Aging Veterans and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA): Resources and Community Partnerships

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Presenters

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Percent of American Men who are Veterans across Age Groups (2015)

% of Women who are Veterans is 1-2% across age groups

Source: National Center for Veterans Analysis & Statistics
% of Veterans who Use VHA Services (FY15)

Source: National Center for Veterans Analysis & Statistics
Enhance and Develop Trusted Partnerships

with Federal, State, Private Sector, Academic Affiliates, Veteran Service Organizations and Non-Profit Organizations - VA Strategic Plan Goal #2

✓ Facilitator and access point to organizations interested in partnering with Veterans Health Administration in the service of Veterans.

✓ Resource and catalyst for the growth of responsible and productive partnerships.

Partnerships build capacity, leverage resources, address new and emerging needs, and build on the experiences and knowledge of each other.
Why Partner With VHA?

• Advance shared objectives
• Enhance impact through resource sharing
• Demonstrate measurable outcomes

No single office, organization, or agency owns the expertise and resources to deliver ALL of the benefits, services, and resources necessary to meet the needs and expectations of every Veteran.
Strategic Partnerships

Maximize External Proposals

**Opportunistically** match external, unsolicited offerings to help with existing and emerging Veteran needs.

Proactive Engagement

**Proactively** solicit and engage in partnerships to help with existing and emerging Veteran needs.

Sustain, Improve, and Replicate

Sustain, Improve, and Replicate established partnerships to effectively leverage resources and serve Veterans.

**Overarching Goal**

VA becomes a Leader in the National Veterans Partnerships Space

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Aging Veterans: Background

- There are over 22 million Veterans in the U.S.
- ~9 million Vets enrolled; 47% over age 65
- Elderly Veterans are “10 years older” than age-matched non-Veteran counterparts
  - More interacting diagnoses, drugs
  - More functional dependence
  - More caregiver needs and challenges
- 70% of VA patients over age 65 use one or more other healthcare services—yet there is no systematic linkage among providers/services
  - Discontinuities in care and documentation
  - Redundant and missed services
Vision

• All Veterans and their caregivers will have access to, and choices among, the services that allow our Veterans to stay in the place they call home.

Mission

• To foster Veterans seamless access to, and transitions among, the full continuum of non-institutional extended care and support services in VA and the community.

“Serving those who served for us”
Veteran Community Partnerships (VCP) are formalized partnerships through which local VA facilities connect with state and local community service agencies in an effort to:

- **Enhance** and improve access to and quality of care
- **Promote** seamless transitions
- **Educate** community agencies & VA providers
- **Support** caregivers
- **Develop and foster** strong relationships between VA and community agencies and providers
VCP Locations (Sites Trained)
Who is Involved?

**VA Medical Center Partners:**
- Hospice and Palliative Care
  - VA Voluntary Service
  - OIF/OEF program
  - Social Work Service
- Nursing Service/Community Health
  - Mental Health Service
- Geriatrics and Extended Care
  - Office of Public Affairs
  - Homelessness
- Veteran Experience Office

**Community Partners:**
- Veterans
- Veterans Services Organizations
- Hospice-Veteran Partnerships
- Community, county, and state human services agencies
- Aging network
- Caregivers
- Caregiver coalitions
- Academic institutions
- Service Organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Non-profits
- Charitable organizations
- Philanthropic organizations
- Hospice organizations
- Home care agencies
- Respite organizations
- Disability groups
VCP National Advisory Council

• Administration for Community Living*
• Disabled American Veterans*
• LeadingAge (formerly American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging) *
• National Alliance for Caregiving*
• National Association of Area Agencies on Aging*
• National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization*
• VHA Hospice-Veteran Partnership Workgroup
• VHA Office of Care Management and Social Work
• VHA Office of Community Engagement
• VHA Offices of Geriatrics and Extended Care
• VHA Office of Nursing Service
• VHA Offices of Primary Care Services
• VHA Office of Rural Health

