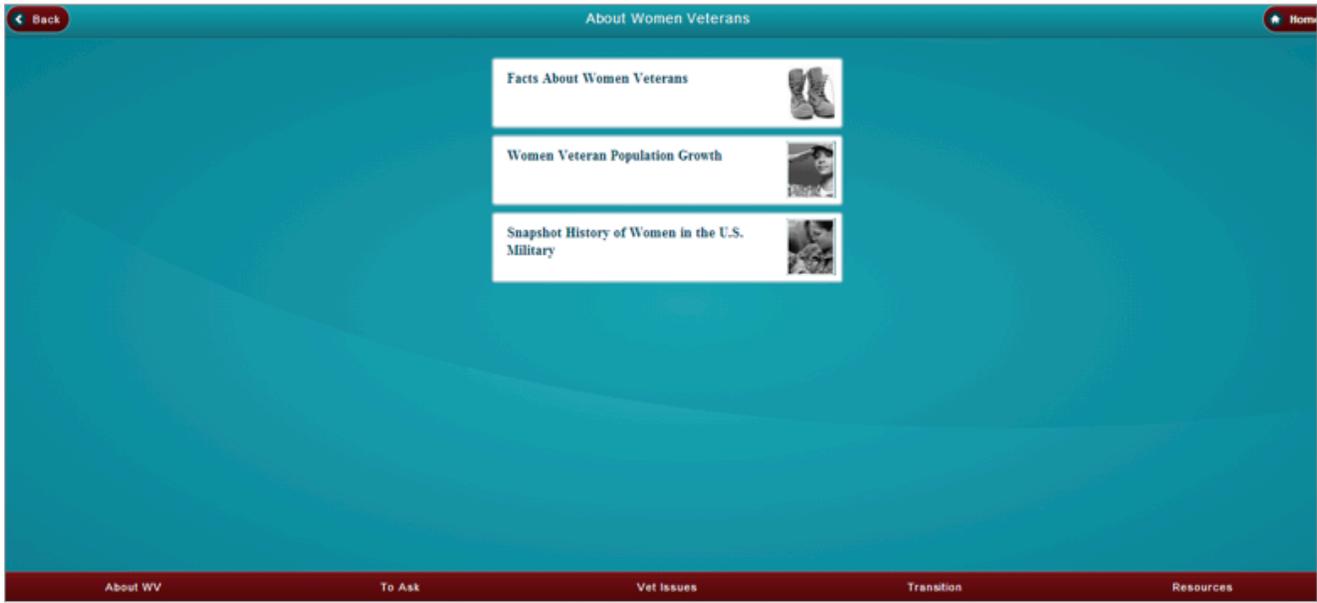


## Finding more information about the App

Tap the **About This App** button in the upper right corner of the Home screen > You will be taken to the About screen, which gives you more details about the App > Tap the **Back** or **Home** buttons in the upper corners to go back to the Home screen.

# About Women Veterans

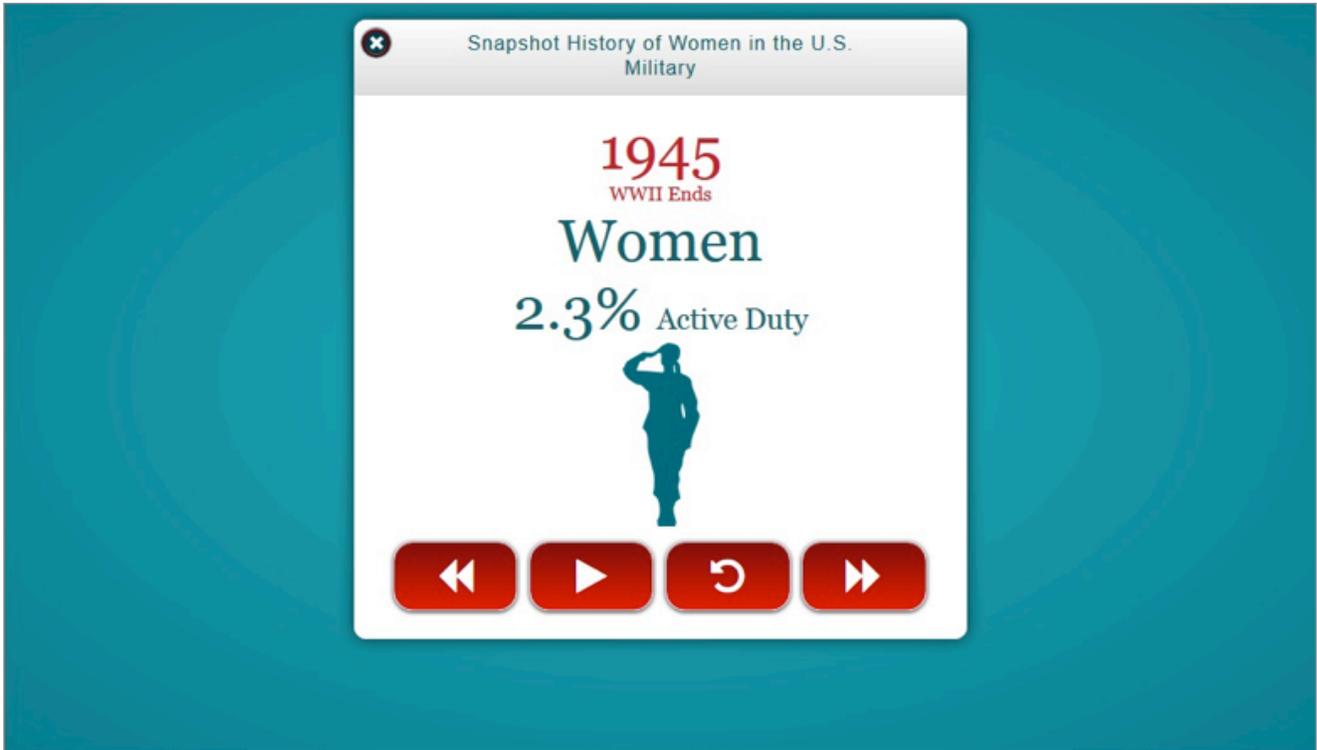
Understanding the history and context of women's military service and how women Veterans and Servicemembers seek medical care can help you better serve your female Veteran patients.



