Patient Handbook
Information and Education Guide
VA Western Colorado Health Care System
2121 North Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501
970-263-2800
VHA Mission, Vision, and Core Values (I CARE)

**VHA Mission**
Honor America’s Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

**VHA Vision**
VHA will continue to be the benchmark of excellence and value in health care and benefits by providing exemplary services that are both patient centered and evidence based.

This care will be delivered by engaged, collaborative teams in an integrated environment that supports learning, discovery, and continuous improvement. It will emphasize prevention and population health and contribute to the nation’s well-being through education, research, and service in national emergencies.

**VA Core Values (I CARE)**
The Core Values are the basic elements of how we go about our work—they define “who we are”—and form the underlying principles we will use every day in our service to Veterans:

- Integrity
- Commitment
- Advocacy
- Respect
- Excellence
Checklist for New Enrollees to VA Health Care

Welcome to VA Health Care! We want to make it easy for you to get started. Use this checklist to make sure you have all the information you need.

- Find a VA health care facility near you
- Learn how to make and cancel appointments
- Learn how to transfer your medical records and prescriptions to VA
- Learn how to fill and refill prescriptions
- Learn what to do in case of emergency
- Learn where to get care after hours
- Learn how to take an active role in your health care as a member of your PACT
- Learn how to take care of your health and to partner with your providers
- Register for My Health eVet to take advantage of its online features for Veterans: http://www.myhealth.va.gov/
- Learn how to access and share your medical records electronically
How VA Health Care Works for You

Choose a Facility

You can choose where you receive VA health care services, including primary care, specialty medicine, surgery services, mental health care, and other care services. Primary care is your gateway to VA health care.

VA Western Colorado Health Care System
2121 North Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501
970-263-2800

Craig Veterans Community Clinic
Major William E. Adams
785 Russell Street, Suite 400
Craig, Colorado 81625
970-824-6721

Glenwood Springs Veterans Community Clinic
2425 South Grand Avenue, Suite 101
Glenwood Springs, Colorado 81601
970-945-1007

Moab Veterans Community Clinic
702 S. Main Street, Suite 5-B
Moab, Utah 84532
435-719-4144
Montrose Veterans Community Clinic  
154 Colorado Avenue  
Montrose, Colorado 81401  
970-249-7791

Please choose the facility that is most convenient for you. This is called your “preferred facility.” Once you choose a facility, VA staff will provide you with more information and help you schedule your first appointment.

Get Assigned to a Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT)

You receive your primary care in VA through what is known as a Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT). Your PACT can take care of most of your health care needs or refer you for specialty care as needed.

You will be assigned a primary care provider—a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician’s assistant—who is part of a PACT “teamlet.” This teamlet includes a registered nurse who serves as Care Manager, a clinical associate (licensed practical nurse or medical assistant), and an administrative associate. All women Veterans receiving primary care must be offered assignment to a Women’s Health provider and Patient Aligned Care Team (WH-PACT). Women’s Health PACTs have team members who have received training and/or are experienced in the care of women Veterans.

Your teamlet will work with you to provide most of your care, but your PACT also includes pharmacists, social workers, dietitians, behavioral health specialists, and other health professionals, as well as support staff—all focused on working with you, with your health care and well-being in mind.
Your PACT will:

- Build a partnership with you to promote your health and well-being
- Provide or arrange for preventive health services, such as immunizations and screenings
- Give you medical care and coordinate your care with other providers
- Give you information about healthy living habits, your health problems, and any treatment you may need, and work with you to achieve the health care goals you choose

If You Need to See a Specialist

Your PACT will coordinate all care for you. If you need to see a specialist, your PACT will request a consult for you. The specialty care area will contact you about an appointment or the next step in your care. The PACT and specialty care team will work together to care for you.

If You Live in More than One Location or Have Traveled Away from Your PACT

Once you are enrolled in VA health care, you are eligible for care at any VA facility. We encourage you to get most of your care through your preferred facility and assigned PACT. Even when you travel, your PACT will continue to help you and manage your primary care needs.

When you plan extended travel outside your usual VA care area, please give your PACT and pharmacy

- A temporary address and phone number
- The starting date and the expected date of return
Routine prescription refills can be sent to you at your temporary address. Be sure to allow time (approximately 2 weeks) for the refills to arrive at your temporary address by mail.

