

# **US Dept. of State – The RMOP Program**

**Kenneth B. Dekleva, MD**

**Director of Mental Health Services, Office of Medical  
Services, US Dept. of State; Esther P. Roberts, MD,  
Clinical Professor, GWU Dept. of Psychiatry**

January 15, 2015

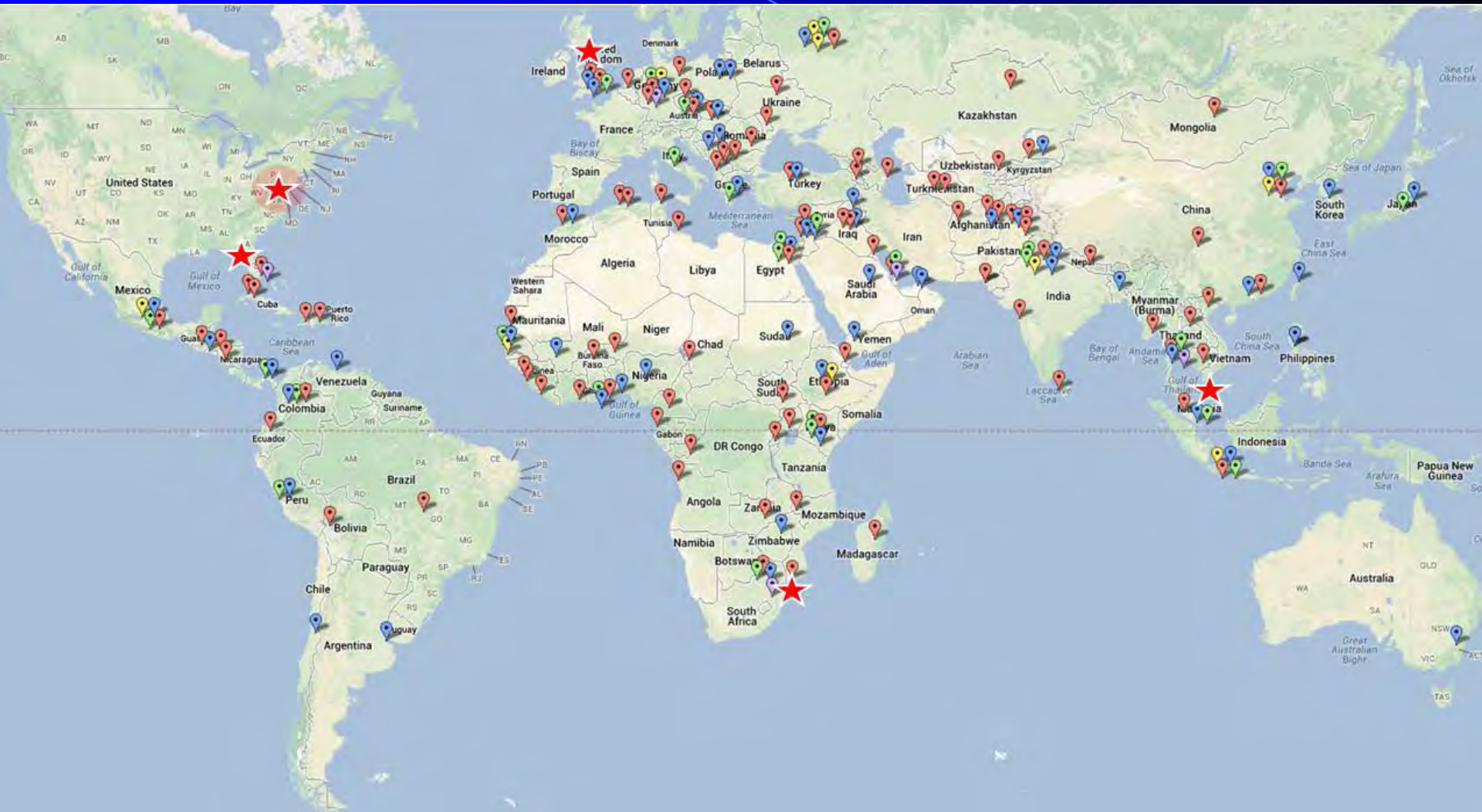
Grand Rounds, GWU Dept. of  
Psychiatry



January 15, 2015

Grand Rounds, GWU Dept. of  
Psychiatry

# State Dept. Health Units 2015



January 15, 2015

Grand Rounds, GWU Dept. of  
Psychiatry

# Foreign Service Life

**Terrorism**

**Frequent moves**

**Change of school**

**Lack of spousal  
employment**

**Excessive travel**

**Environmental**

**Loss of control**

**Crime**

**Fishbowl Phenomenon**

**Work Stress**

**Inadequate resources**

**Family issues**

**Lack of support system**

**Linguistic/social  
isolation**

**War Zones**

**Ebola**

# Special populations

- **‘Trailing spouses’**
- **Multi-ethnic and multi-racial families**
- **Minorities**
- **Singles; LGBT**
- **Foreign Service Nationals**
- **Third Culture Kids (TCKs)**
- **Children with special needs/disabilities**

