

# HEALTH CENTERS SERVING VETERANS:

A Toolkit for the Veteran  
Community Care Program (VCCP)  
Administered by the U.S. Veterans  
Health Administration

TOOLKIT



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
Community Health Centers

**APRIL 2020 UPDATE**

# THE NACHC MISSION

## America's Voice for Community Health Care

The National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) was founded in 1971 to promote efficient, high quality, comprehensive health care that is accessible, culturally and linguistically competent, community directed, and patient centered for all.



# TOOLKIT

## PURPOSE

This toolkit is intended to provide information about Veterans, Veteran healthcare, and how health centers can provide care to Veterans through VA's Veterans Community Care Program (VCCP).

The toolkit also includes resources for health centers generally interested in expanding their efforts to serve Veterans.

The information provided in this toolkit can be used to educate healthcare providers and other health center employees and guide outreach to Veterans in the community.

# TOOLKIT TOPICS

1. Veterans & Healthcare
2. Veteran Services in Health Centers
3. Veteran Community Care Today
4. Providing Community Care to Veterans
5. Resources

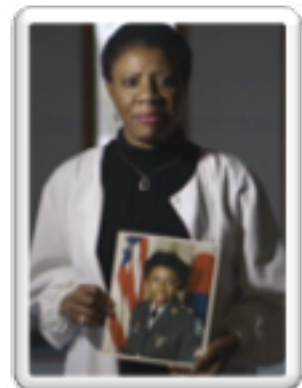
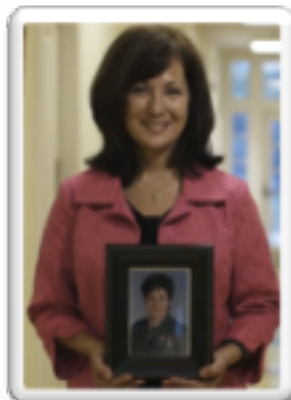
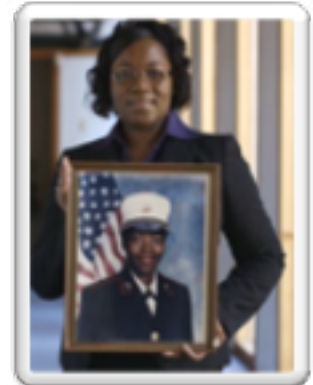


# 1.

## VETERANS & HEALTHCARE

### Who is a Veteran?

A Veteran is a person who served on active duty in the Coast Guard, Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force or Commissioned Officers of the Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/apply/veterans.asp>



# VETERANS & HEALTHCARE

## Veterans Eligible for VA Healthcare

### Are all Veterans eligible for VA Healthcare?

#### No; only veterans who:

- were discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable
- are former or current Reservists, if they served for the full period of active duty for which they were called (excludes training purposes)
- are former or current National Guard members if activated/mobilized by a federal order for active duty

There are about **21 million** Veterans in the United States, approximately **9 million** are enrolled in VA Healthcare<sup>1</sup>

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Many Veterans don't self-identify. Asking if someone has "ever served" results in more accurate responses than asking if someone is a "Veteran," especially among women.