**Care in the Community**

Your VA medical center may refer you to a community provider if

- The services you need are not available in VA or are not available in a timely manner as determined by your provider.

Services provided by community vendors at VA’s expense must meet VA standards and must be preauthorized in advance by the VA.

Information about Veteran copayments and the community care claims process can be found at [www.va.gov/communitycare](http://www.va.gov/communitycare).
Phone Directory

Main WCHCS phone number: 970-263-2800

- 24-hour nursing line: 970-263-2800, option #3
- Addiction Services: 970-263-2824
- Audiology: 970-263-2802
- Billing (Internal/Co-Pays): 866-393-1846
- Billing (Care in the Community/Emergency Care): 888-795-0773
- Blind Rehabilitation: 970-263-5080
- Canceling and scheduling appointments: (970) 263-2800
- Chaplain Service: 970-263-5018
- Cardiopulmonary: 970-263-2800 x1302
- Compensation and Pension: 970-263-2827
- Dental: 970-263-2800 x2808
- Eligibility and Enrollment: 970-263-2813
- Emergency: 911
- Third party insurance questions: contact your local carrier directly
- Laboratory Services: 970-263-2812
- Mental Health Services: 970-263-2824
- Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator: 970-263-2800 x2346
- My HealtheVet Coordinator: 970-263-5014
- National Call Center for Homeless Veterans: 1-877-424-3838
- Nutrition and Food Services: 970-263-2847
- Occupational Therapy: 970-244-1335
- Oncology (cancer): 970-263-2800 x 2082
- Orthotic and prosthetic services: 970-244-1355
- Patient Advocate: 970-263-2826
- Pharmacy Representative: 970-263-2800, option #1
- Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Services: 970-244-1335
- Podiatry: 970-263-2821
- Primary Care: 970-263-2800
- Recreation Therapy: 970-263-2800 x 2596
- Release of Information: 970-263-5076
- Social Work: 970-263-2800
- Speech-language pathology: 970-244-1335
- Suicide Prevention Coordinator: 970-263-2800 x2562
- Telehealth Services: 970-263-2831
- Transition & Care Management (OEF/OIF/OND) Team: 970-263-5080
- Travel Office: 970-263-2800 x2117
- Traveling Veteran Coordinator: 970-263-2800
- VA Community Care: 970-263-2800, option 2
- VA Police: 970-263-5078
- Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255
- Veterans Health Education Coordinator: 970-263-2800 x2577
- VHA National Tobacco Cessation Quit Line: 1-855-QUIT VET (1-855-784-8838)
- Whole Health Program Coordinator: 970-263-2800 x2577
- Winter Sports Clinic: 970-244-1314
- Women Veterans Program Manager: 970-263-2800 x2508
VA Health Care Services

VA places a high priority on giving you excellent health care. VA provides a full spectrum of health care services, including health promotion, disease prevention, diagnosis, therapy, rehabilitation, and palliative care.

VA health care has adopted a whole health approach, a radical redesign of health care that empowers and equips you to take charge of your health and well-being. Guided by a personalized health plan, VA’s Whole Health System considers the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and environmental elements that work together to provide the best quality of life for you.

VA currently has 171 medical centers and over 1000 outpatient clinics located across the United States. These facilities provide many kinds of treatment services, including critical care, mental health care, orthopedics, pharmacy, physical therapy, primary care, radiology, surgery, and women’s health. VA is proud to provide highly qualified health care professionals dedicated to your health care needs.

VA’s goal is to provide eligible Veterans with the care they need at the right time, at the right place, from the right provider. This may be on-site during inpatient hospitalization, at one of the primary or specialty care clinics, at a community-based outpatient clinic (CBOC), in a community living center, or in a residential care facility. However, not all services are provided at every site where VA health care is provided. Sometimes, you may need to travel to another VA facility or receive care from a local community care provider. Telehealth is another option for some appointments. If any of these are necessary for you, your VA provider will work with you to obtain these services, based on your needs, availability, and eligibility criteria.
Inpatient Care Services

Inpatient care provided by VA Western Colorado Health Care System includes a full range of treatment services that include (but are not limited to):

- Acute Care Inpatient Units
  - Medical
  - Surgical
  - Psychiatric
- Intensive Care Units
  - Medical
  - Surgical
  - Cardiac specialty
- Community Living Center

Primary Care (PACT)

VHA primary care gives eligible Veterans easy access to health care professionals familiar with their needs. It provides long-term patient-provider relationships, coordinates care across VA health services, educates patients, and offers disease prevention programs.