# A Typical Embassy

**State Dept.**

**DAO**

**AID**

**FBI**

**DEA**

**DHS**

**FAS**

**FCS**

**FAA**

**CDC**

**NASA**

**DoD**

**Peace Corps**

**DOE**

**DOJ**

**Treasury**

**Other agencies**





## **State, War and Navy Building**

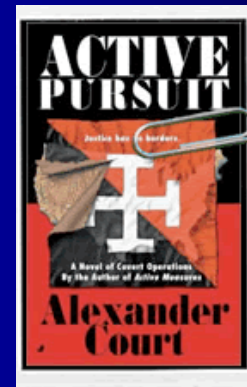
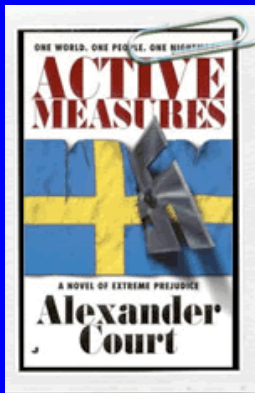
Home to Department of State from 1875-1947

Home to the War Department Health Unit

Now Executive Office Building of the President

# The Policy Psychiatrists

- William Davidson: 1968-1970
- Steve Pieczenik: early 1970s-early 1980s
  - Negotiation strategies
  - Psychological analysis of behavior of nations
  - Novels





# Development of the Regional Psychiatrist Program

- 1946: Office of Medical Services established
- 1977 – Elmore Rigamer becomes first DOS psychiatrist, posted to U.S. Embassy Kabul
- 1979: Ambassador Dubs murdered in Kabul
- 1979-1981 Iran Hostage Crisis
- 1980s – 4 regional psychiatry positions
- Currently --- 20 overseas psychiatrists

# Challenging parameters of a unique medical practice

- Remoteness, austerity, danger
- Privacy/confidentiality issues
- Boundary issues
  - Dual role considerations
  - Consulting with leadership on organizational morale
  - National security considerations



