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*LIFE AFTER SERVICE STUDIES (LASS) SECONDARY ANALYSIS
(2011 SERIES - RELEASE 2)*

Province of Residence at Release and Post-Release – Data from the Income Study

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Research Questions (Request)

Do Veterans move post-release such that the distribution by province of residence changes? Does the distribution by province differ for Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) clients versus non-clients?

Background

Where Veterans chose to live after release from the military has implications for VAC's allocation of resources across the country to support Veterans. In fact, one of the five components of VAC's transformation agenda is *aligning the organization with client demographics*. This report examines the distribution and movement of recently released Regular Force Veterans to inform the allocation of resources to support Veterans.

VAC's Statistics Directorate produces forecasts by district office. While the forecasts have performed well over the last few years, many of the simplifying assumptions used have not been tested. As a result, the forecasts may prove to be less accurate over the longer term. These assumptions include: (1) new client intake by district office will remain the same as in previous years; (2) current clients will not move between districts; and (3) the mortality rate at each age does not differ between district offices (national survival probabilities are applied). As the forecasts do not adjust for differences in need, those using the district office client forecasts for resource allocation are not taking into account possible differences in client needs between district offices.

This analysis examines the provincial distribution and mobility of recent releases from the Regular Force (some of whom are VAC clients). The results are intended to inform VAC Veteran forecasts by district office. Outreach efforts by the department also need to be informed by any differences in the geographic distribution of Veterans including non-clients.

Method

For the Income Study, data on releases were extracted from the Department of National Defence (DND) Human Resources Management System to create the study population. The study population for the first report¹ included 36,638 Regular Force Veterans released from January 1, 1998 to December 31, 2007, excluding re-enlisted members (42,591 releases less 5,953 who re-entered the Canadian Forces (CF) and were still serving as of November 2009).

The study population data were record linked by Statistics Canada to the general family file (T1FF) tax records data from 1997 to 2007 using the social insurance numbers (SIN) contained on both datasets. Statistics Canada provided VAC and DND with tables on income trends, sources of income and low income by demographic and service

1 MacLean MB, Van Til L, Thompson JM, Poirier A, Sweet J, Adams J, Sudom K, Campbell C, Murphy B, Dionne C & Pedlar D. Income Study: Regular Force Veteran Report. Veterans Affairs Canada, Research Directorate and Department of National Defence, Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis. January 4, 2011: 70p.

characteristics. Province of residence at release was available on the DND data and the tax data provided the province of residence as of December 2007². Over 90% of the study population was record linked to the tax records (33,601/36,638).

This analysis examined the provincial distribution of the total study population (as described above) at two points in time -- at release and again as of 2007, a period of 5 years on average. It also looked at three subgroups as of March 2009³: (1) New Veterans Charter (NVC) clients; (2) Disability Pension (DP) clients; and (3) non-clients.

Results

At the time of release, about half of the study population (Regular Force Veterans released from 1998 to 2007) were living in Ontario (31%) and Quebec (21%); 13% lived in Alberta; 12% in Nova Scotia; and 9% in British Columbia. The remaining Veterans (14%) lived in the other provinces and in other countries. From release to 2007 (about 5 years on average), the proportion of the population living in other countries increased from 2% to 7%. The proportion decreased in Nova Scotia, Ontario and Manitoba, and stayed the same for most provinces including Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

	NVC Clients		DP Clients		Non-Clients		Total	
	Release	2007	Release	2007	Release	2007	Release	2007
Matched Population ¹	2,525		8,492		22,579		33,601	
Newfoundland	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Prince Edward Island	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nova Scotia	12%	11%	12%	11%	12%	10%	12%	10%
New Brunswick	6%	6%	6%	6%	4%	4%	5%	5%
Quebec	21%	21%	21%	21%	21%	20%	21%	21%
Ontario	28%	28%	29%	27%	32%	29%	31%	29%
Manitoba	5%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%
Saskatchewan	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Alberta	15%	14%	16%	15%	12%	12%	13%	13%
British Columbia	9%	9%	7%	8%	9%	9%	9%	9%
Yukon ²	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Northwest Territories ²	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nunavut ²	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other Countries ³	1%	4%	2%	4%	2%	8%	2%	7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

1. Veteran population matched to income tax records for Income Study.

2. Most cells had contained less than 60 Veterans. A few cells contained no Veterans.

3. Mainly United States for release year. Tables provided by Statistics Canada were grouped into other and therefore details are not available for 2007.