As a patient in VHA, your primary care is focused on you. We deliver your care in teams, called Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACTs). You are the center of your PACT, which also includes family members, caregivers, and VA health care professionals. This team-based method helps us give you effective, efficient, comprehensive care. It also helps us communicate about and coordinate your care with you and across all parts of the VA health care system.

All women Veterans receiving primary care must be offered an assignment to a Women’s Health PACT (WH PACT). The WH PACT consists of health care team
members who have received training and/or are experienced in the care of women Veterans.

**Outpatient Services**

VA also provides numerous outpatient services to help diagnose and/or treat Veterans’ medical conditions, usually as a consultation from a primary care provider. These providers specialize in a particular area of care and have extensive training and education.

VA outpatient services include:

- Audiology/Hearing Prosthetics and Equipment
- Bariatric (weight-loss surgery)
- Blind rehabilitation
- Cardiology - Vascular (heart and blood circulation)
- Chiropractic care
- Dental
- Dermatology
- Diabetes and endocrinology
- Diagnostic laboratory (tests)
- Eye care (optometry & ophthalmology)
- Geriatric care
- Mental health
- MOVE! program
- Neurology (nerves)
- Nuclear medicine (imaging)
- Nutrition
- Occupational therapy
- Orthotic and prosthetic services (artificial limbs, orthotic devices)
- Oncology (cancer)
• Pacemaker (heart)
• Pain management
• Pharmacy (medication)
• Physical therapy
• Podiatry (feet)
• Primary care
• Pulmonary (lungs)
• Radiology (x-rays and imaging)
• Recreation therapy
• Respiratory therapy
• Speech-language pathology
• Telemedicine
• Urology

**Long-term Care**

VA community living centers serve Veterans who

• Have chronic stable conditions, including dementia
• Need rehabilitation or short-term specialized services, such as respite or intravenous therapy
• Need comfort and care at the end of life

The goals of care are to restore Veterans to maximum function, prevent further decline, maximize independence, and/or provide comfort when dying. Most VA community living centers are located on or near the grounds of VA medical centers throughout the United States.
Mental Health Services

VA places a high priority on providing mental health services for Veterans of all eras of service.

VA WCHCS provides specialty outpatient and inpatient mental health services. In addition, readjustment counseling services are available for Veterans and their families at Vet Centers across the nation. Our goal is to support recovery and enable Veterans facing mental health challenges to live meaningful lives in their communities and achieve their full potential.

VA mental health services are available in specialty clinics, primary care clinics, community living center, and residential care facilities where Veterans receive health care. Specialized programs, such as mental health intensive case management and work programs are provided for those with serious mental health conditions.

VA has integrated mental health care into the primary care setting. Veterans may receive mental health care from their primary care providers or from a collaborating behavioral health provider based in the primary care clinic.

VA WCHCS has same day access to mental health care. Please visit the Mental Health Clinic located on the second floor of building 1. Monday through Friday 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM. If after hours, please visit the Emergency Room.

The list of services and programs that mental health supports includes:

- Inpatient care
- Outpatient mental health care
- Primary care-mental health integration
- Specialized PTSD treatment services
- Specialized substance-use disorder treatment
- Treatment for disorders related to military sexual trauma (these services are free for all Veterans who experienced military sexual trauma)
- Peer support services
- Mental health intensive case management (MHICM)
- Suicide prevention programs
- Mental health programs for older Veterans
- Mental health programs for women Veterans
- Evidence-based psychotherapy programs
- Mental health disaster response/post-deployment activities
- Compensated Work Therapy
- Same day access to mental health care

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

Veterans receive clinical preventive services from their primary care providers. These services include immunizations to prevent disease, screening tests to detect disease at an early stage, and behavioral counseling to avoid or reduce risk factors for disease.

Veterans participate in health education programs to help them manage their health. They also participate in health promotion programs to learn healthy living skills. Go to www.prevention.va.gov for more information.