# Bombing

January 15, 2015

Grand Rounds, GWU Dept. of  
Psychiatry

# Office of Medical Services

**RMOs**

**FSHPs**

**RMOPs**

**RMTs**

**RMMs**

**Local medical  
resources**

**Nurses**

**Operational Medicine**

**Medical Director**

**Foreign Programs**

**MED Clearances**

**Mental Health Services**

**ECS; ADAP; DSSP;  
DSMP; CFP**

**Occupational Health**

**DASHO**

**Travel Medicine**

# **Mental Health Program: Integrated medical care**

**Culture shock**

**Stress management**

**School consultation**

**Management  
consultation**

**Travel medicine**

**Occupational health**

**Medical diplomacy**

**ADAP**

**DSSP**

**Disaster response**

**General psychiatry**

**Security/forensic issues**

**Emergency Response**

**Family Advocacy**

**Crime**

**War Zone concerns**

**ECS; DSMP**

**CFP**

# RMOP Positions

**Amman**

**London**

**Pretoria**

**Vienna**

**Mexico City**

**New Delhi**

**Moscow**

**Beijing**

**Manama**

**Athens**

**Frankfurt**

**Cairo**

**Jakarta**

**Accra**

**Lima**

**Dakar**

**Tokyo**

**Nairobi**

**Bangkok**





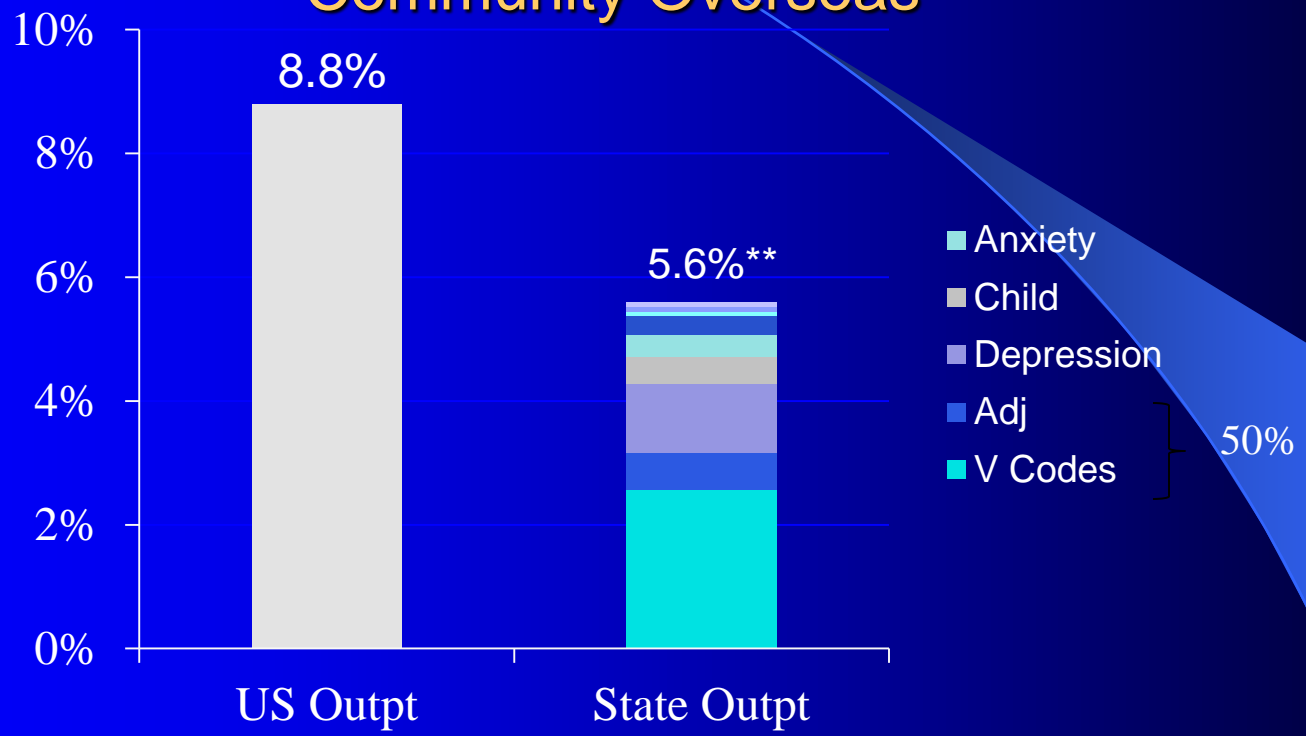
January 15, 2015

Grand Rounds, GWU Dept. of  
Psychiatry

# **HU Population in 2 regions (unpublished data by RMOPs)**

- **50% employees; 50% EFM**s
- **6% med-evac for psych disorders; 3% curtailed**
- **ADHD: nearly 50% of all children seen by RMOP**
- **Psychotic disorders: < 1%**
- **Anxiety disorders: 7-9%**
- **Mood disorders: 20-30%**
- **Substance-abuse disorders: 2-4%**
- **Adjustment disorders: 6-10%**
- **No psychiatric diagnosis (30%) or V Code (52%)**

