

AGENCY DISCLOSURE NOTICE

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

We are conducting focus groups with active-duty service members to learn about their experiences with family planning in the military. Specific topics include family planning services, contraception and contraceptives, fertility and infertility, pregnancy, and policies and services surrounding reproductive health. The findings from this study will provide DoD with a more nuanced picture of the needs and experiences of service members and identify where policy and programs surrounding reproductive health and family planning may require revision or where new policies and programs may be needed.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participating in this focus group or discussion is voluntary. You may choose not to answer any question, and you may leave the room at any time. It is possible that our discussion may elicit difficult feelings. We will not report your participation or non-participation to anyone in your chain of command or in the [SERVICE BRANCH]. We expect this discussion to take roughly 60 minutes.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The research team will treat the information you provide as confidential. We will not disclose the individual responses you provide to anyone outside of the research team. Information from the discussion will not be attributed to specific individuals and will be reported in aggregate in project briefings and reports. We will be taking notes on the discussion today but will not include names or any other information that might identify you in our notes. We do plan to use some comments/quotes from the focus groups in reporting our findings, but these will not contain any information that would lead you to be individually identified.

If you do choose to provide examples about your personal experience, especially those that involve other individuals who are not a part of the focus group, we ask that you do not provide details or information that could be used to personally identify those people (e.g., names, dates, locations).

POTENTIAL RISKS

It is possible that some participants may become upset by discussing their own personal experiences with family planning, or by hearing about the experiences of others. Similarly, some people may be concerned that their personal experiences could be shared outside the group, which could result in reputational harm. We ask that you all respect one another's confidentiality and not reveal what is mentioned today after the discussion. Although we are asking everyone in the group to keep each other's answers confidential, we cannot guarantee that the other participants will do so. We also want to remind everyone that not everyone will share the same view on some of the issues that are discussed. We ask that participants respect their peers' viewpoints. It is fine to disagree, but please do so respectfully.

Please note that some states have prohibited or restricted access to some reproductive health procedures, including pregnancy termination, or may have laws against providing assistance to others who want access to these procedures. We will not ask about these behaviors, but disclosure of them in this focus group could result in legal consequences should any other participant report them to the authorities.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

For anyone who feels uncomfortable talking about any topics in the group, we also have a secure site where you can send us additional comments securely and confidentially. To access this site, please go to [INSERT WEB ADDRESS]. You will also need the following passcode: [INSERT PASSCODE]. Please do not share this website or passcode with anyone outside the focus group.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The study leads are Dr. Sarah Meadows and Dr. Julia Bandini. They can be reached at smeadows@rand.org and jbandini@rand.org.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or need to report a research-related injury or concern, you can contact RAND's Human Subjects Protection Committee toll-free at (866) 697-5620 or by emailing hspcinfo@rand.org. If possible, when you contact the Committee, please reference Study # 2022-N0421.

RESOURCES

If you feel any discomfort during or after our discussion today, please consider using the following resource:

Military OneSource (<https://www.militaryonesource.com>) is a free, 24-hour service that is available 7 days a week to provide a full range of services, across the deployment cycle, to military personnel and their families, at no cost. They can be reached at:

Stateside: CONUS: 1-800-342-9647

Overseas: OCONUS Universal Free Phone: 1-800-342-9647

Collect from Overseas: OCONUS Collect: 1-703-253-7599

En Español llame al: 1-800-342-9647

TTY/TDD: Dial 711 and give the toll-free number 81-00-342-9647

Live chat is also available via the Military One Source website.

If you are interested in learning more about reproductive health and health care resources that are available to you, you may contact:

1. Installation MTF or clinic [phone number/other contact info as relevant]
2. Women's Health Clinic or Contraceptive Clinic (if applicable) [phone number/other contact info as relevant]
3. Decide + Be Ready App, available in the Google Play and the App Store

Please note that the discussion you attend is not an official channel for reporting abuse, discrimination, or misconduct. If you would like to talk to someone about any abuse, discrimination, or misconduct you may contact your installation's:

1. Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) Hotline [phone number/other contact info as relevant]
2. Sexual Harassment and Assault Response (SHARP) Hotline [phone number/other contact info as relevant]
3. Victim Advocate Hotline [phone number/other contact info as relevant]
4. Chaplain Hotline [phone number/other contact info as relevant]