



# Veterans Benefits 2010

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# Community Care Programs

## Veterans Home Directed Care

- New Program in partnership with Aging and Disability Services
- For residents in Whatcom, Skagit, Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Pacific, Pierce and King counties
- Provides up to a budget maximum of \$2500/month for veteran to purchase a package of care services provided both in the home and in the community. Example: in-home personal care, chore assistance, adult day health, delivered meals...

### -Eligibility:

- Three or more ADL (bathing, dressing, toileting...)dependencies
- Significant cognitive impairment
- Receiving hospice services
- Two ADL dependencies and two or more of the following:
  - 3 or more IADL (money management, laundry, shopping, making meals...) dependencies
  - Recently discharged from a nursing facility
  - 75 years old or greater
  - 3 hospitalizations or 12 outpatient clinics or emergency evaluations
  - Clinically Depressed
  - Lives Alone

# Community Care continued

## Homemaker Home Health Aide

- Home based personal assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL).  
Example: non-skilled personal care, light housekeeping, meals prepared, transportation to appointments, shopping...
- To reduce admissions of veterans to nursing homes by providing:
  - Help to increase their skills necessary to remain independent in ADLs or become less dependent, when possible
  - Respite care to the caregiver so that the veteran can remain in their home
- Eligibility:
  - Being discharged from a nursing home
  - Being discharged from a hospital and who would otherwise require admission to nursing home
  - Under hospice care

# Community Care continued

## Respite

- 31 days each *calendar year* for every veteran meeting criteria
- Provided in the VA Community Living Centers at American Lake & the Seattle VA, at a local/community contracted nursing home, using the community adult day health care program or homemaker home health aid program
- To give family caregivers and other informal and unpaid social support systems temporary relief from the demands of daily care, thereby supporting the veteran's desire to delay or prevent nursing home placement
- Eligibility:
  - The veteran has a diagnosed chronic disabling illness or condition
  - The veteran lives at home and requires substantial assistance in ADL in order to continue to reside safely in the home
  - The veteran's caregiver is in need of temporary or intermittent relief from day to day care tasks in order to sustain this care-giving role
  - The veteran must meet clinical criteria, as well as eligibility criteria for nursing home and long-term care (same criteria as for VHDC)

# Community Care continued

## Contract Nursing Home Program

-Skilled and intermediate care nursing homes contracted with the VA to provide time-limited care to veteran residents at VA expense

-Eligibility:

- Any veteran who has a service-connected disability rating of 70 percent or more
- A veteran who is rated 60 percent service-connected and is “unemployable” or has an official rating of "permanent and total disability"
- A veteran with combined disability ratings of 70 percent or more
- A veteran whose service-connected disability is clinically determined to require nursing home care

# Community Care Continued

## Adult Day Health Care

- Therapeutically oriented outpatient day program that provides health maintenance, rehabilitative services, socialization, and caregiver support in a congregate setting
- Provides 2 days a week attendance at VA expense
- Eligibility (one or more of the following conditions):
  - Three or more ADL dependencies, or
  - Significant cognitive impairment, or
  - Two ADL dependencies and two or more of the following conditions:
    - Dependency in three or more IADLs
    - Recent discharge from a nursing home, or planned nursing home discharge contingent on receipt of home and community-based care services
    - Seventy-five years old or older
    - High use of medical services defined as three or more hospitalizations in the past year; or twelve or more visits to outpatient clinics and emergency rooms in the past year
    - Clinical depression
    - Living alone in the community

# Innovative services

## **Care Coordination Home Telehealth (CCHT):**

- Provides messaging/monitoring devices, video tele-monitors and video-phones to monitor vital signs (pulse, weight, temperature, blood pressure...) and transmits the data to a RN or MD for treatment planning
- For those with diabetes, chronic heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, in need of rehabilitation...
- Enables veterans to remain at home and live independently
- Enhances primary care

# CCHT



# Caregiver Support:

## Fisher House

- Opened September 10, 2008
- Has served over 1,400 families of hospitalized veterans and active duty military personnel
  - 21 guest suites
  - Short term (3 day minimum, no maximum)
  - Similar to Ronald McDonald Houses



## Caregiver Support continued

### Heroes of the Heart



- 2 full days (1 at each VA facility). This year- November 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.
- speakers, breakfast, lunch, entertainment and goodies.
- free to families and friends of Veterans and VA staff, small fee for paid community caregivers
- This year is the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual

# Caregiver Support continued

## **Support Groups:**

- weekly & monthly
- open and curriculum based (e.g.. managing dementia, MS, ALS, Stroke...)

