



Army chaplains need training to help suicidal soldiers

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[USA Today](#) [1]

Nearly all army chaplains and chaplain assistants have worked with soldiers who are suicidal, and many say that they need more training in suicide intervention, according to a recent study published in the journal *Spirituality in Clinical Practice*. Forty-four percent of chaplains and 57 percent of chaplain assistants said they need suicide prevention training. While most of those surveyed said they encourage troubled soldiers to get help, there are specific barriers to help-seeking that contribute to the reluctance of some army chaplains and chaplain assistants to intervene when a soldier expresses suicidal thinking. Because of confidentiality concerns, about half are hesitant to tell someone in the soldier's chain of command and a third would not call a crisis hotline for the soldier. In addition, some chaplains and chaplain assistants share the negative views about therapy that can discourage soldiers from seeing a behavioral health specialist. "In this circumstance where people are going to them [army chaplains] and using (them) like a behavioral health provider, let's make sure they have a basic amount of competency," said the lead author of the study, Rajeev Ramchand. As a result, the Army Office of Chaplains is investigating where there may be gaps in chaplains' intervention skills.

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Links within this resource

[1] <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/04/07/army-chaplains-suicide-treatment-stigma-rand-study/24964077/>

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