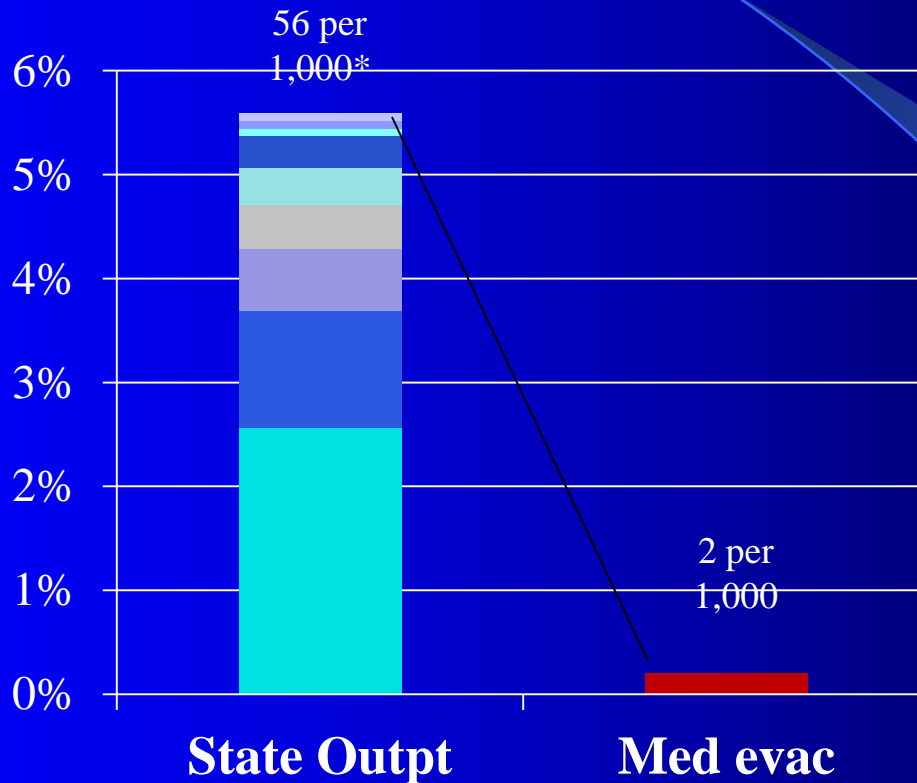
# 12-Month Psychiatric Service Use: US vs. Diplomatic Community Overseas\*



**Use of psychiatrists in the same ballpark**

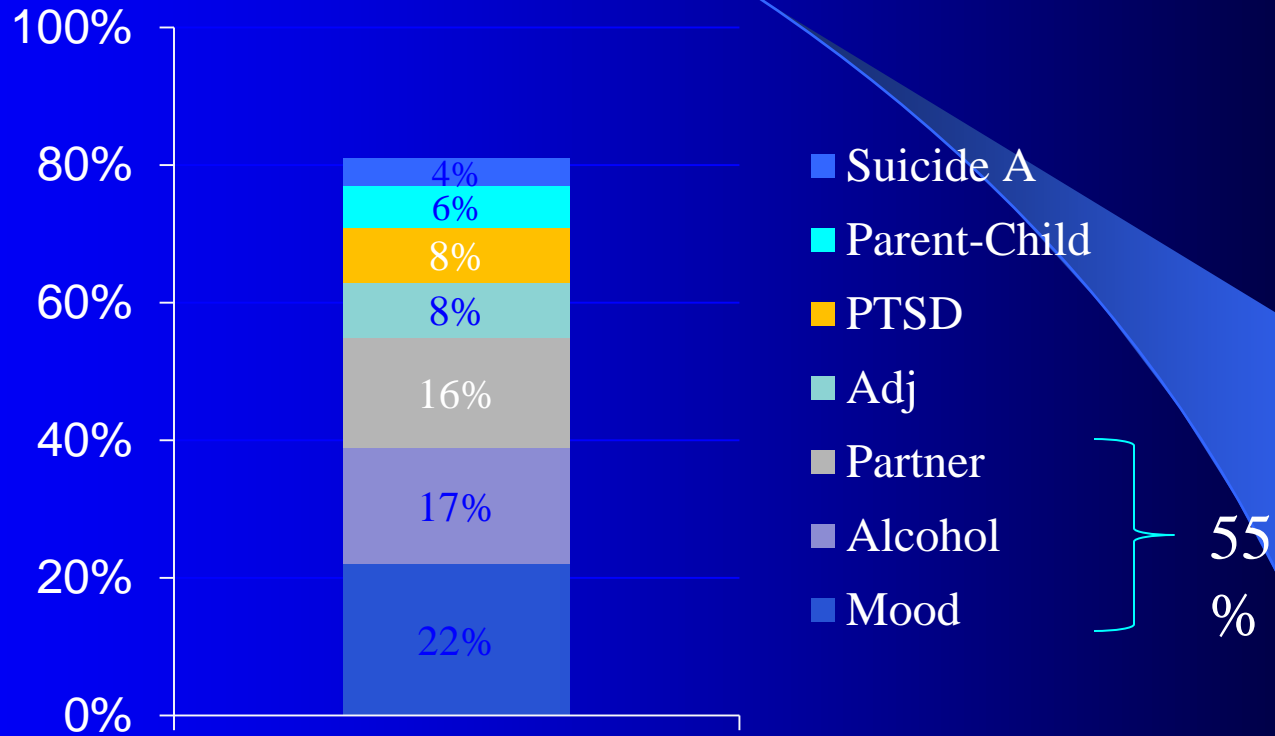
\*Wagner AGP, 2002; Flynn, DOS, 2006; Valk FSMB, 1990  
 Grand Rounds, GWU Dept. of Psychiatry  
 January 15, 2015

