

March 10, 2024

## **13 Reasons Why HBOT for TBI/PTSD Veterans Should be Nationally Funded as Part of a “Standard of Care” Legislative Effort**

1. Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) has been shown to virtually eliminate suicidal ideation. Since DoD and the VA continue to declare that Suicide Prevention is their #1 clinical priority, they should immediately adopt HBOT-for-TBI/PTSD as part of standard of care.
2. The VA 2022 mental health, suicide prevention, homeless, caregiver, and opioid budget was \$15.7 billion as the suicide rate in the Services and among Veterans continues to rise. The same budget has escalated on average of 18% per year for the past 4-years without improvement as the VA’s own statistics totaling over 146,000 suicides by 2024:

**Figure 2: Veteran Suicide Deaths, 2001–2021**



3. We have a national TBI/PTSD Veteran suicide (146,000+) and opioid (109,000+) epidemics which for 18 years has cost over **255,000 TBI/PTSD Veterans their lives which represents 41% of all US troops KIA since beginning off WW I (623,718)**. Nearly 70% who commit suicide don’t use the VA. Veterans with TBI had more than a 3-fold increased risk of opioid overdose compared with those without.
4. **Ten state Governors** (OK, TX, IN, AZ, KY, FL, NC, WY, MD, VA) **have enacted HBOT legislation** with a cumulative state legislative vote count of **1,364 to 4 in favor**. Additionally, **seven of those states** (IN-\$1M, AZ-\$25K, KY-\$8K, FL-\$28M, NC-\$250K, MD-\$1M, VA-\$125K) have already appropriated over \$30M to treat and help heal invisible signature brain wounds. Should not the US at a minimum match the state funding of treatments? Successes to date with a portion of those state funds exceed 100 Veterans.
5. . The Textbook of Military Medicine algorithm for “Blast Exposure” definitive therapy is HBOT for TBI.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Conventional Warfare: Ballistic, Blast, and Burn Injuries, Textbook of Military Medicine Series on Combat Casualty Care,

6. Dr Paul G. Harch HBOT conducted meta-analysis of 11 of the 21 clinical trials, and their positive results, highlights the safety and efficacy of HBOT for mTBI. **The safety and efficacy of HBOT for mTBI has been proven.** A national HBOT medical statement attesting to the safety and efficacy of HBOT is signed by medical doctors across the country and is available for review.
7. **Over a hundred TBI/PTSD Veteran video testimonials** of the estimated 12,500+ HBOT treated attesting to the safe and effective results of HBOT treatment and may be viewed here. **An Army General, Vietnam Medal of Honor recipient** and many distinguished service Veterans testimonials about their positive HBOT treatment experience. <https://www.youtube.com/@treatnowdotorg/videos>
8. While not all states have allocated state funds to treat TBI/PTSD Veterans, each state enacted recognizes the need for private and public funds to be used until the **federal government recognizes its obligations**, or the **states seek federal legal re-imbusement** for medical support to TBI/PTSD Veterans wounded in service to our country.
9. We conservatively estimate over 877,450 TBI/PTSD PHYSICALLY brain wounded Veterans current economic impact is an estimated at \$118.1 billion annually, \$4.7 trillion over 40-year lifespan. That is an average impact cost of \$2.3 billion annually to each state. We can treat and heal for less than ½ of 1 percent of the total lifetime cost.
10. The current estimated annual national impact cost is \$134,595 per Veteran (\$118.1B/877,450) while the one-time safe and effective treatment remedy is estimated at \$20K each (\$250 Hr. X 80 dives). **The 2022 average Medicare cost per beneficiary in the US was \$15,727 (usafacts.org) with a potential annual saving after treatments.**
11. There are 3.75 million Veterans who support HBOT treatment including the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans (DAV), AMVETS, Air Force Sergeant Association, and Vietnam Veterans of America.
12. The VA and DoD have no well-defined TBI treatment, and every single intervention or medication prescribed **is not approved by the FDA for TBI**; providers are merely treating the symptoms. Why is the VA allowed to prescribe over 100 off-label drugs to TBI/PTSD Veterans but not medical grade oxygen which has been an approved drug for decades. HBOT is the ONLY proven medical TBI treatment that has undergone study, peer review and clinical trials successfully.
13. **“The problems appear to be systemic.** Over and over, the hospitals and clinics in the VA’s sprawling health care network have fallen short when it comes to treating people with “mental illness.” The conclusion emerges from a ProPublica review of all the **reports published by the VA’s inspector general since 2020. That includes 162 regular surveys of facilities and 151 investigations** that were triggered by a complaint or call to the office on a wide variety of alleged health care problems.”<sup>2</sup>

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Part 1, Volume 5, 1990, Pages 311-316, Chart Page 313, Office of Surgeon General, Department of Army

<sup>2</sup> How the VA Fails Veterans on Mental Health, Kathleen McGrory and Neil Bedi, January 9, 2024, ProPublica