#### HEALTH CENTER PRO TIPS!

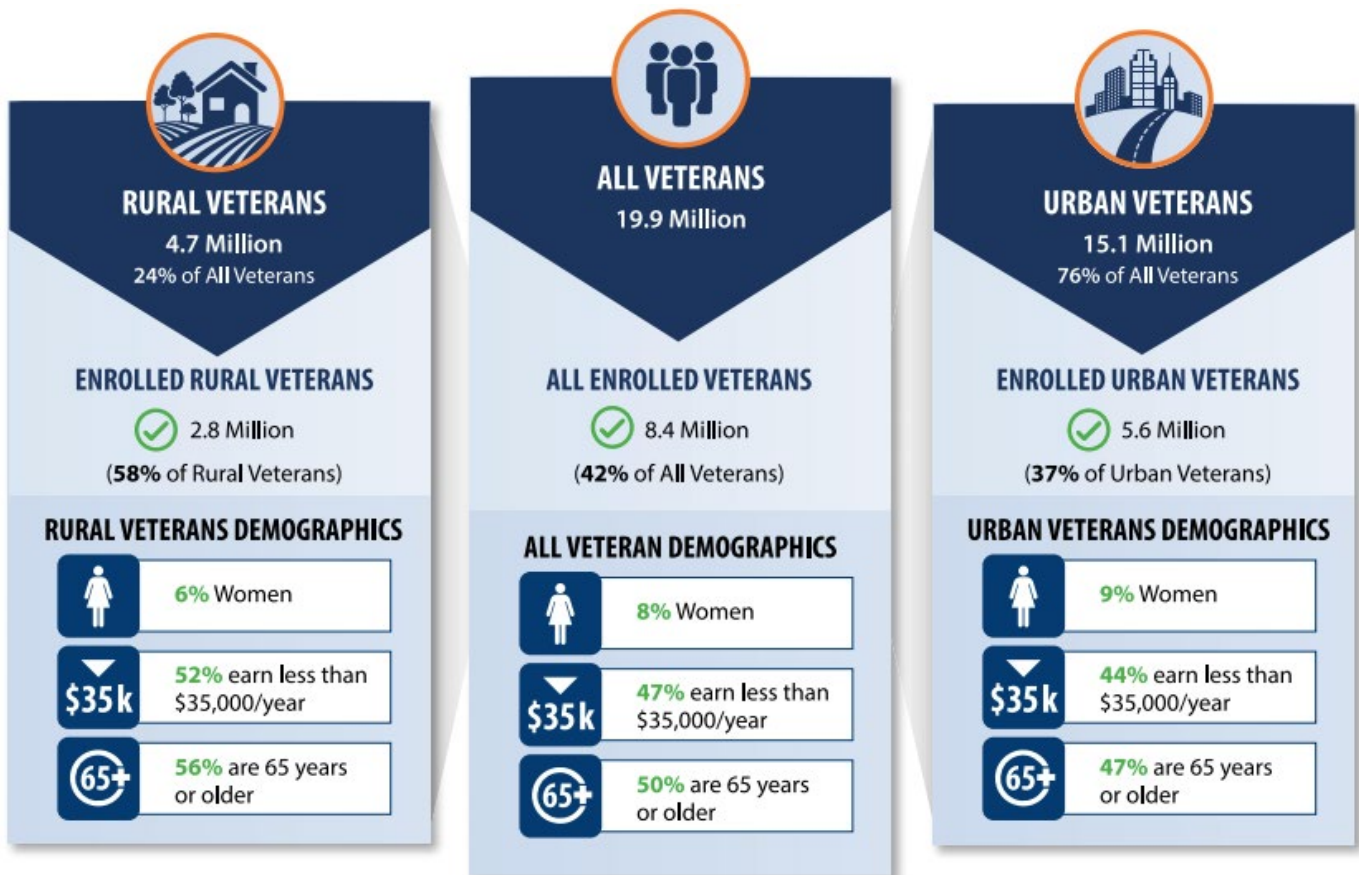
- Health Centers can help eligible Veterans enroll in the VA healthcare they've earned by asking everyone **"have you served?"**
- Health Centers can connect individuals who've served to their local county or state Veteran service officers to determine eligibility and enrollment

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vets.gov/healthbenefits/apply>

# 1.

## VETERANS & HEALTHCARE

### Veteran Population Snapshot



**Source:** VHA Office of Rural Health, Thrive 2018 Annual Report.  
[https://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/docs/ORH\\_Thrive2018\\_FINAL\\_508.pdf](https://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/docs/ORH_Thrive2018_FINAL_508.pdf)



# VETERANS & HEALTHCARE

## Where do Veterans Receive Healthcare?

VA healthcare is the country's largest integrated healthcare system with more than **1,200 care locations**.

### Community Health Centers (CHCs) Role:

- **Community Care.** If the nearest VA location can't provide the services a Veteran needs, they can receive care from a provider in their local community through the **Veterans Community Care Program (VCCP)**. Providers that join the VCCP participate in the Community Care Network (CCN), which is the preferred national network of the VA.

### Veterans receive care in the following VA settings<sup>1</sup>:

- **VA medical centers (VAMCs)**, which offer a range of traditional and advanced hospital services.
- **VA community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs)**, which provide the most common outpatient services (like health and wellness visits) for routine appointments in a convenient location.
- **Vet Centers**, which provide community-based counseling, outreach, and referral services to Veterans who served in a combat zone as well as to their families. Mobile Vet Centers also help bring care to more rural locations.
- **VA Community Living Centers** and other assisted living or residential (live-in) settings, which support Veterans who need more intense nursing care and help with everyday tasks.
- **Veteran's own home.** If needed, Veterans may get medical treatment, nursing care, or help with everyday tasks in the comfort of their own home.

