

Increasing Providers' Awareness of the Mission Act of 2018's Impact on Veteran's Care

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GAPNA
VA SIG

Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks

VA MISSION Act for Veterans
Your Care is Our Mission



The VA MISSION Act of 2018 empowers Veterans and enhances care options.

VA Will:

- Continue to be a trusted, caring partner
- Meet you where you are, with the right care at the right place and the right time
- Provide telehealth in your home, in a VA facility, or in the community
- Focus on providing an excellent experience for you and the important people in your life

We are honored to serve you!



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Expansion of Non-VA Care

Increased access to healthcare in the community- through approved non-VA medical providers in your community (3, 5-10)

- Creation of a VA Community Care Network – for streamlined processes for eligibility, scheduling, and payments- which replaces the more complex previously known as Veterans Choice Program
- Changes in Health Information Sharing- veteran written authorization signatures will no longer be required for VA to release electronic health information to community providers for the purposes of receiving medical treatment. VA only shares Veteran health information with a specific community provider when a Veteran is seeking medical care from that provider.

Eligibility

- You need a service not available at any VA medical facility (ex. maternity care, obstetric care)
- You live in a U.S. state or territory without a full-service VA medical facility (ex. Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S.Virgin Islands.)
- You qualify under the “Grandfathering” provision related to distance eligibility for the Veterans Choice Program. Specifically, you must:

- (1) Have been eligible for the Veterans Choice Program based on the “40 mile” eligibility criterion (you resided more than 40 miles from the nearest VA medical facility with a full-time primary care provider);
- (2) Continue to reside in a location that would qualify you under that criterion; and
- (3) Either (A) reside in Alaska, North Dakota, Montana, South Dakota, or Wyoming; or (B) (i) Reside in another state,(ii) Have received care from VA (directly or in the community) between June 6, 2017, and June 6, 2018; and (iii) Be seeking care before June 6, 2020.

- VA cannot provide care within certain designated access standards, including:

- Average drive time to a VA medical facility that can provide the care you need;
 - 30 minutes primary or mental health care, 60 minutes specialty care
- Appointment wait time at that VA medical facility
 - 20 days primary or mental health care, 28 days specialty care

- You and your referring clinician agree it is in your best medical interest to receive this care in the community, based on established criteria, including, but not limited to:

- The distance between you and the facility that could provide your care;
- The nature of the care you need;
- The frequency of the care you need;
- When you need the care;
- The potential for improved continuity of care;
- The quality of care that would be provided to you; and
- Whether you face an unusual or excessive burden in accessing care from a VA facility

- Urgent Care - benefit for retail or urgent care for minor non-life threatening illnesses and injuries ex. strep throat, muscle strain, ear infection
 - <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>
 - Contact your local VA medical facility
 - Call 877-881-7618 to reach the OCC National Contact Center
- Emergency Care/Hospitalizations – for life threatening illnesses no changes under the Mission Act- notify VA within 72 hours
- Indian Health Service (IHS) and Tribal Health Programs (THP)- VA works with the to reimburse the cost of care provided to eligible Veterans at IHS and local THP facilities

Expansion of VA Educational Initiatives

- Increased education debt reduction programs, medical and dental scholarships, graduate medical education expansion into rural areas, and veterans healing veterans programs (3, 5)

Expansion of Caregiver Benefits

The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC)(3,5,11)

Eligibility requirements for the family caregiver

You must be at least 18 years old and at least one of these must be true for you.

You must be either:

A spouse, son, daughter, parent, stepfamily member, or extended family member of the Veteran, or Someone who lives full-time with the Veteran, or is willing to do so if designated as a family caregiver

Eligibility requirements for the Veteran

All of these must be true for the Veteran you're caring for.

The Veteran must have a VA disability rating (individual or combined) of **70% or higher**. The Veteran's service-connected disabilities must have been caused or made worse by their active-duty service during one of these periods of time:

On or after September 11, 2001, **or** On or before May 7, 1975 (as of October 2020) to be expanded to all eras (October 2022)

And the Veteran must:

Have been discharged from the U.S. military or have a date of medical discharge, **and** Need at least 6 months of continuous, in-person personal care services

The Veteran can appoint:

1 **Primary Family Caregiver** (the main caregiver), and
Up to 2 **Secondary Family Caregivers** (people who serve as backup support to the primary caregiver when needed)

Eligible Primary and Secondary Family Caregivers can receive:

- Caregiver education and training
- Mental health counseling
- Travel, lodging, and financial assistance when traveling with the Veteran to receive care
- Eligible Primary Family Caregivers may also receive:**
- A monthly stipend (payment)
- Access to health care benefits through the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA)—if you don't already qualify for care or services under another health care plan
- At least 30 days per year of respite care for the Veteran

Caregiver support line 855-260-3274

Conclusion

By nurse practitioners increasing their awareness of these increased veteran benefits across the continuum of healthcare, they can become better equipped to help veterans seeking care.

References/Resources

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