Care Management, Chaplain, and Social Work Services

VA social workers are available in health care delivery settings and programs across the system of care. They provide psychosocial and clinical services to Veterans, their families, and caregivers. Care Management, Chaplain, and Social Work (CMCSW) programs address the whole health needs of wounded, injured and ill Servicemembers, Veterans, their families, and caregivers, with
care and compassion throughout VHA. CMCSW has responsibility for the Caregiver Support Program, VA Chaplain Service, Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program, Integrated Case Management including Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH), Community Employment Coordination, Telehealth Nursing, Veterans Justice Outreach, policies on reporting suspected abuse and neglect, and family support for Veterans with polytrauma. CMCSW is also responsible for the VA Liaisons for Healthcare at military treatment facilities, who provide comprehensive and specialized clinical assistance to transitioning Service members at military hospitals. Also provided are clinical support and case management services to transitioning Service members and new Veterans through the Transition and Care Management Program at each VA medical center. Go to www.patientcare.va.gov/caremanagement.asp for more information.

The VA Chaplain Service ensures that Veterans and families have access to the highest quality of spiritual care, guarantees every patient’s constitutional right to the free exercise of religion, and protects Veterans from undesired proselytization while in a VA medical facility. Go to www.patientcare.va.gov/chaplain/ for more information.

Prosthetic Services

VA Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service (PSAS) is the largest and most comprehensive provider of prosthetic devices and sensory aids in the world. The term “prosthetic” includes artificial limbs and any devices that support or replace a body part or function. VA provides all clinically appropriate and commercially available, state-of-the-art prosthetic equipment, sensory aids, and devices to Veterans, crossing the full range of patient care. Such items include artificial limbs and bracing, wheeled mobility and seating systems, sensory-neural aids (e.g., hearing aids and eyeglasses), cognitive prosthetic devices, items specific to women’s health, surgical implants and devices surgically placed in the Veteran
(e.g., artificial hips and pacemakers), home respiratory care, and recreational and sports equipment. In addition to providing devices, PSAS also administers three unique benefits to assist Veterans and Servicemembers with disabilities: clothing allowance, automobile adaptive equipment, and home improvement & structural alterations. For more information, visit www.prosthetics.va.gov.

**Caregiver Support Program**

VA's Caregiver Support Program provides services and supports for family caregivers of Veterans including peer support, education, and training. VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) provides certain medical, travel, training, and financial benefits to caregivers of certain Veterans and Servicemembers who were seriously injured during service on or after September 11, 2001. Legislation passed in 2018 will expand eligibility for PCAFC for the next several years. For more information, contact the Caregiver Support Coordinator at your local VA medical facility, visit www.caregiver.va.gov, or dial toll-free, 1-855-260-3274.

**Women’s Health**

Women are enrolling for VA health care in record numbers and at VA we are committed to meeting their unique needs by delivering the highest quality care, in a safe and healing environment.

VA has implemented comprehensive primary care provided by trained and designated women’s health providers at all sites of care. Comprehensive primary care means providing you with all your care needs, including general medical care and reproductive health care from the same provider, at the same place, and when possible at the same visit. VA primary care providers have been trained in women’s health topics, state-of-the-art gender-specific equipment, such as mammography machines, (which have been purchased at many facilities
nationwide), and a culture change initiative to make all VA staff more sensitive to the needs of women Veterans.

VA’s comprehensive primary care services include care for acute and chronic illness, health promotion and disease prevention, mental health and readjustment counseling, as well as gender-specific care such as cervical cancer screening (Pap tests), breast cancer screening (mammograms), birth control, and preconception counseling. VA also offers specialty care, including gynecology services. Maternity care and newborn care are also provided for eligible women Veterans (coordinated by VA, but usually provided off-site).

Care coordination is a way in which your health care team works together to make sure your health needs are met. Your Women’s Health Patient Aligned Care Team (WH PACT) has training and expertise to care for women Veterans. The team will talk with you about your preferences and help you set goals for your health. The WH PACT will coordinate all aspects of your care. This coordination may include care provided by specialists, emergency room providers, inpatient hospitalizations, and referrals to the community.