## Viewing general information and statistics about women Veterans

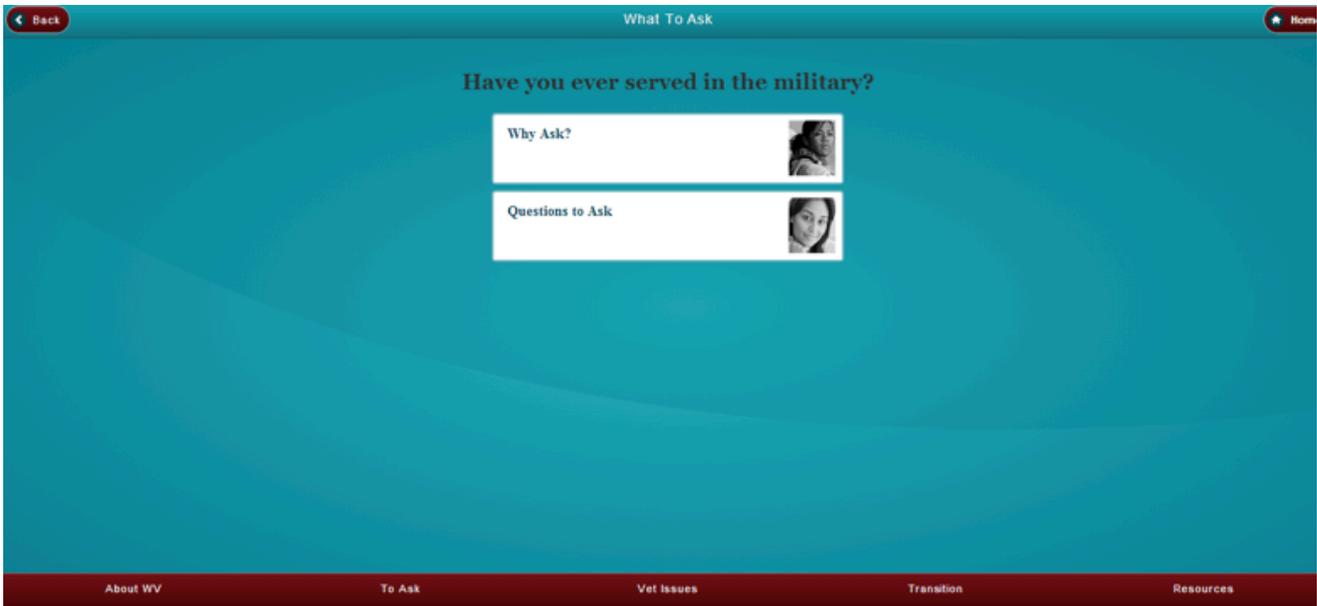
Tap the **About Women Veterans** tab on the Home screen or the **About WV** tab along the bottom of the screen > You will see three categories within this section. Tap the tab that corresponds to the information you wish to view:

1. **Facts about Women Veterans** – Statistics and data points about women in the military, as well as a list of VA health care resources for women Veterans. To return to the About Women Veterans screen, tap the **Back** button in the upper left corner.
2. **Women Veteran Population Growth** – A graph showing the projected women Veteran population growth through 2020. To return to the About Women Veterans screen, tap the **Back** button in the upper left corner.
3. **Snapshot History of Women in the U.S. Military** – A series of slides showing the percentage of active-duty women Servicemembers from 1945 to the present. Tap the buttons along the bottom of the slideshow to navigate through the slides. To close the slideshow and return to the About Women Veterans screen, tap the **X** tab in the upper left corner.