<sup>1</sup> Some Veterans are eligible to receive care in other federal health facilities such as DOD Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs). <https://www.va.gov/health-care/about-va-health-benefits/where-you-go-for-care/>



# 2.

## VETERAN SERVICES IN HEALTH CENTERS

### Why NACHC is Working to Expand Health Center Capacity to Serve Veterans

**For over 50 years, health centers have proudly served Veterans and their families in need of care. Today, serving Veterans is enabled by VA legislation (VA MISSION Act):**

- On June 6, 2018, President Trump signed the VA MISSION Act into law
- Section 101 specifically identifies that any Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), may provide care to eligible Veterans under the provisions of the VA VCCP
- The MISSION Act makes it easier for Veterans to access the health care they need, when and where they need it

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Additionally, Veterans are valuable members of our communities who have struggled with access to high quality healthcare in places where there's not an existing VA facility.

#### **Providing care to Veterans in our communities:**

- Is in line with health center mission to provide access for all
- Provides an opportunity for an additional source of revenue
- Creates community impact and opportunity for partnership with Veteran Service Organizations, Veteran Service Officers and non-profits
- Is specifically **enabled** by VA legislation (VA MISSION Act)

# 2.

## VETERAN SERVICES IN HEALTH CENTERS

### Who Can Receive Community Care?

**Under the MISSION Act, there are six eligibility criteria for a Veteran to seek community care:**

1. The specific care they need is not provided by VA at any facility
2. They reside in a U.S. state (AK, HI, or NH) or territory (Guam, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, or U.S. Virgin Islands) that does not have a full-service VA medical facility
3. “Grandfathered” eligibility based on residence and the 40-mile eligibility criterion from the Choice program
4. The specific care needed is not available within designated access standards
5. The Veteran and their referring clinician decide it is in the Veteran’s best medical interest to receive the specific care needed in the community
6. VA has designated the VA medical service line delivering the specific care needed as not providing care that complies with VA’s standards for quality

**If a Veteran meets any of these criteria, they are eligible to receive care from a community provider in VA’s network.**

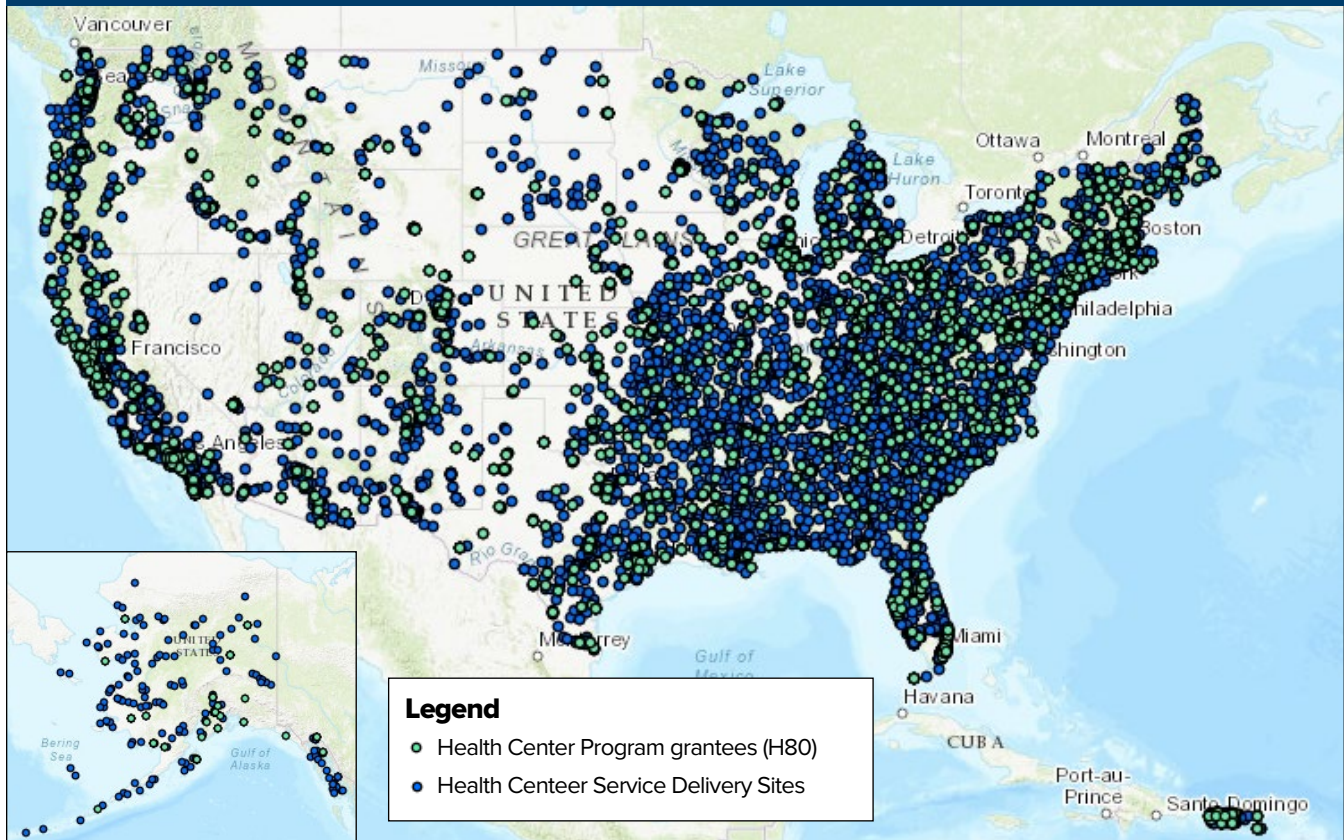
# 2.

