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Significant barriers to health and mental health access continue for families of gay and lesbian service members after repeal of 'Don't Ask Don't Tell'.

(Washington, DC, October 10, 2012) Military Partners and Families Coalition (MPFC) release the 2011-2012 MPFC Community Health Care Survey Study results conducted to assess the health and mental health needs of the gay, lesbian, bi, and transgender (LGBT) service members and their families. MPFC is the only organization founded by partners of active duty service members to provide support, advocacy, education and outreach for partners and children of LGBT service members.

In this Study, respondents shared that even though Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) has been repealed, the deleterious effects on the emotional lives of members of this community remain. Respondents wrote about the array of disparities and exclusions they continue to experience in a post DADT world where Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) remains in force. Over half of the respondents agree that coming out would put them and members of their family at risk for some kind of negative reaction within the military community, even though DADT has been repealed.

And while half of respondents disagree that members of the LGBT community have unique healthcare needs; half agree that members of the community are more likely than their heterosexual counterparts to have physical health needs. There was considerable variation among respondents about whether or not they would feel comfortable having an open discussion with their healthcare provider about their unique healthcare needs as a member of the LGBT community.

Kathleen Moakler, Government Relations Director for the National Military Family Association "Servicemembers and those who love and support them have been under tremendous strain in this past decade of war. This study answers questions about what LGBT families say they need in the way of healthcare support, both mental and physical. It is an important addition to the compendium of research being done on the effects of repeated deployments on military families".

In giving voice to the feelings of the respondents, the Survey begins to identify the impact on LGBT military families of being denied everything from health insurance, to visiting a loved one in the military hospital, to receiving spousal benefits for fallen service members in combat.

MPFC will be presenting the Survey results at the OutServe International Military Leadership Conference on Oct 27, 2012 in Orlando, FL.

Visit www.milpfc.org to download the 2011-2012 MPFC Community Health Care Study Survey Report in its entirety.

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Military Partners and Families Coalition (MPFC): is a private non-profit, non-partisan organization based in Washington, D.C. It was founded in 2011 by a group of spouses and partners of active duty U.S. Armed forces service members stationed in the U.S. and overseas. MPFC provides support, resources, education and advocacy for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender military partners and their families. For more information, go to www.milpfc.org.