

Veterans Compensation and Rehabilitation Inquiry

Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
Canberra City ACT 2694

17th September 2018

Economic inequality

I request that the Productivity Commission consider the link between economic inequality, unmet financial expectations, mental disorders and suicidal behaviour among Veterans.

All Veterans have a rightful expectation of being “taken care of” in the event any service acquired disabilities impacted on their capacity to provide for their families in a way that meets their expectations.

Unfairly, over time the financial component of their compensation has eroded considerably whilst community norms have moved in the opposite direction. My point here is, if one has an expectation of living a reasonable and comfortable existence, as was the original intent of the TPI/VEA compensation arrangements then one is in for a rude awakening in 2018. It is saddening that many of those who sacrificed the most are now entering the twilight of their lives with little financial security and burdened with the weight of an unwanted war and a thankless society. For example, I vividly recall the Academic Registrar of the University of Adelaide back in 1969 calling me into his office and politely telling me to withdraw my application for University enrolment (BEc) as it would be too disruptive to have a Veteran on Campus. It is hard to comprehend the impact on one’s life of such an egregious act. Unfortunately my story is typical of many.

The problem with this disparity is that it accentuates the diaspora between the affluent and the disabled veteran creating a hyper-awareness of their financial misery. This “Economic Inequality” or distress and failure of the Veterans financial expectations has a major impact on Veterans Mental Health.

We took, as a nation, our best and brightest, sacrificed them to the God of War and then abandoned them. It is beyond time to rectify this unjust economic discrimination against Veterans.

There is no doubt that the relationship between household income and mental disorders is very real. Low levels of household income are associated with several lifetime mental disorders and suicide attempts, and a reduction in household income is associated with increased risk for incident mental disorders. Policymakers need to consider the unmet financial expectations of Veterans and its chilling toll.

Thank you for your consideration

Keith Enno

References (clickable links)

Relationship between household income and mental disorders: findings from a population-based longitudinal study

The Link Between Household Income and Mental Health

Relationship between household income and mental disorders ...

Strong Relationship Between Income and Mental Health - Gallup News

Health Reports: Income and psychological distress: The role of the ...

The association between income and distress, mental disorders, and ...

Low income associated with mental disorders and suicide attempts ...

(PDF) Relationship Between Household Income and Mental Disorders ...

relationship Between Household Income and Mental Disorders: Findings From a Population-based Longitudinal Study

Relationship between household income and mental disorders - NCBIⁱ