## VETERAN SERVICES IN HEALTH CENTERS

### Why Health Center Capacity Matters for Veterans

Nationally, nearly 1,400 HRSA-funded health centers operate over 12,000 sites and provide care to **28 million people; over 385,000 are Veterans.**

#### Health Center Grantees and Service Delivery Sites



The VA can't be everywhere. With 1,200 VA sites across the country, community health centers help fill the gap in thousands of communities.

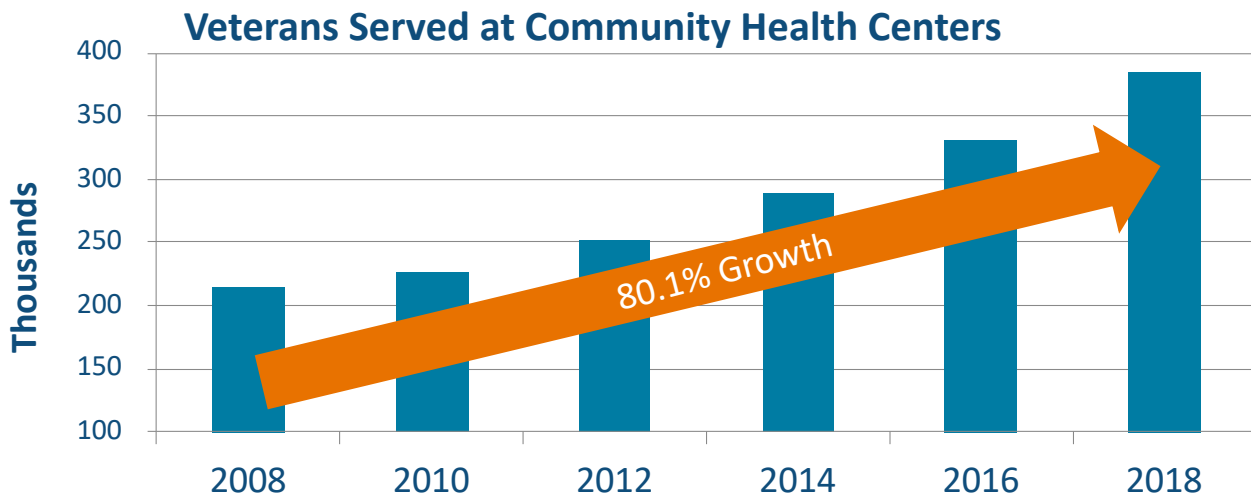
About 95% of health centers and 70% of health center look-alikes served Veterans in 2018.

<https://bphc.hrsa.gov/about/healthcenterprogram/index.html> • <https://data.hrsa.gov/data/dashboards/sites>  
<https://data.hrsa.gov/maps/quick-maps?config=mapconfig/ActiveGrantsforSites.json>

# 2.

## VETERAN SERVICES IN HEALTH CENTERS

### Health Centers Increase Access for Veterans



	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018	Growth from 2008-2018 (% Increase)
Veterans	213,841	226,019	251,188	289,391	330,271	385,222	80.1%

