

## IAVA's Rapid Response Referral Program (RRRP) 2019 Q1 Report:

*The groundbreaking, best-in-class Rapid Response Referral Program has now served over 9,300 veterans. In 2012, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America saw a need to create a safety net for transitioning veterans to connect them to the extensive, but often fragmented, network of support systems and resources available to them. RRRP is that safety net for veterans and their families nationwide.*



### **RRRP Program in Action:**

RRRP worked with an Army veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom who served from 2006-2014. The veteran initially reached out to RRRP reporting significant challenges related to service connected Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The veteran shared that he longed for community support, effective mental health support and “a world that can understand the despair and loneliness” he was experiencing. The veteran’s Veteran Transition Manager (VTM) listened, provided guidance and support and swiftly connected him with his local [Vet Center](#) where he began engaging in weekly individual counseling and bi-weekly group counseling sessions. Just as the veteran began to report a decrease in adverse symptoms related to PTSD, the [2019 government shutdown](#) began. The veteran’s salary was the family’s only source of income and he and his wife had two small children to support.



Through strong program partnerships and the expertise and tenacity of his VTM, the veteran was swiftly linked up with Operation Second Chance, one of RRRP's go-to financial assistance referral partners. Operation Second Chance provided financial assistance which ensured the veteran and his family were able to maintain housing, basic bills and transportation while they waited for the government shutdown to end. The veteran reports a decrease in stress, improved mental health, stable finances and he and his family are now securely on a pathway toward a more stable future thanks to his VTM.

### **2019 Q1 Client Quotes:**

*"My case manager is by far the best customer service representative I have ever encountered. There are no words to explain her selfless sacrifice and service. Constantly maintaining communication and looking for resources for my family. I have gained my family's love and happiness back, and my anger and hostility has dimmed down a lot." - RRRP client*

*"She went over and beyond for me, more than any other program or outreach center ever has. I have been trying to get direction and assistance for almost a year, and everything my VTM was able to find, locate and assist with was within less than a month!" - RRRP client*

*"I reached out for help with my rent and had no idea the amount of support I would receive for other areas of my life that I have been struggling with for years. Thank you." - RRRP client*

*"I just wanted to say thank you for everything that you did for me in the past. I just wanted to reach out to you and say thank you for all of your help. Just to give you a quick update on myself, I finally got my disability and I am rated at 80% service connected!" - RRRP client*



**RRRP Impact Metrics:**

<u>2019 Q1 Impact Metrics:</u>	<u>All Time Impact Metrics:</u>
Total Cases: <b>208</b>	Total Cases: <b>9,315</b>
Average Customer Service Rating: <b>5 (out of 5)</b>	Average Customer Service Rating: <b>4.6 (out of 5)</b>
Total Referrals: <b>334</b>	Total Referrals: <b>11,370</b>
Veterans Crisis Line Connections (vets facing the most urgent crisis like suicide): <b>22</b>	Veterans Crisis Line Connections (vets facing the most urgent crisis like suicide): <b>253</b>
Clients Facing Homelessness: <b>53</b>	Clients Facing Homelessness: <b>1,272</b>
Female Veterans Served: <b>43</b>	Female Veterans Served: <b>918</b>
Veteran Family Members Served: <b>20</b>	Veteran Family Members Served: <b>594</b>
RRRP Client Average Age: <b>40</b>	RRRP Client Average Age: <b>41</b>
Client Gender Breakdown: <b>67/33% (m/f)</b>	Client Gender Breakdown: <b>79/21% (m/f)</b>
Top 5 Referral Areas:	Top 5 Referral Areas:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Assistance: <b>131 (39%)</b></li> <li>• Housing &amp; Homelessness: <b>52 (15%)</b></li> <li>• Suicide &amp; Mental Health: <b>47 (14%)</b></li> <li>• Disability Claims: <b>33 (10%)</b></li> <li>• Employment: <b>31 (9%)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Assistance: <b>3,475 (30%)</b></li> <li>• Housing &amp; Homelessness: <b>1,502 (13%)</b></li> <li>• Employment: <b>1,290 (11%)</b></li> <li>• Education: <b>1,059 (9%)</b></li> <li>• Suicide &amp; Mental Health: <b>1,032 (9%)</b></li> </ul>

**IAVA is Tracking the Trends:**

**Suicide & Mental Health:** RRRP facilitated a 50% increase in Veterans Crisis Line (VCL) referrals for at risk clients, as compared to Q1 in 2018. RRRP continues to be the front line safety net, preventing suicide and ensuring veterans and family members have swift access to the mental health support they require.