Every VA has a full-time Women Veterans Program Manager (WVPM) who can help you navigate the VA system. VA understands your needs and we are proud to serve you. Positive changes are underway across the entire system and employees are embracing the message: “It’s everyone’s job to care for women Veterans.” Learn more: www.womenshealth.va.gov/culture_change.asp.

As part of continuing culture change, VA is expanding efforts to address the issue of harassment and to promote a culture where all Veterans are respected. Harassment can be disruptive to access to care and have a negative impact on health and health care. Through action and accountability to eliminate any harassment at VA facilities, VA is making an impact to improve all Veterans’ experiences.

**Additional Resources:**
The Women Veterans Call Center (WVCC)

WVCC staff are trained to provide women Veterans, their families, and caregivers information about VA services and resources. We are ready to respond to your concerns. The call is free, and you can call as often as you like, until you have the answers to your questions. The WVCC is available Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 10 p.m. ET, and on Saturdays from 8 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. ET at 1-855-VA WOMEN (1-855-829-6636).

Frequently asked questions:
www.womenshealth.va.gov/programoverview/faqs.asp
Locate your nearest facility to get in touch with the WVPM:
www.va.gov/directory
Learn more about women Veterans health care:
www.womenshealth.va.gov/
Get more information about health care and enrollment:
www.womenshealth.va.gov/healthcare.

VA Programs for Homeless Veterans

VA’s goal is that every Veteran has permanent, sustainable housing with access to high-quality health care and other support services, and that Veteran homelessness in the future is prevented whenever possible (or is otherwise rare, brief, and nonrecurring). There are many programs and resources to support homeless Veterans.
If you are a Veteran who has lost your home or is at risk of losing your home, you can receive the support you’ve earned to get back on your feet. Contact VA’s National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838) to talk confidentially to a trained VA staff person. The hotline and online chat (www.va.gov/homeless) are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and neither VA registration nor enrollment in VA health care is required to use either service. “Make the Call” and take the first step to access help from VA.

For more information about VA programs for homeless Veterans, go to: www.va.gov/homeless
How to Access VA Health Care

VA Telephone Care

You can access VA care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Use VA’s telephone service to

- Schedule appointments for all clinical areas, including primary/ambulatory care, community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs), and specialty clinics
- Call the VA pharmacy to access the automated telephone refill services for medications or supplies
- Get advice about your health care concerns

During Business Hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm)

970-263-2800, option #2

Contact your designated Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) for primary care, and/or your corresponding specialty clinic, to

- Make an appointment, change an appointment, or cancel an appointment. If you know you are going to miss an appointment, please cancel it as soon as possible so that another Veteran can get an appointment.
- Get advice about your health concerns. You can work through your assigned Registered Nurse Care Manager as well as the other members of your PACT. This includes the extended team members from your clinic such as pharmacy, social work, mental health, etc.

Things to remember:
Veteran Information

- If you are feeling sick, please call your PACT. The team will assess your medical needs and work with you to address them.
- Calling the primary care clinic will help us to make arrangements with your own primary care provider and extended team as much as possible.
- Please understand that if you "walk in" to a primary care clinic without a scheduled appointment, we will evaluate your condition, and you will then be seen according to the severity of your medical situation.

After Business Hours (Evenings, Nights, Weekends, Federal Holidays)

There are two ways you can get the care you need after hours:

1) Call the after-hours telephone advice care line.

970-263-2800, option #3

Use this service to

- Make an appointment, change an appointment, or cancel an appointment. If you know you are going to miss an appointment, please cancel it as soon as possible so that another Veteran can get an appointment.
- Get advice about your health concerns.

The advice line is staffed by registered nurses who will discuss your medical concern and work with you to determine the care you need. The nurse will document the telephone call in your electronic medical record and notify the appropriate medical provider.

Some VA medical centers use an automated telephone call to remind patients of an upcoming clinic appointment. This helps reduce no-shows and improves access for all Veterans.
2) Use the online “secure messaging” function in MyHealtheVet to inquire about non-emergency issues.

You can send specific questions concerning your medication, upcoming appointments, day-to-day health plan, and more 24 hours a day. Your clinic will respond to you online, or by phone if necessary, to provide the answers and service you need.

www.myhealth.va.gov
My HealtheVet

My HealtheVet is the award-winning Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) patient-facing website. It offers Veterans, service members, their dependents, and caregivers “anywhere, anytime” access to VA health care information and services.