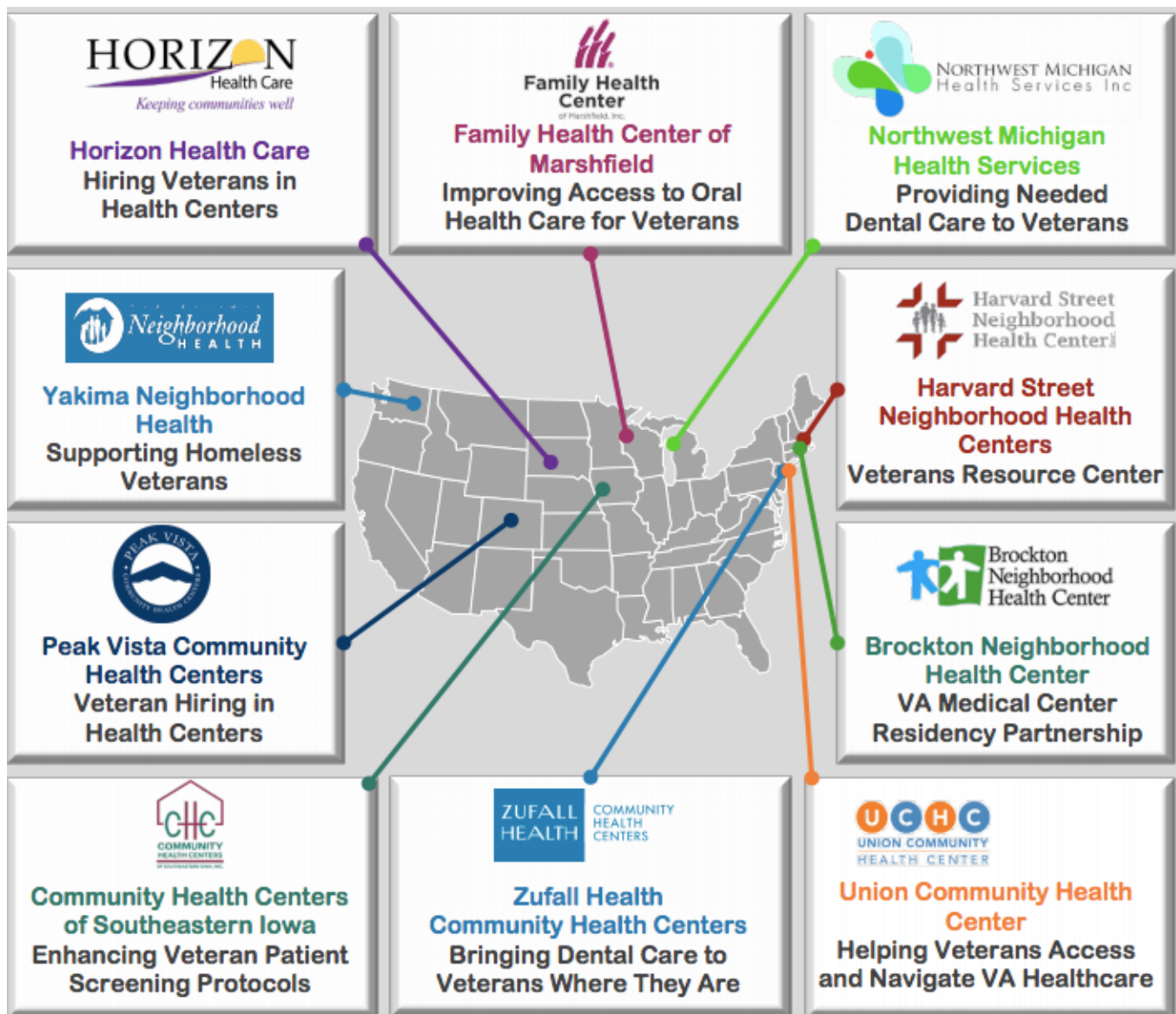
**Source:** 2018 Uniform Data System. Bureau of Primary Health Care, HRSA, DHHS.  
<https://bphc.hrsa.gov/uds/datacenter.aspx?q=t4&year=2018&state=>

# 2.

## VETERAN SERVICES IN HEALTH CENTERS

### Community Health Center Veteran Service Success Stories

Health Centers around the country have made efforts to actively engage and serve Veterans in their communities. NACHC continues to help Health Centers understand and participate in VA programs.