# Rate of Outpatient Visits and Mental Health Evacuations at State



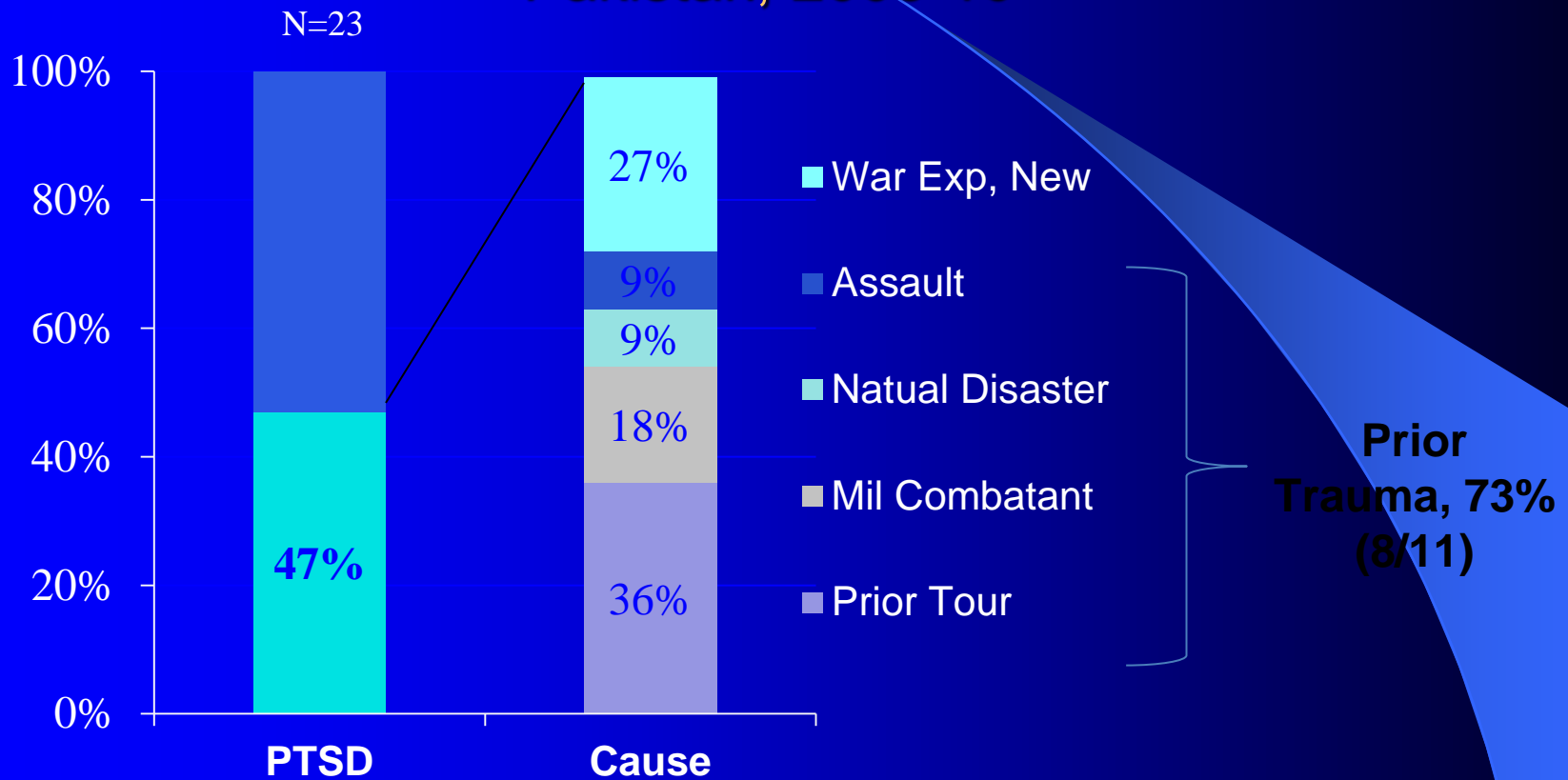
**Mental health evacuations needed by perhaps 5%**