## What to Ask

Many women who have served do not identify as Veterans, so asking “Are you a Veteran?” may not be the best approach. Because issues related to military service can affect physical and mental health, it is important to learn what to ask and how to ask it.

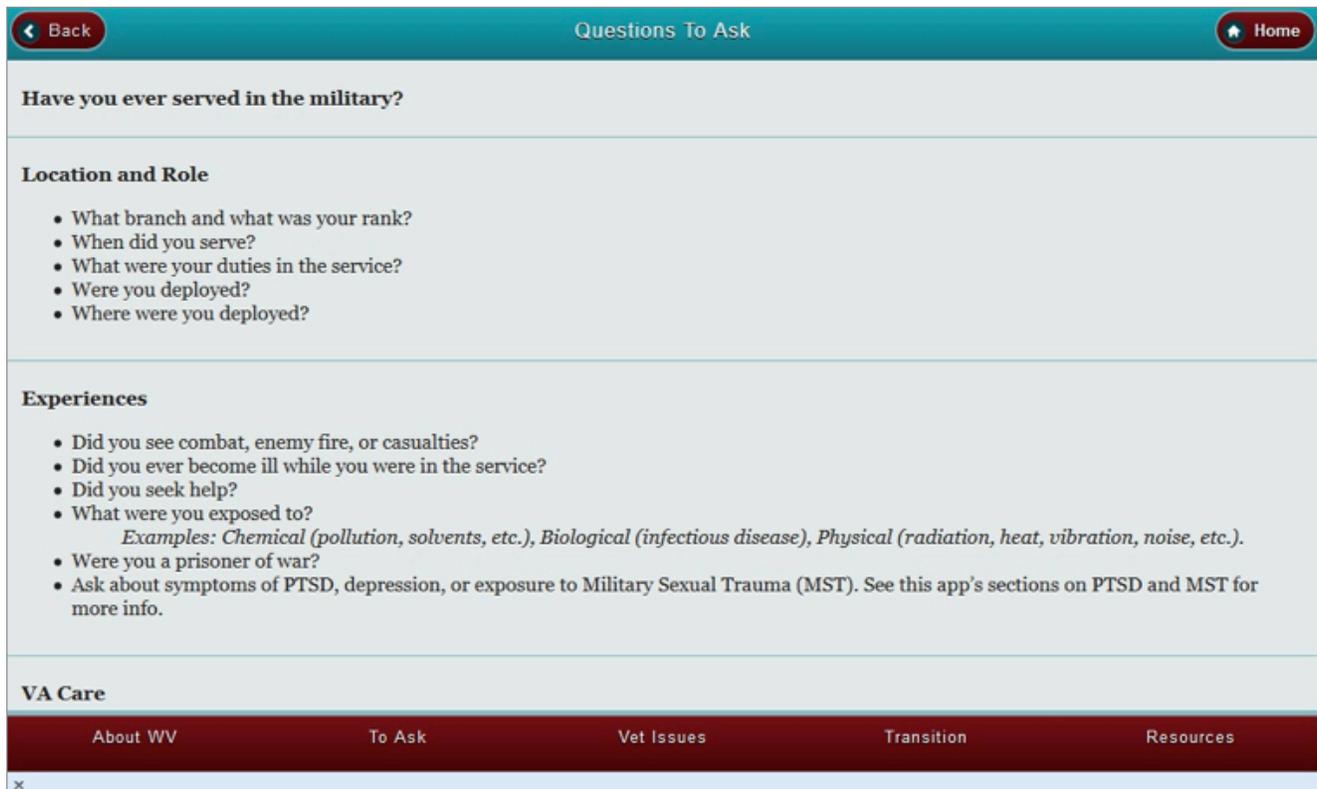


## Learning about your patients' service history

To ensure you're asking your patients the appropriate questions about their service details, tap the **What to Ask** tab on the Home screen or the **To Ask** tab along the bottom of the screen > You will see two categories within this section. Tap the tab for the information you wish to view:

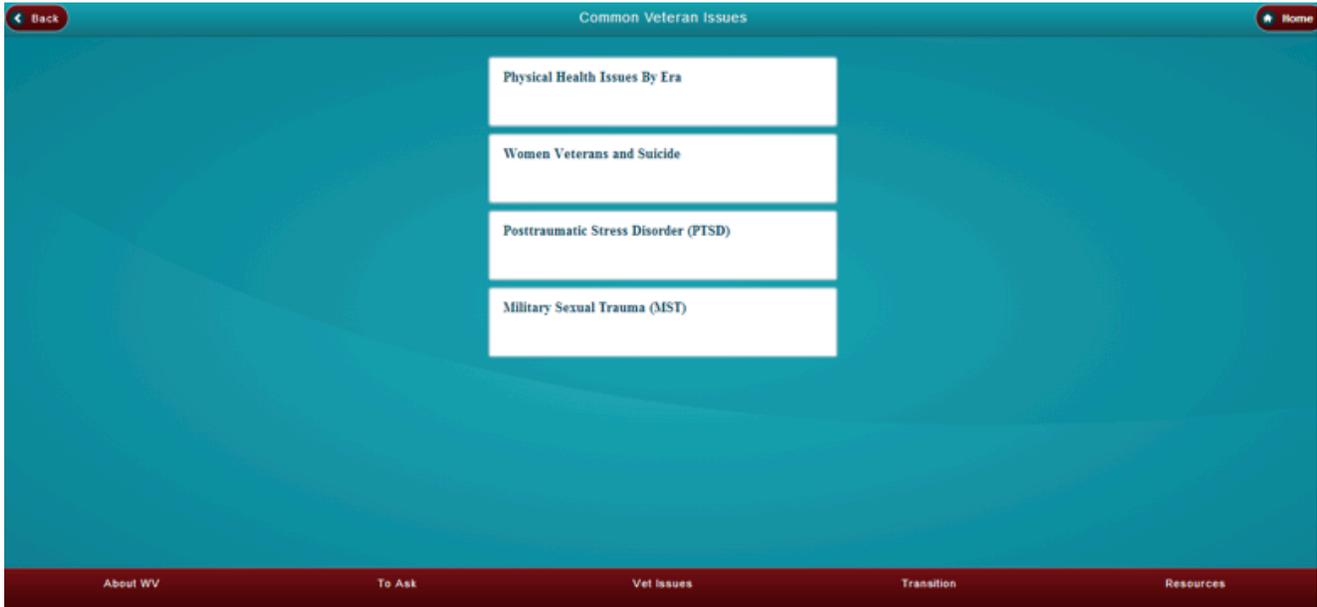
1. **Why Ask** – An overview of why it is important to know your patients' military history and what health concerns this information may help you identify.
2. **Questions to Ask** – A list of specific questions that will help guide your conversation with your patient.

To return to the What to Ask screen from any of these sections, tap the **Back** button in the upper left corner.



# Common Veteran Issues

Although every patient is unique, there are some common issues that tend to affect the Veteran population in general and that may affect women Veterans in specific or unique ways.



## Learning about common issues that affect Veterans

To learn more about these issues and their particular impact on women Veterans, tap the **Common Veteran Issues** tab on the Home screen or the **Vet Issues** tab along the bottom of the screen > You will see four categories within this section. Tap the tab that corresponds to the information you wish to view:

1. **Physical Health Issues By Era**
2. **Women Veterans and Suicide**
3. **Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**
4. **Military Sexual Trauma (MST)**

To return to the Common Veteran Issues screen from any of these sections, tap the **Back** button in the upper left corner.

## Learning about physical health issues by era

Veterans may experience different health issues and conditions based on where and when they served. To learn about common issues specific to certain eras, tap **Physical Health Issues By Era** > Tap the era you wish to view:

- **Iraq War and Afghanistan War**
- **Gulf War**
- **Vietnam War**
- **Cold War**
- **Korean War**
- **World War II**

Details will appear about common health conditions, injuries, infections, etc. from the era you selected. Some details offer further information, which you can view by tapping the buttons with the arrows. To return to the Physical Health Issues By Era screen, tap the **Back** button.



## Learning about women Veterans and suicide

Women Veterans have an increased risk of suicide compared with women in the general population. To learn about factors that lead to suicide and resources that can help, tap **Women Veterans and Suicide** > Tap the information you wish to see:

- **Women Veterans at High Risk** – Information about factors, signs and symptoms of suicide
- **Veterans Crisis Line** – A list of resources for at-risk patients

