

DACOWITS' 2012 Recommendations

#	Recommendation:
1	DoD should establish a means for oversight, collection and dissemination of research, lessons learned and best practices for the health of women.
2	The pre-deployment health assessment for women should provide information on effective urogenital hygiene practices, use of female urinary diversion devices, symptoms and treatment of vaginitis and urinary tract infections, options for birth control and menstrual cycle control, and ways to manage stress. This information should also be part of continuing health education for deployed women.
3	All health care providers should be trained to diagnose and treat women's health issues in a deployed setting in a competent and professional manner, respecting the privacy of the women treated.
4	Inventory and ready availability of equipment and supplies for women's health should be assured in deployed environments, including birth control, emergency contraception, medications for vaginitis and urinary tract infections, tampons and sanitary napkins, and female urinary diversion devices.
5	The Services should ensure that properly designed and fitted individual combat equipment is provided to women on an expedited basis and the Services should collaborate on product development, testing, and procurement to facilitate the development and prompt distribution of appropriate individual combat equipment.
6	The Secretary of Defense should assign responsibility for the initiatives on sexual assault prevention and response announced by DoD in April and May of 2012 to an official with sufficient authority to oversee and evaluate the implementation of the initiatives by both DoD and the Services.
7	DoD should include measures of sexual harassment and sexual assault in command climate assessments, and the results of command climate assessments should be provided both to the relevant individual commander and to the next higher level of command.
8	Effectiveness in combating sexual harassment and sexual assault should be a part of individual performance evaluations of all Service members.
9	DoD should affirmatively, strongly and immediately press for passage of legislation, such as the provision offered by Senator Jeanne Shaheen, to provide for DoD funding of abortion coverage in the case of rape or incest.
10	All Services should continue to develop and implement innovative strategies for successful retention of highly qualified women and men.
11	DoD should eliminate the 1994 ground combat exclusion policy and direct the Services to eliminate their respective assignment rules, thereby ending the gender based restrictions on military assignments. Concurrently, DoD and the Services should open all related career fields, specialties, schooling and training opportunities that have been closed to women as a result of the DoD ground combat exclusion policy and Service assignment policies.
12	Any physical standards should be validated to accurately predict performance of actual regular and recurring duties of a military job and applied equitably to measure individual capabilities. Women as a class should not be restricted from military assignments because to do so would exclude available, capable personnel based on gender and not on the requirements of the job, at a sacrifice to military readiness.