# Conditions Leading to a Mental Health Evacuation, 2008-10



**Mood disorders, ETOH and partner problems ---  
5-6x as common as PTSD**

# Mental Health Evacuations in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan, 2008-10

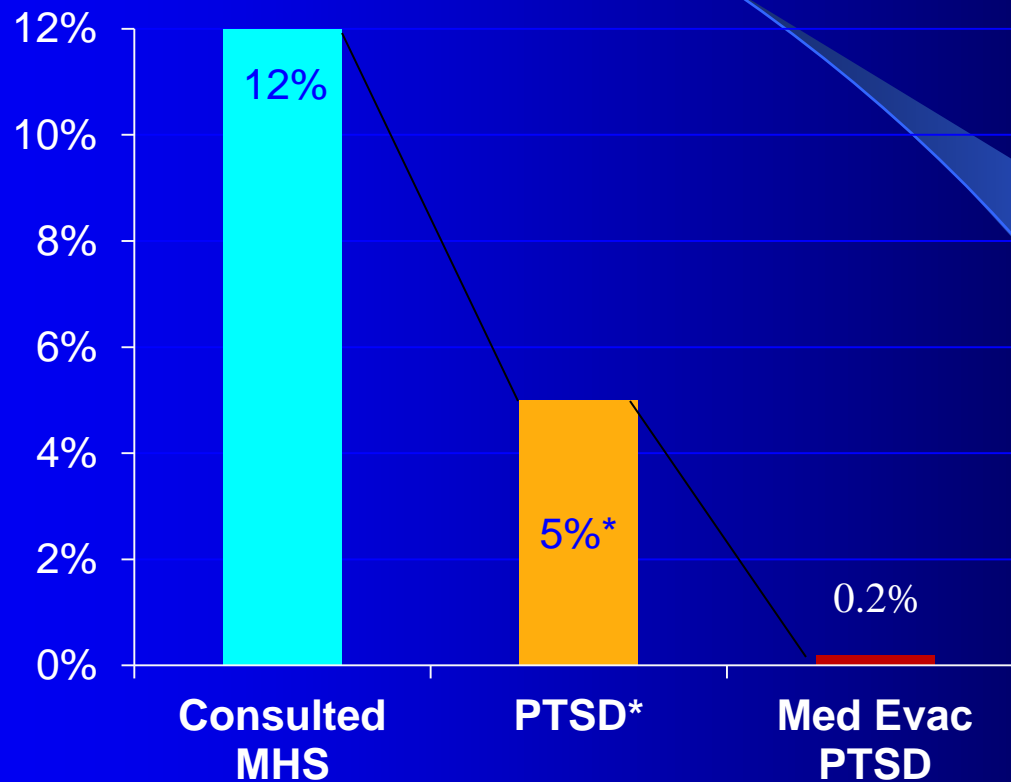


**Prior trauma plays a role in a majority of PTSD**

**mental health evacuations**



# US Diplomats Serving in AIP: Population Prevalence vs. Treated Prevalence of PTSD



**Gap between distress and dysfunction suggests resilience**

# Conclusion

- **Need for more epidemiologic studies, proper control groups**
- **Role of self-selection ('salutogenesis') and medical clearances?**
- **Are med-evac, suicide rates the best metrics w/r to overall behavioral health outcomes in a diplomatic population?**
- **There are very few comparison data overall, and no long-term, prospective studies have been done.**
- **Excessive focus on mental health/pathology, rather than resilience**
- **Need for prospective, longitudinal studies**
- **Ratio of MHS providers to covered lives --- impact of a resource-rich model upon outcome data? DOS = approx. 5X rate of HMOs**

# Questions?

January 15, 2015

Grand Rounds, GWU Dept. of  
Psychiatry



January 15, 2015

Grand Rounds, GWU Dept. of  
Psychiatry