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### **Organization of psychological follow-up for specialists engaged in medical and psychological rehabilitation of ex-combatants**

Psychological rehabilitation of ex-combatants in Ukraine is too often regarded by society as a formal matter and attracted by the growing number of volunteers. At the same time, the numbers of combatants who took part in the Joint Forces Operation (hereinafter – JFO) in eastern Ukraine raises. Part of them has severe traumatic experiences and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (hereinafter – PTSD) and need professional aid and support.

The World Health Organization determines the prevalence of PTSD in the population – 3.6%, while studies in pre-care clinics in the United States show that 11-12% of patients seeking treatment for various reasons suffer from PTSD. Complementing statistics of Afghanistan and Chechnya ex-combatants are summarized that up to 50-55% of combatants who have participated in local wars in recent decades suffer from PTSD (Ushakov I.B and Bubeev Y.A). The world experience of multifaceted research of PTSD related to military service shows its high level of prevalence among veterans of local military conflicts. M.J. Horowitz and G.F. Solomon provide data on the high prevalence of PTSD among veterans in Vietnam, Lebanon and Korea.

In turn, taking into account the Ukrainian experience of the absence of large-scale studies of PTSD prevalence and comparing the gained world experience, it should be noted that only 14% of JFO ex-combatants want to participate in rehabilitation programs, 65% of which turn to psychologists under pressure from management or relatives. Lack of motivation on the one hand and

uniform standards of care on the other in general adding complexity to specialists' work who are engaged in medical and psychological rehabilitation, and it can lead to further negative social consequences.

The current research shows that specialists who are engaged in medical and psychological rehabilitation ex-combatants who were directly involved in battlefield process have psychological issues. Indeed, without psychological follow-up, these key problems of ex-combatants and supported specialists wellbeing are threatened or restricted.

This raises the questions about early diagnosis and treatment of new generation veterans and support of specialists engaged in medical and psychological rehabilitation. One of the main directions of psychological support of ex-combatants and specialists who work with them is the development of short- and long-term research and training program for treatment and prevention of PTSD.

Traditionally, psychologists used psychological training and consulting which showed good results because psychological follow-up require systematic exercises and training session. The developed psychological follow-up program for specialists engaged in medical and psychological rehabilitation consists of two levels:

- complex cases processing for post-conflict recovery and sustainable reintegration;
- specialists' resilience, or the speed and efficiency with which a professional return to normal after stress.

The psychological follow-up program is developed at the Center for the Implementation of Psychological Training Technologies based on the National University of Civil Defence of Ukraine (hereinafter –NUCDU). The Center for the

Implementation of Psycho-Training Technologies of NUCDU has a total area of 220 square meters with 4 separate rooms equipped with projectors with screens, audio systems and computers to simulate emergencies. Training at the Center is carried out by certified trainers in civil defence, extreme and crisis psychology: 16 candidates and doctors of sciences, researchers of NUCDU. This Center provides opportunities for computer simulations and "immersion" of various types of emergencies.