### Success Story Details:

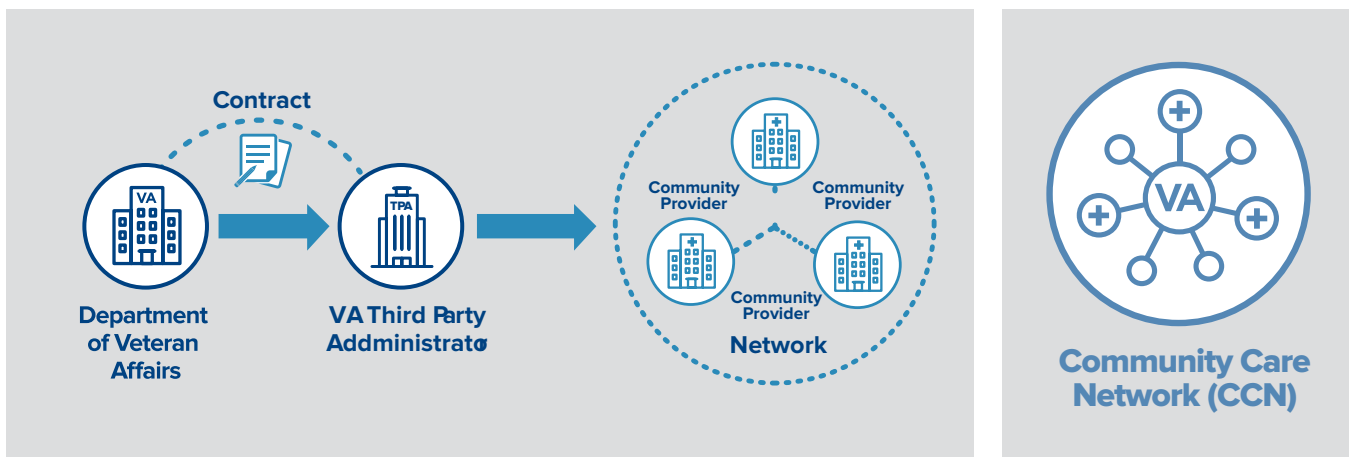
<https://cdn1.digitellinc.com/uploads/nachc/articles/fa902dcd5dff4baca01109c31926c310.pdf>

# 3.

## VETERAN COMMUNITY CARE TODAY

### Veteran Community Care Program

**Community Care Network (CCN)** is a high-performing network of credentialed healthcare providers and practitioners that provide medical, surgical, complimentary and integrative health services (CIHS), durable medical equipment (DME), pharmacy, and dental services to Veterans.



The program purchases care for Veterans in their community and is the preferred national network of the VA. When Community Health Centers participate in the VA Veterans Community Care Program (VCCP) they become members of the CCN.

#### CCN Fact Sheet:

[https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/docs/pubfiles/factsheets/FactSheet\\_26-01.pdf#](https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/docs/pubfiles/factsheets/FactSheet_26-01.pdf#)

# 4.

## PROVIDING COMMUNITY CARE TO VETERANS

### Requirements to Become a Community Care Provider

**1,800 Federally Qualified Community Health Center  
delivery sites** currently participate in the CCN.\*

#### Requirements:

- Enter into a contract with the TPA for your region of CCN
- Have a National Provider Identifier (NPI) from the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System, which is issued at no cost
- Use NPI and referral number to conduct all business activities with VA, including medical, dental, and pharmacy transactions
- Be credentialed in accordance with the requirements for your region of CCN. Work directly with the TPA to complete the credentialing process
- Work with the TPA to become a preferred provider. Requirements are being established but may include training on Veteran-related subject matters



\*Reported by VA-VHA Office of Community Care as of February 2020

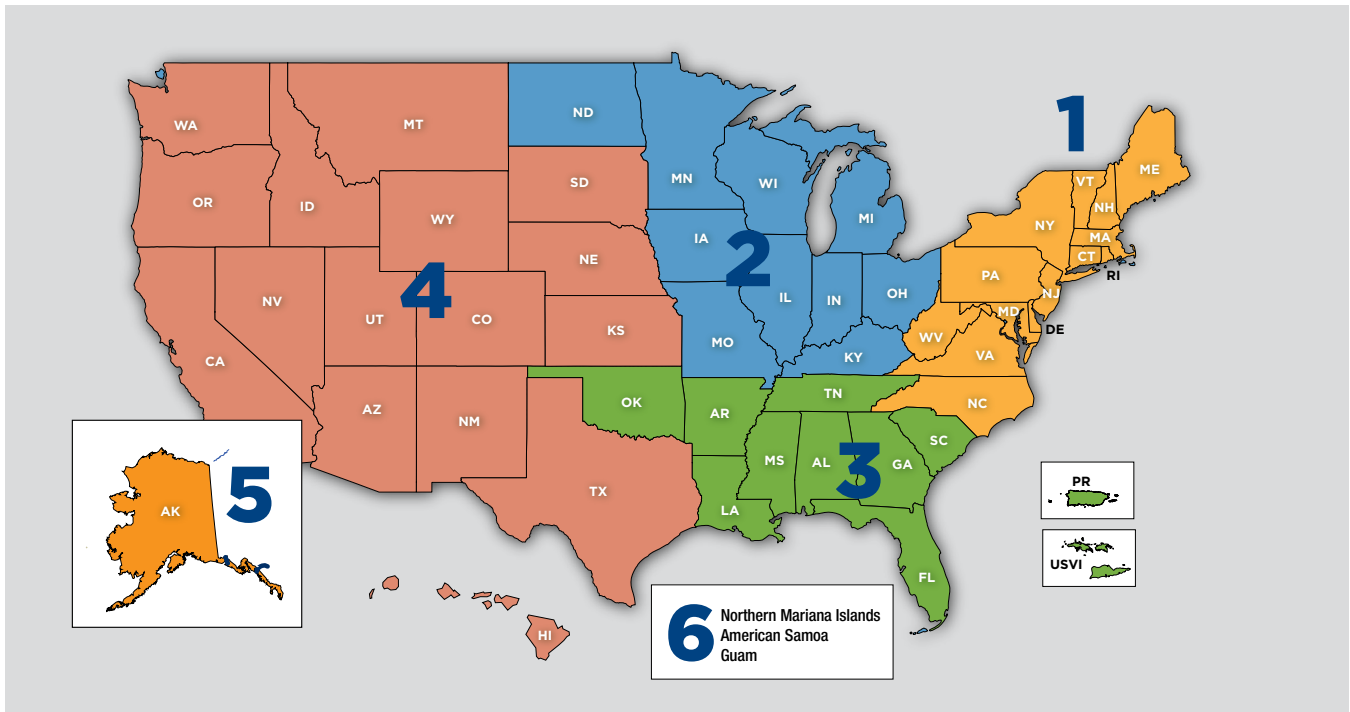
# 4.