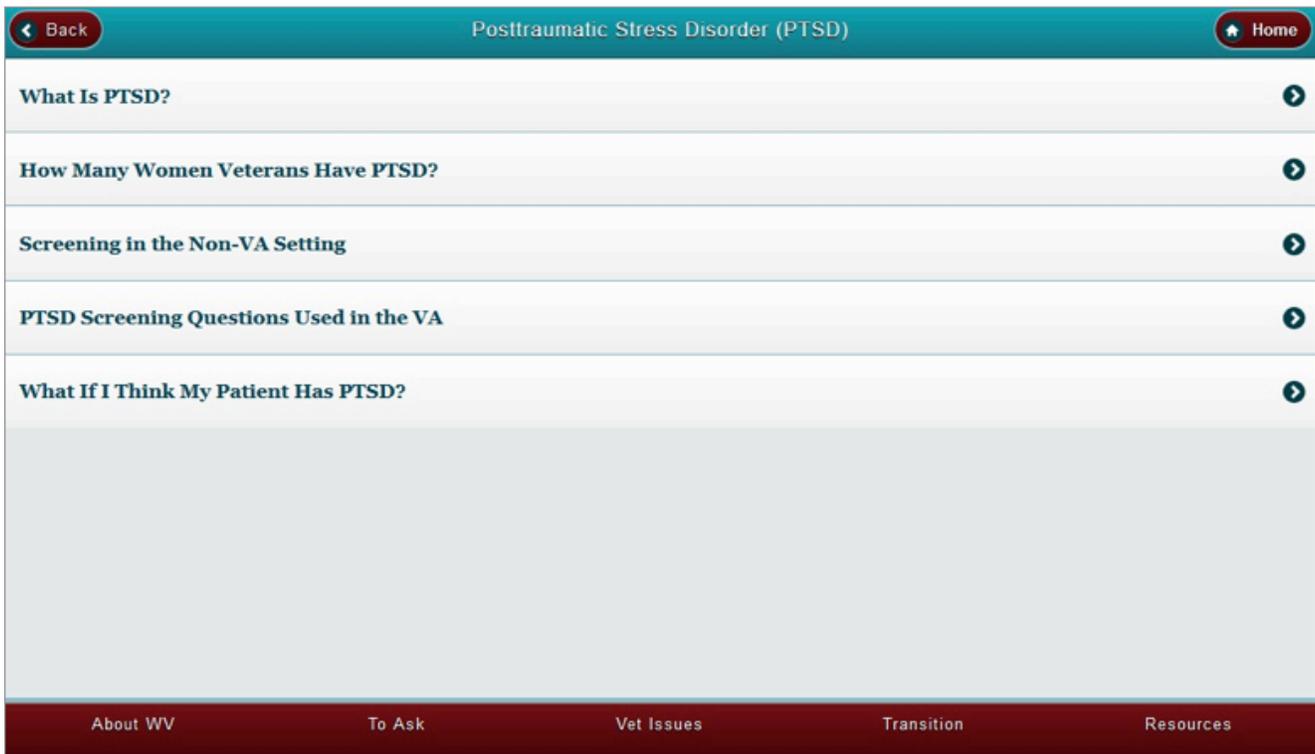
To return to the Women Veterans and Suicide screen, tap the **Back** button.

## Learning about Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

It is important to recognize the signs and symptoms of PTSD, and to provide and/or refer to appropriate care. Because Veterans may seek primary care outside VA, non-VA providers may encounter patients with PTSD resulting from military service. To learn more about PTSD, PTSD screening and how to help your patients, tap **Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** > Tap the information you wish to see:

- **What is PTSD?**
- **How Many Women Veterans Have PTSD?**
- **Screening in the Non-VA Setting**
- **PTSD Screen Questions Used in the VA**
- **What if I think My Patient has PTSD?**

To return to the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) screen, tap the **Back** button.