My HealtheVet is a private and secure online personal health record. It’s free, easy to use, and helps you partner with your health care teams to take charge of your health and well-being.

1. **START:** Visit My HealtheVet www.myhealth.va.gov

   My HealtheVet gives you tools to help track your health and build a Personal Health Record.

2. **REGISTER:** Get started with My HealtheVet

   Anyone can register on My HealtheVet, with different features available depending on your account type. With a Basic account, you can use health tracking tools, record information in your personal online journals and health history records, access medical libraries, take the HealtheLiving Assessment (to determine your Health Age), use mental health screening tools, and more.

   If you are a VA patient, you can upgrade your account to Advanced or Premium. With an Advanced account, you can access all Basic account features, plus you can refill your VA prescriptions online 24/7.

   Some features of My HealtheVet require a Premium account. With a Premium account, you will have full access to all the features available in My HealtheVet, including Secure Messaging and VA Online Scheduling. You will also have access
to key portions of your VA medical record, such as VA Notes and VA Lab Results, as well as additional health information through the VA Blue Button.

3. **AUTHENTICATE: Upgrade to a Premium My HealtheVet Account**

To get a Premium My HealtheVet account, you will need to go through a one-time authentication process. This security measure verifies your identity before allowing access to your VA health record.

Getting a Premium Account: If you’re a VA patient, there are two ways you can upgrade your account:

- **In-Person Authentication (IPA)** at your local VA medical center or community-based outpatient clinic; or

4. **REFILL PRESCRIPTIONS: Manage your prescriptions and medications online**

Use My HealtheVet to keep your prescriptions straight. The My HealtheVet online prescription tools allow you to refill your VA prescriptions (Rx), track their delivery, get VA prescription shipment notifications, create medication lists, and more.

5. **COMMUNICATE: Participate in Secure Messaging**

Use Secure Messaging to communicate online with your VA health care team. To use Secure Messaging, you must be a VA patient with a Premium account and receive care at a VA facility. Secure Messaging gives you quick, easy access to communicate about *non-urgent issues* with members of your VA health care team. You can do this anytime, anywhere, at your convenience.
Secure Messaging is only for non-urgent, non-critical communication!

5. **SHARE:** Use VA Blue Button to view, print, and/or download your information

The VA Blue Button tool gives you easy access to your VA medical records. It lets you view and download your My HealtheVet personal health information and share it with members of your health care team without the hassle of requesting paper records.

6. **APPOINTMENTS:** Self-schedule or request help scheduling certain VA appointments

VA Online Scheduling is available for primary care appointments, and may be available for specialty care appointments at certain facilities. To use Online Scheduling, you must have a My HealtheVet Premium Account, be a VA patient at a participating medical center or clinic and have had a primary care appointment at that facility in the last two years. Visit [https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/keeping-up-with-all-your-va-appointments](https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/keeping-up-with-all-your-va-appointments) or talk to your care team to learn more.

**Resources**

- Go to the My HealtheVet home page, [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov) and select **About** to access user guides, FAQs, and more to help you learn about My HealtheVet features.
- Access videos to help you learn more about My HealtheVet: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL3AQ_JVoBEyw4-GQg4Ch-UaL5m5yNNLhV](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL3AQ_JVoBEyw4-GQg4Ch-UaL5m5yNNLhV).
VA Telehealth Services

Through VA Telehealth Services, you can access VA care at a time and place that is most convenient for you.

Different Telehealth Services are available at different VA medical centers and clinics. For more information about what services are available near you, talk to your health care team or contact your VA medical center. You can find your nearest medical center by visiting: https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp.

VA uses several telehealth technologies to help you get the best possible care no matter where you are. Here are some examples:

**Real-Time Telehealth** lets you videoconference with your VA care teams from any computer, smartphone, or other device with an internet connection from wherever is convenient for you—including your home. Available through VA’s new VA Video Connect technology, Real-Time Telehealth helps save you the time, money, and hassle it would take to go to a medical center in person for routine visits, especially if you live far away.

