Improving Health Care for Veterans Begins With You

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Presentation Overview

• Discuss the need for community providers to be knowledgeable about Veterans issues
• Review some common issues for Veterans
• Review VA health care and benefits
• Provide resources for providers who provide care to Veterans
Why are we having this discussion?

• Just under 30 percent of the Veteran population today resides in rural areas.

• Around 30 percent of those enrolled rural Veterans served in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) and Operation New Dawn.

• OEF/OIF/OND:
  – 1,724,058 OEF/OIF/OND Veterans have become eligible for VA health care since FY 2002
    • 1,006,092 (~58%) Former Active Duty
    • 717,966 (~42%) Reserve and National Guard

• Among all 1,724,058 separated OEF/OIF/OND Veterans
  – 998,004 (~58%) have obtained VA health care since FY 2002 (cumulative total).
Why are we here?

- Recommendations from Assessing the Experiences, Supportive Service Needs and Service Gaps of Veterans in the Commonwealth of Virginia, August 10, 2010
  - Increased service provider coordination and partnership building
  - Increased cultural competence among service providers
  - Improved information network for veterans, families and service providers
Figure 20

Head Injury / Loss of Consciousness / Concussion (Question 10)
% of Respondents Reporting Head Injury / Loss of Consciousness / Concussion

- 0% - 25%
- 25.001% - 50%
- 50.001% - 100%
- Value not shown; fewer than 4 respondents

Note: This map does not reflect 92 (out of 2037) respondents whose results are not currently associated with a specific county.

Virginia Wounded Warrior Program Regional Consortia Catchment Areas
- Northwestern (1)
- Northern (2)
- Southwest (3)
- Central (4)
- Tidewater (5)

Percent of respondents answering "yes" to Question 10, by county
Question 10: "Have you ever experienced a head injury, head trauma, loss of consciousness, or a concussion due to any cause?"

Produced by CGIT @ VT 7/28/2010
Figure 21

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
% of Respondents Reporting Experiencing PTSD

0% - 10%
10.001% - 35%
Value not shown: fewer than 4 respondents

Note: This map does not reflect 92 (out of 2037) respondents whose results are not currently associated with a specific county.

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Percent of respondents reporting experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), by county

Produced by CGIT @ VT
7/26/2010
Figure 22
Location of Respondents Reporting Depression

Depression Score
% of Respondents with Medium or High Depression Scores
- 0% - 10%
- 10.001% - 35%
- 35.001% - 80%
- Value not shown; fewer than 4 respondents

Note: This map does not reflect 92 (out of 2037) respondents whose results are not currently associated with a specific county.

Virginia Wounded Warrior Program Regional Consortia Catchment Areas
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- Tidewater (5)

Percent of respondents with Medium or High Depression Scores, by county

Produced by CGIT @ VT 7/23/2010
Issues facing Veterans

• Military culture, may be difficult for Veterans to establish relationships with civilian providers
• Veterans may have exposure to a variety of environmental factors due to their service
  – The VA has developed screening tools to identify these issues and screen all Veterans for these issues (based on period of service)
    • Agent Orange Exposure for Vietnam Veterans, some Vietnam Veterans may be eligible for compensation benefits if they have certain conditions (called presumptive illnesses: Diabetes Type II, Hodgkin's disease, Ischemic Heart Disease, several cancers)
    • Gulf War Syndrome
    • Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other mental health diagnoses
    • Traumatic Brain Injury
    • ALS
  – Some of these conditions may also qualify Veterans for additional compensation and benefits through the Veterans Benefits Administration
Recommendations

• Include a Military Health History in your intake
• Have ready resources
• Seek out Veteran Community Partnerships, Joining Forces, Mental Health Summits and other partnership opportunities
Pop Quiz

• Are all Veterans eligible to receive health care through the VA?

NO
Introduction to VHA

• With 151 VA medical centers (VAMCs) nationwide, VHA manages one of the largest health care systems in the United States. VAMCs within a Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) work together to provide efficient, accessible health care to veterans in their areas.
• The VHA also conducts research and education, and provides emergency medical preparedness.
Eligibility and Enrollment

- Eligibility for VA health care is dependent upon a number of variables, which may influence the final determination of the services for which you qualify. These factors include:
  - the nature of a Veteran’s discharge from military service (e.g., honorable, other than honorable, dishonorable)
  - length of service
  - VA adjudicated disabilities (commonly referred to as service-connected disabilities)
  - income level
  - available VA resources (MST)
How Do I Enroll?