**Female Veterans:** Recognizing and improving services for female veterans is a top priority and driving force of [IAVA's Policy Agenda](#). Women who serve deserve access to quality resources and supports; as IAVA's advocacy team fights on the frontlines to ensure impactful legislation is passed to support female veterans, RRRP is seeing an increase of female veterans reaching out in need of help. RRRP served an all time high of female veterans in Q1, at 33% of total veteran clients served.

**Emergency Financial Needs:**

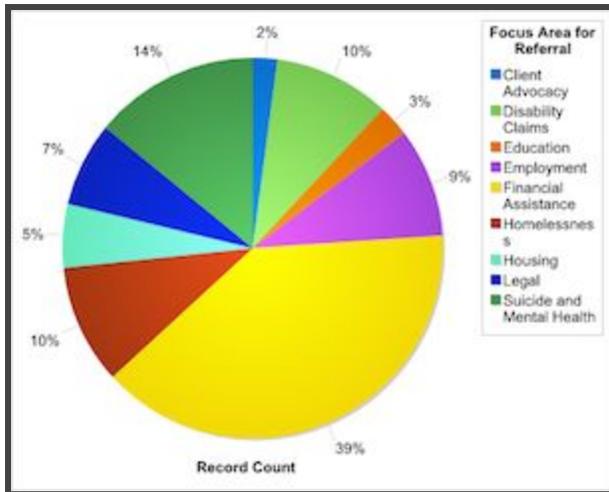
Although veterans and family members reach out to RRRP with a significant range of issues, financial assistance needs continued to dominate requests received in Q1.



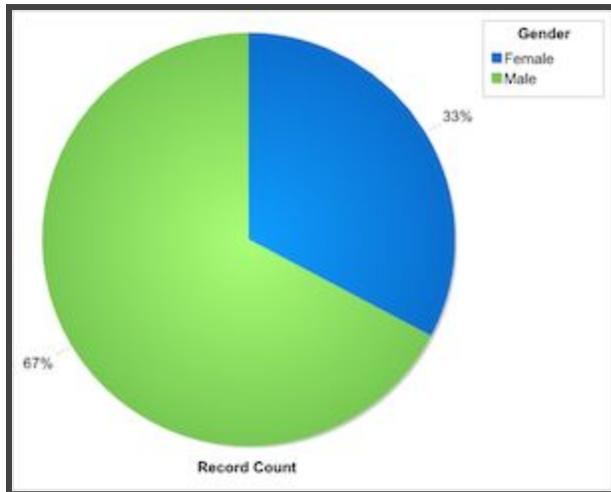
Whether veterans are looking for help getting connected with mental health support or housing resources, are seeking employment assistance, or need help troubleshooting education benefits, often, a severe financial crisis is part of the equation.

- **39%** of all referrals involved emergency financial assistance
- **80%** of these clients needed additional support and resources to resolve issues directly contributing to their financial hardship, like disabilities, lack of employment or housing, and mental health and physical health challenges
- **61%** of clients seeking emergency financial assistance were veteran families with at least one child living in the home

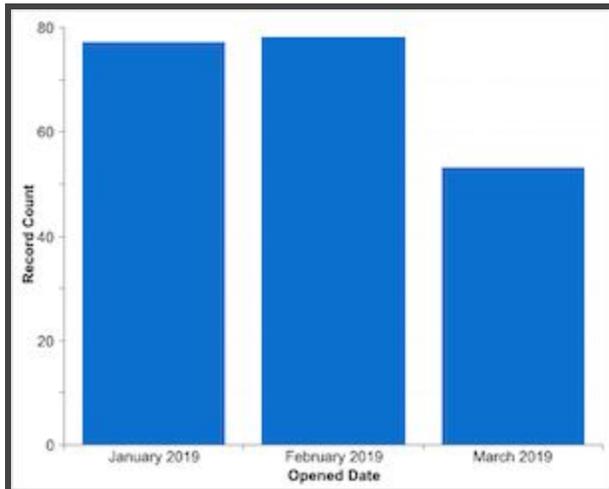
**All Referrals 2019 Q1**



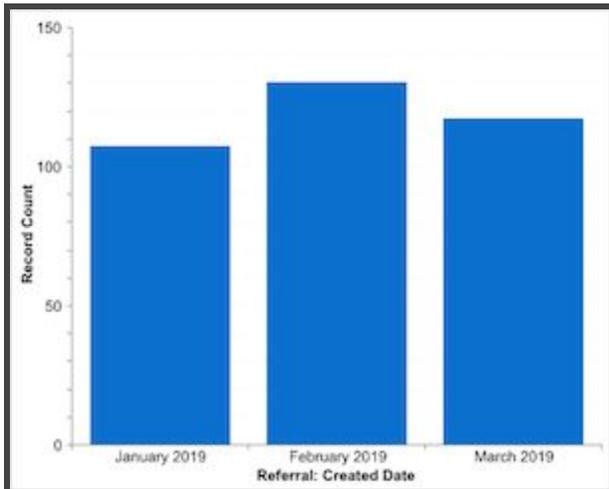
**Gender Breakdown 2019 Q1**



**Cases by Month 2019 Q1**



**Referrals by Month 2019 Q1**



## **Telling the RRRP Story & Expanding Reach:**

RRRP continues to evolve and provide the highest quality services to clients, while telling the RRRP story and supporting enhanced staff development:

- **Blogs:** In Q1 RRRP effectively told the RRRP story and reached larger audiences than ever before, with a focus on the people's lives that have been changed. RRRP continues to lead the way as a thought leader for issues that impact post 9/11 veterans and families most. RRRP produced [7 original blogs](#) including:
  - [Lives Impacted by the Government Shutdown](#)
  - [When Post 9/11 GI Bill Transferability Goes Wrong](#)
  - [TBI Among Service Members & Veterans](#)
  - [RRRP's 2018 Impact Report via Facebook Live](#)
  - [Recommended Reading: The Body Keeps Score](#)
- **Staff Enhancement:** RRRP's Veteran Transition Managers (VTMs) engaged in 17 different professional development opportunities in the community, strengthening partnerships, effectively advocating for the veteran community and extending programmatic reach, including:
  - Delivering RRRP's first ever yearly [Impact Report for 2018](#) via [Facebook Live](#), reaching broader audiences in new and exciting ways
  - Shaping and delivering powerful testimony on critical issues impacting our community like veteran suicide, substance abuse, homelessness, gaps in VA care and services for women veterans



- Engaging in radio segments on Connecting Vets and Westwood One Radio sharing personal experiences and perspective from time in service
- Participating in IAVA's signature leadership development program [Storm the Hill](#)



### **New Staff Highlight: Dennis Higgins**

Dennis joined IAVA's team as a [Veteran Transition Manager, Mental Health & Outreach Lead](#) for RRRP in January, 2019. Dennis served in United States Army for nine years and was honorably discharged in 2010. He deployed five times to Iraq and twice to Afghanistan. It was seeing the care that his brothers and sisters were receiving when they separated that led him to the helping field. Dennis brings extensive expertise and experience to RRRP and before coming to IAVA he trained as a psychology extern at the VA facilities in St. Albans and Brooklyn, NY. Dennis received a B.S. in Psychology from East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania and has M.A.s in Clinical Psychology and Mental Health Counseling from Adelphi University.



### **IAVA Partner Highlight: Veterans Crisis Line (VCL)**

In Q1, RRRP connected 22 veterans to the [Veterans Crisis Line](#) (VCL) which means that **nearly every week VTMs connected two veterans that were either suicidal or at risk of suicide with life-saving support.** RRRP relies on this critical partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to keep veterans and families safe by ensuring that our clients who are in crisis are connected with trained VCL responders to prevent suicide.



VCL is a confidential, 24/7 toll-free hotline that connects veterans in crisis with qualified and experienced Department of Veterans Affairs responders via telephone, online chat, and text. VCL's primary function and goal is to prevent suicide and ensure that veterans and family members have the support they need. IAVA's Rapid Response Referral Program and the VCL have been in partnership since RRRP launched in 2012 and has connected nearly 260 clients to this life saving resource.

### **Looking Ahead:**

As client needs remain high RRRP continues to evolve, effectively strengthen the program and meet the needs of veterans and their families by:

- Expanding expertise of team members to include meaningful professional development, specialized trainings and engagement opportunities
- Telling the RRRP story in new and innovative ways by engaging in increased reporting and quarterly media events to promote our work and extend our reach
- Inform, develop and deliver testimony at local and state levels to ensure that the needs of the veteran community are acknowledged and effectively met
- Engage with partners that provide high quality services and produce effective results in meeting the needs of clients to develop, strengthen and build relevant referral sources
- Working closely with IAVA's Advocacy team to ensure effective representation of client needs related to IAVA's [Big 6 Policy Agenda](#)
- Leveraging technology to improve efficiency, effectiveness and seamless access to services

**IAVA is changing and saving lives daily. This program is currently funded by generous grants from Cigna Foundation, The Resnick Family Foundation, and The Kahlert Foundation, Inc. Thank you for your continued support. To learn more about RRRP and how to support this program, please contact [development@iava.org](mailto:development@iava.org).**

**If you or veteran you know is in need of resources or support [contact us](#) today. To find out more about RRRP visit our [FAQ](#) page.**