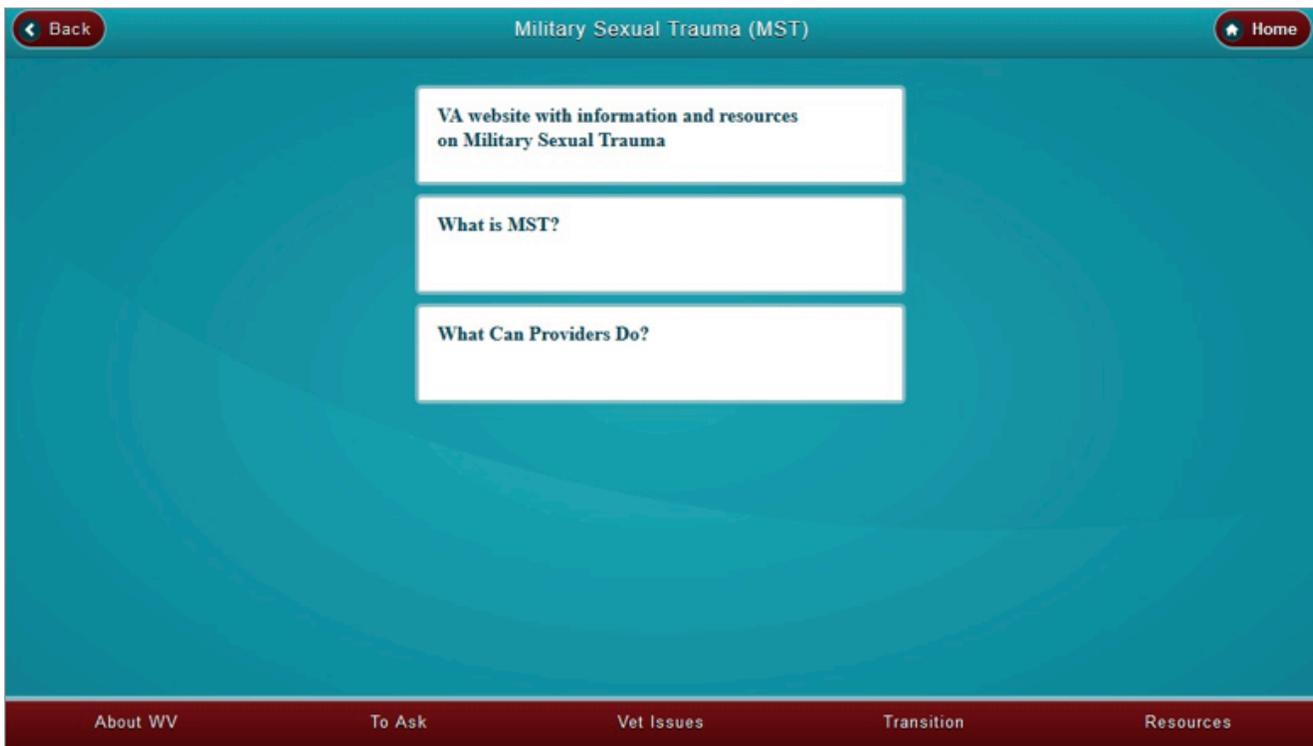


## Learning about Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

Among women Veterans seen in VA for health care, one in five women report experiencing MST. To learn about MST and resources that can help, tap **Military Sexual Trauma (MST)** > Tap the category of information you wish to view:

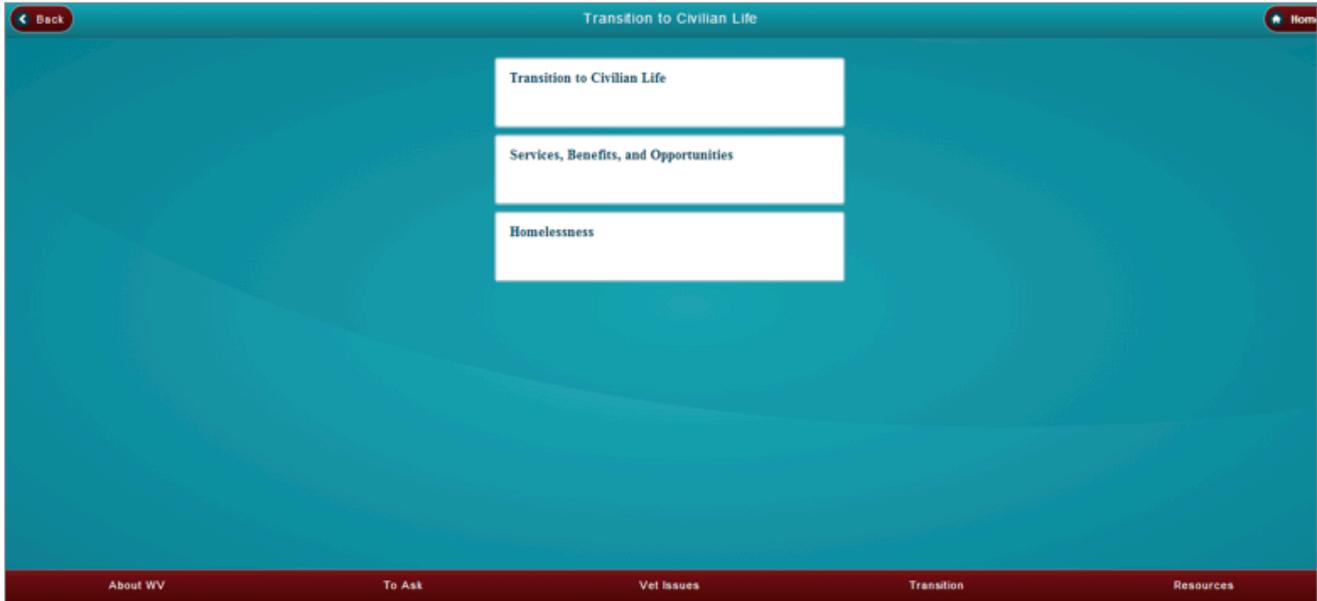
- **VA website with information and resources on Military Sexual Trauma** – By tapping this button, you will navigate to a site external from the App > Tap **Yes** to continue or **Cancel** to stay on the screen.
- **What is MST?** – General information about MST
- **What Can Providers Do?** – Guidelines for screening and treating patients with MST

To return to the Military Sexual Trauma (MST) screen, tap the **Back** button.