**Store-and-Forward Telehealth and Home Telehealth** bring specialized care to you in your own home. This technology lets you share information with your care team and can help them monitor chronic conditions over time. It also helps them capture and share images, sounds, or data with other specialists for help in diagnosis and delivery of care. This kind of VA Telehealth may be particularly useful if you have physical limitations that make travel to a medical center difficult.
**Telehealth Hubs** let you videoconference with a specialty provider while at your local clinic. This gives you greater access to VA specialty services, including mental health support.

To learn more about VA Telehealth Services, visit www.telehealth.va.gov or watch this Introduction to VA Telehealth Services: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N5oe5pB7V2g.

Watch this video about VA Video Connect for more information about how it is helpful for Veterans: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2HZPs-BFBtw.

View this video to learn more about VA TeleMental Health services and the work that the Office of Connected Care does: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6XRS8U3gJM&t.

**Reference**

www.telehealth.va.gov
Veterans Health Information Exchange (VHIE)

The Veterans Health Information Exchange (VHIE) program, formerly known as VLER Health, is sharing your health information between your VA and participating community care providers to improve the quality and coordination of your care. VHIE’s instant exchange of information can dramatically improve patient safety, especially during emergencies, and overall improve coordination and continuity of care for Veterans who seek care in the community.

What type of information is shared?

By participating in VHIE, VA and participating community care providers can securely access and view your health information, including, but not limited to:

- A list of health problems
- Allergies
- Medications
- Vital Signs
- Immunizations
- Chemistry and Hematology reports
- Discharge summaries
- Medical history
- Records of physicals
- Procedure results (e.g., X-ray reports)
- Progress notes

Participating Community Partners

The network of participating community partners is continuously expanding. With nearly 200 major healthcare systems from across the nation participating, you can
benefit from VHIE not only locally, but also in the event of a medical emergency when traveling.

Participating health organizations in western Colorado and the broader Rocky Mountain region include, but are not limited to, these community partners:

- Centura Health, CO;
- Colorado Regional Health Information Exchange (CORHIO);
- Denver Health;
- SCL Health/St. Mary’s Hospital (Grand Junction, CO; MT; KS);
- University of Colorado Health;
- University of Utah Health; and
- Utah Health Information Network (includes Moab Regional Hospital and Utah Navajo Health System).

Please check the VHIE website (listed below) for a complete listing of all current participating community partners.

Questions

If you have questions or decide not to share your health information with community partners, please contact the VHIE Coordinator at (970) 263-2800 ext. 2124.

Reference

https://www.va.gov/vler/
VA Mobile

VA Mobile provides mobile health apps for Veterans to help them be more active participants in their health care and lead healthier lives.

Many of VA’s apps are self-tracking, meaning they do not transmit data back to VA. These apps can help you manage chronic conditions or learn about and manage symptoms of mental health issues. Other apps connect to VA systems. If you are a VA patient, you can use these apps to more easily access your health data or connect with your care team.

Most apps that connect to VA’s health record are web apps, which means they can be accessed from any computer or mobile device with an internet connection. For your security, they store no information on your device. To access these apps, you need a DS Logon Premium (Level 2) Account. Learn more at https://mobile.va.gov/login-information

Visit the VA App Store to explore, learn about, and access the apps available for Veterans: https://mobile.va.gov/appstore/veterans. Come back often to check out the latest apps!

Learn more about VA Mobile’s work at www.mobile.va.gov or watch the Connected Care 2017 video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6XRS8U3gJM&t.

Apps Currently Available for Veterans (as of December 2017)

- ACT Coach
- Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry
- Anger and Irritability Management Skills (AIMS)
- Ask a Pharmacist
- CBT-i Coach
- Concussion Coach
• CPT-Coach
• DS Logon Education
• Mindfulness Coach
• Mood Coach
• MOVE! Coach
• Moving Forward
• My VA Health
• Parenting2Go
• PE Coach
• PTSD Coach
• PTSD Family Coach
• REVAMP App for Veterans
• Rx Refill
• STAIR Coach
• Stay Quit Coach
• VA Online Scheduling
• VA Pressure Ulcer Resource
• VA Video Connect
• VetChange

Reference
https://mobile.va.gov
Emergency Care

What is emergency care?

A medical emergency is when you have an injury or illness that is so severe that you could become gravely ill or even die without immediate treatment.