• Veterans must complete the 10-10EZ form, and return it to a VA facility
  – The 10-10EZ must be filled out FULLY in order to prevent delays in processing, up to and including a possible return of your application
  – If financial information is not disclosed, co-pays will be charged for non-combat related care

• You can apply by going to your local VA Medical Center, Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) or online at https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/

• Following determination of eligibility, Veterans will receive a letter notifying them about their ability to receive health care benefits
Sites of Care
Including those planned through 2014

VISN 6 Network Office
VA Medical Center
Health Care Center
Multi-Specialty Outpatient Clinic
Primary Outpatient Clinic
Outreach Clinic
ARCH Site
Services Available

- Cardiology
- Dentistry
- Endocrinology
- Emergency Services
- Gastroenterology
- General Medicine
- General Surgery
- Geriatrics and Extended Care
- Hematology/Oncology
- Infectious Disease
- Neurology
- OEF/OIF/ONG Outreach
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopedics
- Otolaryngology
- Plastic Surgery
- Primary Care
- Psychiatry/Psychology
- Pulmonary Medicine
- Rehab Medicine
- Renal
- SCI Clinic
- Thoracic Surgery
- Urology
- Vascular Surgery
- Women’s Health
Non-VA Care

• Fee Basis Reimbursed Care
• A pre-authorization from VAMC for treatment in the community is required to use Fee Basis care
• Emergency events may be reimbursed on behalf of the Veteran in certain cases, such as for service connected conditions. There are specific time limits on requesting emergency care reimbursement. You must contact your local VAMC Fee Basis Unit for further information.
• Centralized Fee Unit: (540) 982-2463 ext.5048
Other Benefits

• Beneficiary Travel Eligibility
  – Have a service connection rating of 30% or more=all appointments
  – Traveling for a service connected condition (for Veterans service connected at 0%-20%)=only service connected appointments
  – Receive a VA pension
  – Income does not exceed maximum annual VA pension rate
  – Travelling for a scheduled compensation or pension examination
Other VA Programs
Vet Centers are community based and serve combat veterans and their families by providing professional readjustment counseling, community education, and linkage between the veterans and other services in the VA.

- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Liaison with VA facilities
- Discharge Upgrade Information
- Employment Assistance Referrals
- Community, social service and medical referrals
- Family and significant other counseling to facilitate Veteran’s readjustment
- VA Benefits Assistance Referrals
- Substance Abuse counseling and referrals
- Bereavement counseling for families of deceased active duty military
- Mobile Unit is stationed in Richmond
Vet Center Locations

Virginia Vet Centers:
• Alexandria
• Norfolk
• Richmond
• Roanoke
• Virginia Beach

West Virginia Vet Centers:
• Martinsburg
• Princeton
VAMC Resources
VA Resources

• Key contacts for VA Medical Centers:
  • Enrollment Coordinator
  • OEF/OIF/OND Program
  • Suicide Prevention Program
  • Transfer Coordinator
  • Women’s Program Manager
  • Centralized Fee Unit
  • Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program
  • Rural Health Program
Veterans Benefits Resources

• VA Benefits 1-800-827-1000
  www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/compensation

• Education 1-888-442-4551
  www.gibill.va.gov

• Home Loans 1-877-827-3702
  www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans

• Life Insurance 1-800-669-8477
  www.insurance.va.gov/miscellaneous/index.htm
Other Pieces of the Puzzle

• Virginia Department of Veteran Services
  – Virginia Wounded Warrior Program

• Veteran Service Organizations
  – Disabled Veterans of America
  – Military Order of the Purple Heart
  – Veterans of Foreign Wars
  – AMVets

• Military One Source

• National Resource Directory
Resources for Community Providers

- Additional training for non-VA Primary Care providers regarding specific issues http://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/education/lecture-series/nonva-employees.asp
- Education regarding exposures http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/health-concerns.asp
Resources for Community Providers

For mental health providers: 
http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/index.asp#sthash.6oVwdAsN.dpbs

For Hospice providers: 
http://www.wehonorveterans.org/
Some Statistics

- Characteristics of Rural Veterans 2010
  - [http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/Rural_Veterans_ACS2010_FINAL.pdf](http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/Rural_Veterans_ACS2010_FINAL.pdf)

- Assessing the Experiences, Supportive Service Needs and Service Gaps of Veterans in the Commonwealth of Virginia, August 10, 2010