2 Other geographic data was available from the Longitudinal Administrative Database of income tax records but was not requested for the Income Study.

3 NVC clients (VAC clients who used programs under the NVC, including Disability Awards, Rehabilitation, Earnings Loss, Career Transition Services, Canadian Forces Income Support and Health Insurance); DP clients (VAC clients in receipt of Disability Pension but not NVC programs); and Non-clients (Veterans not using any VAC programs).

The distribution of clients and non-clients did not differ for most provinces both at release and in 2007, however there were a few exceptions. At release, VAC clients (NVC and DP) were more likely than non-clients to live in Alberta and New Brunswick and less likely to live in Ontario and other countries. This pattern held for 2007. In Manitoba, clients were more likely than non-clients to live in this province at release, but by 2007 most clients were as likely to live in Manitoba as non-clients. The proportion of both clients and non-clients living in other countries increased, but was much more pronounced for non-clients (from 2% to 8% compared to from 1% to 4% for NVC clients and from 2% to 4% for DP clients).

Discussion

The rise in the proportion of the population living in other countries after release could be due to a snowbird effect. This might also explain why clients who are more likely to require ongoing medical care would be less likely to live in other countries. There could also be differences in how residence is recorded or reported between the DND data (which provided the residence at release) and the income tax data (which provided the residence at 2007).

Further Study

This study examined distribution and changes in distribution of Veterans by province. However, further analysis is required in two main areas: (1) distribution by geographical areas smaller than province; and (2) adjustments for need factors for use in resource allocation.

Many of VAC's resources are distributed by district, which are generally organized by the first three letters of the postal code or "Forward Sortation Area (FSA)". VAC has also recently added resources to the Integrated Personnel Support Centres (IPSCs), located in bases across the country, to work closer with DND and to serve Veterans and members closer to where they live. Further analysis could determine where Veterans release among smaller areas than province, which would have implications for transition services, including those of the IPSCs, and the pattern of mobility after release, which would have implications for the location of VAC resources for ongoing support and care or potentially districts.

While examining the geographic distribution of Veterans is an important first step, differences in need levels should also be considered for resource allocation. The types of resources to be allocated must first be identified (e.g., Occupation Stress Injury Clinics; Case Managers). Further analysis could then determine the appropriate need factors for distributing these resources and whether these resources are currently distributed according to these need factors. These need factors could come from sources such as the Survey on Transition to Civilian Life and the 2010 Client Survey as well as administrative data.

Conclusion

This study asked the following questions: Do Veterans move post-release such that the distribution by province of residence changes? Does the distribution by province differ for VAC clients versus non-clients? The distribution of Regular Force Veterans who released from 1998 to 2007 remained the same after release for most provinces, although increased movement to other countries was observed, and declines were observed for Nova Scotia, Ontario and Manitoba. The distribution of clients and non-clients did not differ for most provinces.

Interpretation Guidance

The results cannot be generalized to all Veterans as they represent only a sub-component of the Veteran population (i.e., Regular Force Veterans released from 1998 to 2007). The proportions do not reflect in and out migration, for example a province with the same proportion of Veterans at release and in 2007 does not mean there was not movement of Veterans after release.

Requestor(s)

As part of consultations on secondary analysis for the Survey on Transition to Civilian Life and the Income Study (part of the Life After Service Studies), the Research Directorate consulted with Transformation team leads during January 2011. Wendy Francis and Dianne Arsenault of the Human Resources team and Amber Campbell and Sandra Lambe of the Communications and Outreach Project team identified a need for more information on the geographic location of Veterans.