## **National Family Caregiver Support Month**

- Newly developed by VA Central Office
- Publications for caregivers
- Best Practices Guide
- In facility activities for caregivers

# Caregiver Support cont'd:

## Aid and Attendance and Special Monthly Compensation:

- a benefit paid in **addition** to monthly pension when:
  - Requires the aid of another person in order to perform ADLs/IADLs **OR**,
  - Bedridden due to disability or disabilities requires that he/she remain in bed apart from any prescribed course of convalescence or treatment **OR**,
  - In a nursing home due to mental or physical incapacity **OR**,
  - Blind or so nearly blind as to have corrected visual acuity of 5/200 or less, in both eyes, or concentric contraction of the visual field to 5 degrees or less
- **“Housebound”** is paid when:
  - Confined to his/her immediate premises because of permanent disability

# Housing

## HUD/VA Supported Housing

- Provides HUD “Housing Choice” Section 8 vouchers designated for participating Public Housing Authorities to assist with rent payment
- To promote maximum recovery and independence and support to sustain permanent housing in the community
- Eligibility:
  - Meets the McKinney Act definition of homelessness :
    - lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night time residence OR
    - has a primary night time residence that is:
      - A supervised publicly or privately-operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations; including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill
      - An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized OR
      - A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Must need case management services in order to obtain and sustain independent community housing

# Housing

## Grant /Per Diem

- To promote the development and provision of supportive housing and/or supportive services with the goal of helping homeless Veterans achieve residential stability, increase their skill levels and/or income, and obtain greater self-determination.
- **Grants:** Cover 65% of the costs of construction, renovation, or acquisition of a building for use as service centers or transitional housing for homeless Veterans. Renovation of VA properties is allowed. Acquiring VA properties is not. Recipients must obtain the matching 35% share from other sources. Grants may not be used for operational costs, including salaries.
- **Per Diem:** Operational costs, including salaries, may be funded by the Per Diem Component. For supportive housing, the maximum amount payable under the per diem is \$35.84 per day per Veteran housed. Veterans in supportive housing may be asked to pay rent if it does not exceed 30% of the Veteran's monthly-adjusted income.

## **CAREGIVERS AND VETERANS OMNIBUS HEALTH SERVICES ACT OF 2010**

- On May 5, 2010, President Obama signed the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 into law. The law includes provisions that help provide support for the caregivers of seriously injured Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans, helps improve services for our nation's 1.8 million women Veterans, and helps expand the availability of health care for Veterans and services preventing Veterans from becoming homeless. These measures and others honor the sacrifices of our men and women who have served this country proudly, the commitment and dedication of those who care for our wounded service members every day, and our Nation's sacred responsibility to stand by our troops, our Veterans, and their families. To view the Act, visit:

[http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111\\_cong\\_bills&docid=f:s1963enr.txt.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&docid=f:s1963enr.txt.pdf)

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# OMNIBUS HEALTH SERVICES ACT

## TITLE I—CAREGIVER SUPPORT

- Sec. 101. Assistance and support services for caregivers.
- Sec. 102. Medical care for family caregivers.
- Sec. 103. Counseling and mental health services for caregivers.
- Sec. 104. Lodging and subsistence for attendants.

## TITLE II—WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE MATTERS

- Sec. 201. Study of barriers for women veterans to health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 202. Training and certification for mental health care providers of the Department of Veterans Affairs on care for veterans suffering from sexual trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Sec. 203. Pilot program on counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces.
- Sec. 204. Service on certain advisory committees of women recently separated from service in the Armed Forces.
- Sec. 205. Pilot program on assistance for child care for certain veterans receiving health care.
- Sec. 206. Care for newborn children of women veterans receiving maternity care.

# OMNIBUS HEALTH SERVICES ACT

- TITLE III—RURAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENTS

- Sec. 301. Improvements to the Education Debt Reduction Program.
- Sec. 302. Visual impairment and orientation and mobility professionals education assistance program.
- Sec. 303. Demonstration projects on alternatives for expanding care for veterans in rural areas.
- Sec. 304. Program on readjustment and mental health care services for veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.
- Sec. 305. Travel reimbursement for veterans receiving treatment at facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 306. Pilot program on incentives for physicians who assume inpatient responsibilities at community hospitals in health professional shortage areas.
- Sec. 307. Grants for veterans service organizations for transportation of highly rural veterans.
- Sec. 308. Modification of eligibility for participation in pilot program of enhanced contract care authority for health care needs of certain veterans.

- TITLE IV—MENTAL HEALTH CARE MATTERS

- Sec. 401. Eligibility of members of the Armed Forces who serve in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom for counseling and services through Readjustment Counseling Service.
- Sec. 402. Restoration of authority of Readjustment Counseling Service to provide referral and other assistance upon request to former members of the Armed Forces not authorized counseling.
- Sec. 403. Study on suicides among veterans.

# How can you help?

- Support and advocate for Veterans services across the age span and eras.
- Be educated about Veterans issues (e.g. returning Iraq/Afghanistan soldiers' needs, the approaching wave of aging Viet Nam era baby boomers, Veterans' suicide risk).
- Be interested in local Veterans activities (e.g. Veterans Day...).
- Educate others about the VA and what goes on in that “big grey building on Beacon hill.”