## PROVIDING COMMUNITY CARE TO VETERANS

### Enroll with Regional Third Party Administrators (TPAs) to Join the VA Community Care Program

All Community Health Centers must execute a new contract with their region's TPA, even if they had Choice contracts in place previously.

FQHC's in Region 5 and 6 should continue to work under existing agreements, which will be valid until new contracts are established.



**Region 1:** 888-901-7407  
**Region 2:** 844-839-6108  
**Region 3:** 888-901-6613



**Region 4:**  
Web Form (Preferred):  
<https://ccn.triwest.com/Forms/AddProvider.aspx>  
866-486-4174



# 4.

## PROVIDING COMMUNITY CARE TO VETERANS

### Who Does What in Community Care?

#### Key Functions and Roles

Function	Roles
<b>Building the Network</b>	<b>TPA</b> has responsibility to build the network and provide a credentialed network.
<b>Care Coordination</b>	<b>VA</b> does the care coordination with the Veteran and providers.
<b>Eligibility</b>	<b>VA</b> determines and exchanges information with the Provider
<b>Referral and Authorization</b>	<p><b>VA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VA sends referrals to providers through a cloud-based system called HSRM</li> </ul> <p><b>TPA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receives and processes referrals nightly</li> </ul> <p><b>FQHC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receives referrals from VA</li> </ul>
<b>Scheduling</b>	<p><b>VA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occurs at local VA facility or directly by Veteran</li> <li>Uses master directory of care provider options through network provider file</li> </ul> <p><b>FQHC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receives appointment request from VA</li> </ul>
<b>Customer Service</b>	<p><b>VA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VA manages Veteran touchpoints</li> <li>Refers Veterans to CCN directly to community provider (not through TPA)</li> </ul> <p><b>TPA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to inquiries from VA staff and community providers</li> </ul> <p><b>FQHC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receives approved referrals directly from VA to care for Veterans</li> </ul>
<b>Medical Documentation</b>	<p><b>VA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share directly with providers through health information exchange</li> </ul> <p><b>FQHC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submits directly to VA through an accepted and secure method of transmission</li> </ul>
<b>Provider Payments</b>	<p><b>TPA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processes and adjudicates claims once received from provider</li> </ul> <p><b>FQHC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit claims to appropriate TPA assigned to CCN region with referral number</li> </ul>

# 4.

## PROVIDING COMMUNITY CARE TO VETERANS

### **Value of FQHC Services to the VA Community Care Network**

- The Community Care Network values all the services provided by FQHC's
- FQHC's are crucial "gap fillers," offering services needed in communities that the VA doesn't fulfill. What those services are varies by community and over time
- If the CCN does not need a particular service today from a FQHC, it does not mean the VA won't need it tomorrow. The needs of the population, as well as the VA services offered, are constantly changing

# 5.

## RESOURCES

### NACHC & Health Centers: Working Together for Veterans



#### Federal Environment

- Choice Act
- 2015 Choice Act amendments
- Implementing regulations
- Policies
- 2018 MISSION Act



#### Communication

- Fact sheets
- Toolkits
- Conference calls
- Veterans Interest Group
- Videos
- Social Media



#### Assistance

- Targeted technical assistance
- Education sessions
- Document “success stories”