# Transition to Civilian Life

Transitioning between military and civilian roles can be challenging for returning Veterans. The transition may affect women Veterans differently than male Veterans.



## Learning about resources for transitioning to civilian life

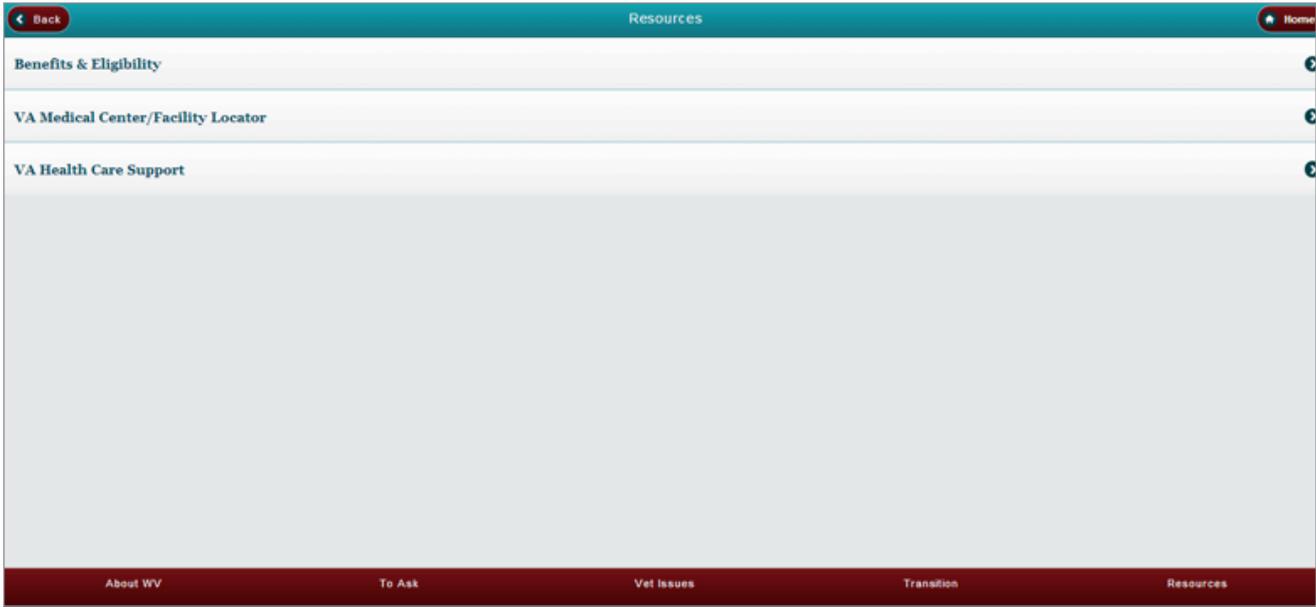
Tap the **Transition to Civilian Life** tab on the Home screen or the **Transition** tab along the bottom of your screen > You will see three categories within this section > Tap the button for the information you would like to view:

1. **Transition to Civilian Life** – resources to help women Veterans with the transition process
2. **Services, Benefits and Opportunities** – an overview of additional resources to help women Veterans with employment and health care services
3. **Homelessness** – an overview of the ways that homelessness affects women Veterans

To return to the Transition to Civilian Life screen from any of these sections, tap the **Back** button in the upper left corner.

