

For Immediate Release

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Veterans Health: HARC research shows there is still work to be done for this population

(PALM DESERT, CA) – February 26, 2015... There is an estimated 50,350 veterans in the Coachella Valley which make up approximately 14% of the adult population. To address the health status and health needs of this important group, HARC, Inc. has released a special report that compares Coachella Valley veterans to non-veterans, in order to identify health issues that may be more prominent in this population.

Results show that most Coachella Valley veterans have the basis for a healthy life: they are economically stable, have high education levels, health insurance, and have routine preventive screenings. However, there are some issues that must be addressed to ensure a healthy veteran population in the Coachella Valley. Some of these issues include:

- Coachella Valley veterans are significantly more likely than non-veterans to have been diagnosed with cancer, diabetes, heart disease, heart attack and stroke.

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- Approximately 9,200 veterans have been diagnosed with diabetes.
- Coachella Valley veterans are significantly more likely than non-veterans to require the use of assistive technology such as wheelchairs or canes.
- Approximately 7,500 veterans do not engage in physical activity at all, putting them at risk for poor health.
- Approximately 14% of Coachella Valley senior veterans have fallen in the past three months.

The full report (found at www.harcddata.org), contains additional data related to health status, behavioral risks, major diseases, access, utilization of services and senior-specific concerns such as elder abuse and injury-causing falls. The report is supplemented with resources for veterans, both locally and nationally. It aims to deliver healthcare providers, cities, government agencies, and private interests a snapshot of veteran health in the Coachella Valley. This data can be used to facilitate decision-making on future issues concerning the veteran population such as program development, access, funding, utilization, and more. HARC hopes that agencies will use this information to improve the health and wellness of our local veteran population.

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About HARC

Formed in 2006 by a consortium of more than 35 public and private healthcare agencies, the Health Assessment Resource Center (HARC) conducts a confidential community health status assessment in the Coachella Valley every 3 years to identify major health and quality of life issues. The nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization is funded in part by contributions from community partners, as well as entities that contract with the agency for customized public health research. More information can be obtained by calling HARC at (760) 404-1945, or visiting the organization's website at www.HARCDData.org.

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