# 5.

## RESOURCES

### **NACHC & Health Centers: Working Together for Veterans** (CONTINUED)

#### **NACHC Veterans Interest Group (VIG)**

- An informal networking and information group to share promising practices, policy updates and operational information regarding increased access to care and services for the Veteran populations served in community health centers
- **To receive Veterans-related updates via email, please send your contact info to [trainings@nachc.org](mailto:trainings@nachc.org)**

#### **Partnerships**

- NACHC supports the development of partnerships between health centers, the VA, graduate medical education programs, VA's Third Party Administrators, Veteran Service Organizations, and other service providers
- These partnerships have helped Veterans access high-quality care in their communities more easily
- NACHC strives to increase understanding between federal, state and local organizations serving Veteran patients, including education on systems, reporting processes and health needs of the population

# 5.

## RESOURCES

### NACHC & Health Centers: Working Together for Veterans (CONTINUED)

Health Center Resource Clearinghouse: <https://www.healthcenterinfo.org>

**HEALTH CENTER RESOURCE CLEARINGHOUSE** ABOUT ▾ PARTNERS ▾ FIND RESOURCES ▾ PRIORITY TOPICS ▾ PROMISING PRACTICES ▾ CONNECT ▾

COVID-19 Resources: Board and CEO Partnership During COVID-19 | STAR<sup>2</sup> Center COVID-19 Webinar (4/14)

**New Resources Added to the Clearinghouse:**

- > COVID-19 & Homelessness Town Hall  
Added: 04/10/2020
- > The Board and CEO Partnership During the Current Public Health Emergency  
Added: 04/10/2020
- > Flujos de trabajo reducidos y orientación de personal para operaciones no clínicas  
Added: 04/09/2020

More new resources >>  
Clearinghouse events calendar >>

**Quick Finds:** ↓  
Use the links below to find resources on key topics

- Clinical Issues
- Emerging Issues: COVID-19, More...
- Finance
- Governance
- HIT/Data
- Operations
- Promising/Best Practices
- Quality Improvement
- Social Determinants of Health
- Special & Vulnerable Populations
- Value-Based Health Care Transformation
- Workforce

- Veteran patient characteristics by national, state and health center level: <https://bphc.hrsa.gov/uds/datacenter.aspx?q=t4&year=2018&state=>
- VA Sites of Care (HRSA Data Warehouse): <https://data.hrsa.gov/>

For more information about NACHC’s efforts to support Veterans or to join our mailing list, contact the training and technical assistance program: [trainings@nachc.org](mailto:trainings@nachc.org)

# 5.

## RESOURCES

### VA Resources for Serving Veterans through Community Care

#### VA Community Care Program

- Community Care Program Main Page: <https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/>
- Provider Page: <https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/providers/index.asp>
- Fact Sheets: [https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/docs/pubfiles/factsheets/FactSheet\\_26-01.pdf](https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/docs/pubfiles/factsheets/FactSheet_26-01.pdf)

#### Training Courses for Providers

- [https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/providers/EDU\\_Training.asp#training](https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/providers/EDU_Training.asp#training)
- <http://deploymentpsych.org/military-culture-course-modules>

#### VHA Community Care Monthly Provider e-letter – sign up here:


- <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVHA/subscriber/>



**VHA TRAIN Courses**

VHA Training Finder Real-Time Affiliate Integrated Network (TRAIN) provides a wealth of training and education resources for community providers. These offerings are no-cost, Veteran-focused, and accredited for continuing medical education. The VHA TRAIN video describes the training course offerings and how to access them.

Visit the VHA TRAIN website to get started. More information about how to enroll, a list of available courses, and additional instructions for how to register can be found in the VHA TRAIN fact sheet.



VHA TRAIN delivers free, VA-approved training on Veteran-specific health topics. Published on Nov 22, 2017.

[VHA TRAIN website](#)   [VHA TRAIN Fact Sheet](#)   [Access the VHA TRAIN login page](#)

# 5.

## RESOURCES

### Additional Resources for Serving Veterans in the Community

- **Make the Connection** — a publicly available, free website that features more than 600 videos of Veterans and their loved ones speaking about their experiences with mental health and everyday life during and after service. For more information visit **Make the Connection:** <https://maketheconnection.net/>
- **PTSD Consultation Program for Community Providers:** <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/consult/resources.asp>
- **Veteran Resources, Data, and Maps** — publicly available information health centers can use to get smart about the needs of their local Veterans:
  - National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics
  - U.S. Census Bureau — Veterans Data
  - The Bureau of Labor Statistics — Veterans Data

#### All available here:

[https://www.va.gov/vetdata/additional\\_sources\\_of\\_information\\_about\\_veterans.asp](https://www.va.gov/vetdata/additional_sources_of_information_about_veterans.asp)



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
Community Health Centers

# THANK YOU

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