



The Defense Veterans Center: a pillar for military assistance and rehabilitation

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On October 23, 2017, the Army General Staff ordered the establishment of the **III Department - Defense Veterans Center (CVD)** at the Scientific Department of the Military Polyclinic, with the aim of ensuring the Armed Forces' rehabilitation capacity for personnel injured in service. The facility was officially inaugurated on September 20, 2018, in the presence of the Minister of Defense pro tempore, and since then it has been an essential point of reference for the reception and assistance of personnel who, in training and operational contexts, have suffered physical or psychological trauma.

Regulatory evolution and institutional recognition

On April 23, 2019, the Minister of Defense identified the CVD as a reference center for managing vulnerabilities and supporting military personnel. This date was followed by the approval of the

Directive for the operation of the CVD, which outlined tasks, access criteria, and operational methods.

With the Decree of September 13, 2022, important innovations were introduced: the definition of **veteran** as personnel in service or retired from the Armed Forces and Carabinieri who have suffered disabling injuries; the establishment of **Veterans Day** on November 11; the creation of an **Interforce Committee on Disability** tasked with developing proposals and initiatives to facilitate disability management and promote inclusion.

Since March 27, 2023, the CVD has been included in the **Institute of Biomedical Sciences of Defense**, assuming a full interforce connotation.

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Mission and functions

The Center aims to provide comprehensive assistance to veterans and their families through:

- administrative and medico-legal evaluations;
- physical rehabilitation with advanced methods;
- psychological support;
- collaboration with the **Defense Paralympic Sports Group (GSPD)**;
- development of networks with institutions and universities;
- promotion of the veteran's role and their social and work reintegration.

The CVD is divided into two main departments:

- **Socio-Assistance Support Department**, which deals with reception, listening, orientation, and bureaucratic-administrative support, as well as enhancing the veteran's role and collaborating with national and international bodies;
- **Rehabilitation and Psycho-Physical Recovery Department**, dedicated to the medical and psychological recovery of injured personnel, with research activities and development of clinical protocols, support to the GSPD, and innovation in rehabilitation techniques.

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Integrated approach to well-being

The CVD adopts a multidisciplinary and innovative approach ranging from reconstructive surgery to pet therapy and hippotherapy activities, up to advanced techniques for the treatment of **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** such as EMDR and Mindfulness.

A central role is played by psychological support, provided both individually and through support communities, with the aim of creating an emotional bridge between veterans and civil society.

Located in Rome, at **Villa Fonseca in via Santo Stefano Rotondo**, the Defense Veterans Center represents a unique facility in the Italian landscape, capable of combining clinical assistance, physical rehabilitation, psychological support, and social inclusion.

Its mission is clear: to ensure veterans and their families dignity, support, and opportunities for reintegration, recognizing the sacrifice of those who have served the country.

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