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## Effective Use of Service Dogs for Veterans with PTSD

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## Introduction

The purpose of this research was to determine information on the studies of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and how effective the use of service dogs is as a treatment to mitigate symptoms. The research for this paper was collected from a series of documents, articles and studies derived from the Utah State University information database.

## Methods

Various peer reviewed articles were consulted in order to draw initial conclusions.

## Results

Studies have shown great success in the use of service dogs for PTSD. Studies such as that of “Salivary Cortisol Awakening Response” have come to conclusions that “Participants living with a service dog also exhibited significantly less PTSD severity as well as less anger, anxiety, sleep disturbance, and alcohol abuse symptoms than those on the waitlist.” Another study regarding “Relationships, Socialization and Combat Veterans” looked at a qualitative study of development and change of social and relational skills whilst training with a service dog. Another study looked at how service dogs affect individuals in the workplace [3].

## Conclusions

Each study came to support the prospective hypothesis. There was an initial conclusion that service dogs could be an effective treatment to assist PTSD symptoms.

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# Effective Use of Service Dogs for Veterans With PTSD

## Result of Salivary Cortisol Study

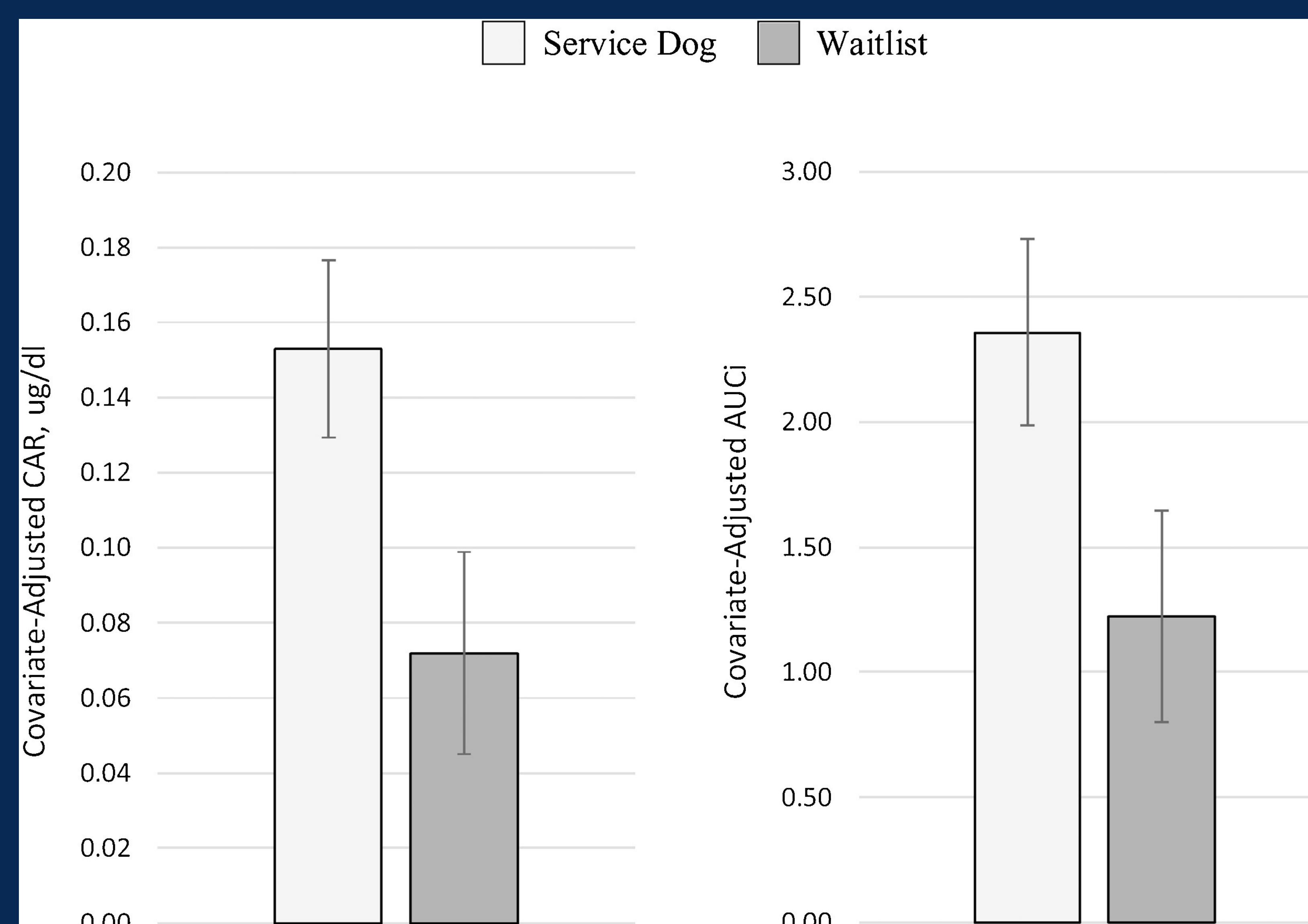


Fig. 1. Graphic display of CAR and AUCi by group. [1] Probable correlation was more pertinent to sleep disturbance and waking cortisol level, but CAR may possibly indicate general health and well-being.



## WORKS CITED:

- [1] Rodriguez, Kerri E., et al. “The Effect of a Service Dog on Salivary Cortisol Awakening Response in a Military Population with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).”
- [2] Scotland-Coogan, Diane. “Relationships, Socialization and Combat Veterans: The Impact of Receiving and Training a Service Dog.” Qualitative Report, vol. 24, no. 8, Aug. 2019, pp. 1897-1914.
- [3] Glenn, Margaret K. “An Exploratory Study of the Elements of Successful Service Dog Partnerships in the Workplace.” ISRN Rehabilitation, Jan. 2013, pp. 1-10.



Photo credit to United States Veteran Service Dogs.

Study conducted with guidance under the USU honors program and Dr. Laura Gelfand.

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