

Navigating VA Resources for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

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Housing Transitions

QUERI

What services does the VA offer to Veterans with homeless experiences?



■ Medical care

- Physical health care is offered in patient-centered medical homes, branded as “patient-aligned care teams (PACT)” at VA
- Homeless Veterans receive care in mainstream PACT and PACTs specifically tailored for Veterans with homeless experiences, called Homeless-PACTs (HPACTs)
 - Many VA facilities have HPACTs, but some do not
 - HPACTs are designed to serve Veterans who are highly vulnerable

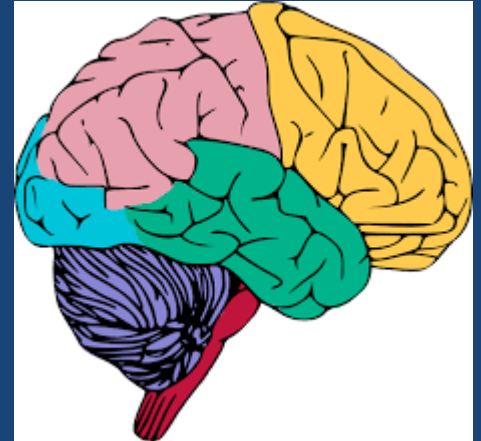
PACT empanelment is a critical linkage for Veterans who are healthcare eligible



- Enable central points of contact (RN care manager and social worker)
- Provide access to same-day care, including mental health services
- Decrease Emergency Department visits and hospitalizations
- Many VA facilities have specialized PACTs for subpopulations (women, geriatrics, Veterans diagnosed with HIV/AIDS, etc.)

Behavioral health care

- Mental health care (medication management, psychotherapy, day treatment) is offered across primary care and specialty mental health settings
- VA mental health clinics are particularly well versed in the sequelae of trauma
- High-intensity case management services are available for Veterans with serious mental illness (e.g., schizophrenia)



Behavioral health care

- Many substance use disorder services are available:
 - Detoxification (hospitals, community partner settings, other on-campus settings)
 - Residential rehabilitation (Domiciliary care for homeless Veterans)
 - Intensive outpatient programs
 - Harm reduction groups
 - Opioid agonist therapy and other medication management
- Psychiatric occupational therapy and recreational therapy is also available

Behavioral health services are available to Veterans who are not healthcare eligible

Emergency mental health care

Veterans can access emergency mental health care and 90-days of care subsequent to the emergency

Care for military-related conditions

Care for needs linked to military sexual trauma, for example, is covered regardless of healthcare eligibility

Adult Residential Facilities are in the continuum of homeless services for Veterans with serious mental illness

- The VA Community Residential Care program (CRC) links Veterans to adult residential facilities in the community
- These services are accessed by Veterans with mental illness who need more structured services
- Housing is a key component of CRC offerings

Social services are often offered in collaboration with community partners

- Homeless outreach
 - Determine VA healthcare eligibility in the field
 - Enable entry into VA
 - Provide education and resources
- Stand downs
 - Large scale community outreach efforts for homeless Veterans (physicals, outreach, housing services)

Homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing

- Supportive services for Veteran families (SSVF)
 - Funds offered to low-income Veterans and their families as short-term subsidies
 - Funds grants to non-profit community partners
 - Intended to promote housing stability

Services for justice-involved Veterans is prioritized



- Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO)
 - Aims to de-criminalize mental illness
 - Links Veterans who are justice-involved to mental health, substance use disorder, and housing services
- Healthcare for Re-entry Veterans
 - Addresses community re-entry among incarcerated Veterans
 - Work directly in state and federal prisons

HUD-VASH and GPD are VA's largest homeless programs

- As a Housing First program, HUD-VASH plays a central role in VA's strategic plan to end Veteran homelessness
 - Joint effort between HUD and VA
 - Veterans receive Housing Choice (Section 8) vouchers through city/County public housing authorities
 - The VA provides supportive services
 - There is a new initiative to enable adult residential facility placement using Housing Choice vouchers

60 yo man with OTH discharge, on SSI, stably housed x4 years

- SSI benefits are inadequate for rent payments → at risk for eviction
- History of incarceration and gang-involvement, limiting the neighborhoods in which he can live
- Limited medication adherence for multiple medical problems
- Suspiciousness and low frustration tolerance

Discussion points

What is the care transition?

There are elements of CTI that are well-suited for any person with vulnerability, but it is best suited for a care transition (which is the stated intent of the aftercare program)

What VA services can this Veteran access?

- Emergency mental health services
- GPD, SSVF, and HUD-VASH
- May be eligible for Vet Center resources

Could this Veteran upgrade his discharge status?

- Major consideration is the role of mental health symptoms in the Veteran's discharge
- Lawyers and Veterans Service Organizations can be important advocates

What housing options are open to this Veteran?

- HUD-VASH versus SSVF may be options (OTH Veterans are eligible)
- May need to explore GPD (THP, not aftercare) for this Veteran while exploring other housing subsidy options

Developing a local network of VA and community partner resources will be your best asset

We have developed a resources and processes worksheet that will help you identify resources for Veterans on your caseload

Questions?

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