# Additional Resources

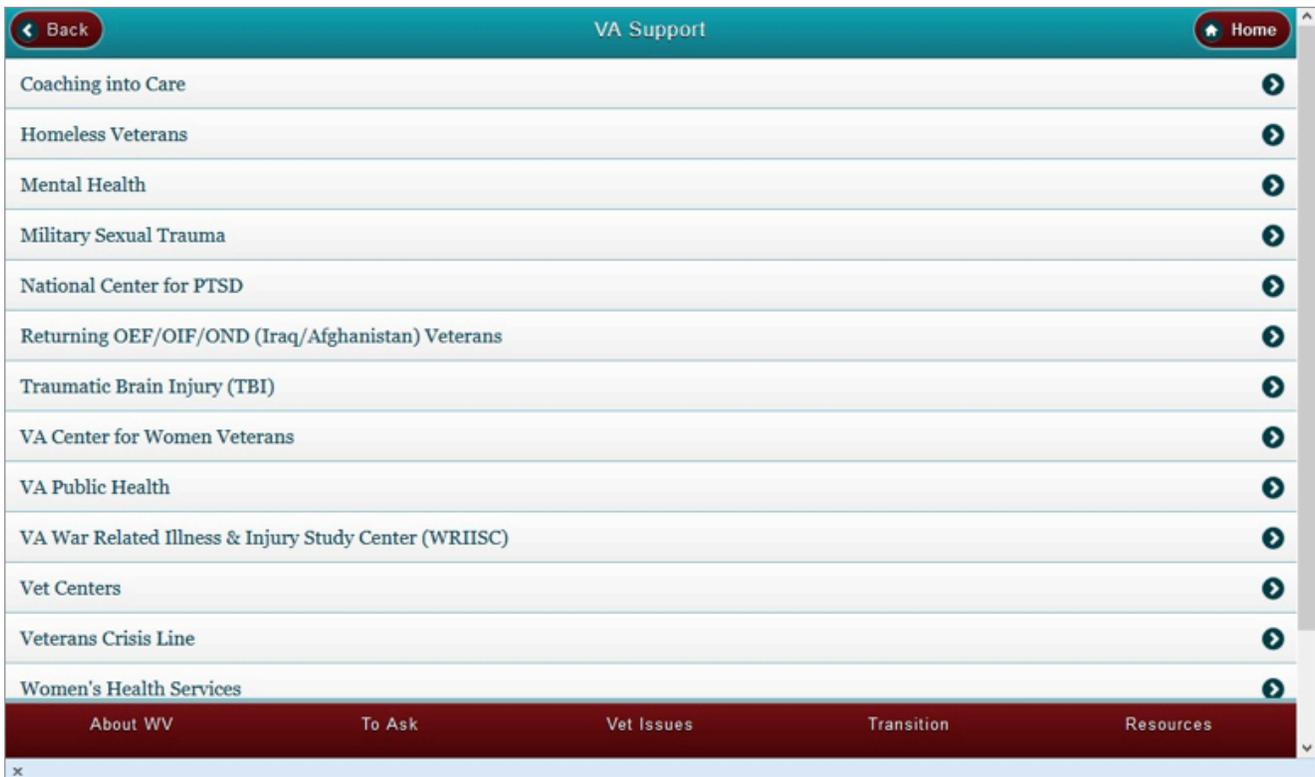
For additional information about topics covered in the Caring4WomenVeterans App, the App provides you with reliable resources to share with your patients.



## Accessing additional resources

Tap the **Additional Resources** tab either on the Home screen or the **Resources** tab along the bottom of the screen > You will be taken to the Resources screen > You will see three categories within this section > Tap the button for the information you wish to view:

1. **Benefits & Eligibility**
2. **VA Medical Center/Facility Locator**
3. **VA Health Care Support.**



These categories will provide you with links to additional resources and information that you can provide to your patients. In some cases, when you click on a resource or a link, you will be asked if you want to navigate to an external site > Tap **Yes** to open the link in a new tab in your browser or tap **Cancel** to stay on the screen. To return to the Additional Resources screen, tap the **Back** button in the upper left corner.

# Help and Additional Information

## Additional Training Materials for the Caring4WomenVeterans App

More resources, such as a Quick Start Guide, Slideshow and FAQs, can be found on [mobilehealth.va.gov/training](https://mobilehealth.va.gov/training).

## Help Desk Information

If you need assistance with the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry, dial **1-855-500-2025** to speak with a VA representative. The Help Desk is open weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. CT. For TTY assistance, dial 711.

## Emergencies

You should never use this App in an emergency situation. If you encounter an emergency, call your local medical center or dial 911.

# Appendices

## Appendix #1: Project References

This App was developed in collaboration with VA's Women's Health Services according to an approved concept paper. The App was tested in a demo environment to ensure optimal functionality. Subject Matter Experts who served in the Caring4WomenVeterans App's creation are: Judy Brennan, Cait Cusack, Maggie Czarnogorski, Sally Haskell, Patricia Hayes, Samina Iqbal, Laure Veet and Alison Whitehead.

## Appendix #2: Glossary

**App** – an application, or software program, that can be accessed through a website or mobile device and is designed to fulfill a particular purpose

**Military Sexual Trauma (MST)** – a term used by VA to refer to sexual assault or repeated, threatening sexual harassment that occurred during a Veteran's military service

**Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** – a mental health problem that can occur after someone goes through a traumatic or life-threatening event like war, assault or disaster, in which the reactions do not go away over time or become disruptive to a person's life

**VA** – Department of Veterans Affairs

**VA Mobile Health** – an initiative that aims to improve the health of Veterans by providing technologies that will expand care beyond the traditional office visit and includes the creation of secure mobile Apps that will leverage the popularity of wireless technologies to support Veterans, Caregivers and VA clinical teams. [More at: [mobilehealth.va.gov/](https://mobilehealth.va.gov/)]