* ex officio members
Activities of VCPs

• Conduct assessments to determine the unique needs of Veterans within communities

• Exchange information between VA and community agencies in an effort to keep both informed of local and VA resources, strengths, and potential growth areas

• Educate community agencies about specific veteran-related issues and benefits

• Conduct community outreach educational programs for veterans groups/community agencies to provide information on the VA continuum of care, available resources, and options

• Hold local/regional/statewide educational events for both community and VA stakeholders to provide information on the continuum of care options and VA healthcare system

• Create/disseminate educational tools that partners can access for the most current and complete information on resources for veterans, in VA and in the community...And more!
“We have humanized VA in this area and torn down many walls and built bridges because of our Veteran Community Partnership. I have more people calling from community organizations to refer Veterans who have never enrolled and accessed their VA benefits. And I have more information about community organizations that can provide quality services for our Veterans and caregivers if not available at VA.”
VCP Resources – Toolkit, Reports, Etc.

www.wehonorveterans.org/vcp
Mental Health Resources: Community Healthcare Professionals

• Community Provider Toolkit
• Military Culture Competence Training
• Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Consultation Service & PTSD 101 Course
• Make the Connection
• Veterans Crisis Line
Providing Key Information and Tools for Providers Serving Veterans:

- Military service screening
- Military culture
- Behavioral health treatment services and resources

[Link](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/)
Goals:

- to help health care professionals be more culturally competent when they serve Servicemembers, Veterans and their families.
- to identify and help healthcare professionals address their own biases, beliefs and assumptions about the military that may influence how they provide care.

- 4 modules
- web-based
- 8 free continuing education units

www.vha.train.org
Course Content:

• *Module 1*: Self-Awareness and Introduction to Military Ethos
• *Module 2*: Military Organization and Roles
• *Module 3*: Stressors and Resources
• *Module 4*: Treatment Resources and Tools

[www.vha.train.org](http://www.vha.train.org)
About the Consultants

- Experienced senior psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, pharmacists, and other health professionals who treat Veterans with PTSD
- Available to consult on everything from your toughest cases to general PTSD questions

Ask about:

- Evidence-based treatment
- Medications
- Clinical management
- Resources
- Assessment
- Referrals
- Collaborating with VA on Veterans’ care
- Developing a PTSD treatment program

Available Resources - www.ptsd.va.gov/consult

- Free continuing education
- Videos, educational handouts, and manuals
- PTSD-related publications
- PTSD and trauma assessment and screening tools
- Mobile apps, and more
Learn from the experts and get CE/CME Credit!

Research-based courses at your convenience (24/7).

Find a Course

PTSD 101

Windows To The Brain: Neuropsychiatry of TBI

Cognitive Behavioral Psychotherapies For PTSD

Assessment of PTSD

Presented by:
National Center for PTSD
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
MAKE THE CONNECTION

www.MakeTheConnection.net

- Is relevant to all Veterans and their families, regardless of eligibility for VA care or the range of mental health issues they may be experiencing.

- Informs Veterans, their families and friends, and members of their communities about resources designed to help Veterans live well.

- Reaches Veterans where they are—online and through trusted media and influencers—when they need support.

- Features true stories from real Veterans, which serve as a powerful tool in breaking down barriers and can help Veterans realize they are not alone.

http://maketheconnection.net/stories/98
Free, confidential support 24/7/365

- Veterans
- Family members
- Friends
- Service members

Confidential chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text to 838255
• Geriatric and Extended Care programs: http://www.va.gov/geriatrics/
• Mental Health Services: http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/
• Caregiver Support Program: http://www.caregiver.va.gov/
• Social Work Services: http://www.socialwork.va.gov/
Summary

• Many older Americans, especially men, are Veterans
  – Older Veterans use both VHA and non-VHA health care services

• Veteran-Community Partnerships are critical to ensure excellent access to and coordination of care

• VHA has many resources for older Veterans and for community professionals who care for them

• We look forward to partnering with you!