**Emergency Department (ED) –** A unit in a VA medical facility that provides more acute care needs such as resuscitative therapy and stabilization for life threatening situations. It is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Urgent Care Center (UCC) –** Provides acute medical care for patients in need of immediate attention for minor injuries. A UCC is generally not open 24/7 and does not typically accept ambulances.

In VA Facilities

If your VA facility has an emergency department and you live nearby, you should go there for emergency care. The VA Western Colorado Health Care System has an Emergency Department which is open 24/7.

In non-VA Facilities

When it is not possible for you to go to a VA medical center, you should go to the nearest hospital that has an emergency department or to an urgent care center. If you are in an ambulance, the paramedics will usually take you to the closest emergency department.

How do I know if what is wrong with me is an emergency?

Use your best judgment. If you think you have potential for loss of limb, life, or eyesight, call 911, or go to the nearest emergency department in your area.
Do I need to call the VA before I obtain emergency care elsewhere?

No. Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department or urgent care center. If you are admitted, a family member, a friend, or a hospital staffer should contact the nearest VA medical center as soon as possible to provide information about your emergency department, urgent care visit, or admission to the outside hospital.

If the doctor wants to admit me to the hospital, must I obtain approval from the VA?

- **NO**, however the VA must be notified that the outside hospital or community provider is going to admit you.
- You, a friend, a family member, or someone from the non-VA hospital must call the closest VA medical center and speak to the patient transfer or patient administration representative. This must be done within 72 hours of your arrival at the emergency department or urgent care center. If a VA bed is available and if you can be safely transferred, you must be moved. If you refuse to be transferred, the VA is not obligated to pay for any further care associated with the hospital admission.

Other Insurance and Coverage

Please note if you have other insurance you may receive bills for co-payments, co-insurance, co-deductibles that the VA is not responsible for.

Will VA pay for emergency care received outside the United States?

Yes, but this coverage is very different. VA will only pay for emergency care outside the United States if your emergency is related to a service-connected condition. Contact the VA Health Administration Center at (877) 345-8179. You can find more information on the Foreign Medical Program at [www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/programs/veterans/fmp/index.asp](http://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/programs/veterans/fmp/index.asp)
Will VA pay for emergency care if I am in jail?

No. Usually the jail is responsible for providing medical care.

How long do I have to file a claim for reimbursement for emergency medical care?

Emergency claims should be filed within 90 days from the date of service. Claims should be submitted to:

NAO
P.O. Box 1004
Fort Harrison, Montana 59636
888-795-0773

If I am admitted to the hospital as a result of an emergency, what will VA pay?

This depends on your VA eligibility status and other factors such as service connection or other insurance.

Where can I get more information?

You can get more answers to your questions on the Veterans Health Administration website:
www.va.gov/healthbenefits/access/emergency_care.asp.

You may also contact a patient benefits counselor at your VA medical center for details about your situation.

During normal business hours contact the Transfer Coordinator:
970-263-2800 x2517

After hours contact the Nurse Triage Line:
970-263-2828
Co-Managed Care/Dual Care

We encourage you to receive all your medical care through the VA and have a single VA primary care provider and team who coordinate all aspects of your care. However, we are willing to work with your private health care providers to provide and coordinate your health care. We call this Co-managed Care or Dual Care. It means that your VA Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) and private health care providers will work together to provide safe, appropriate, and ethical medical care.

VA Policy

If you are seeking care, medications, or supplies from VA, you must enroll in VA health care and have a primary care provider who manages your care, even if some of your care is provided in the community.

Specialty services will be provided according to the local facility or Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN) policy once you are enrolled in primary care.

VA Provider Responsibilities

If your private provider writes a prescription for a medicine that is not on the VA list of approved medicines, your VA provider may offer you another medicine that is very similar, safe, and effective for your condition. If you choose, you may want to talk to your private provider before changing to the VA medicine.

Some medicines need special blood tests. Your VA provider will not write prescriptions for any high-risk medicines unless you agree to have the tests done by the VA. If you live far away or have difficulty traveling, you have the option of providing the written results from your private doctor’s blood tests to your VA provider.
If you request a highly specialized medication, you must be seen by a VA provider competent in that specialty, or the prescribing provider must communicate directly with a VA provider competent in that specialty, either verbally or in writing.

VA providers are under no obligation to follow a treatment or medication plan recommended by community physicians if they disagree with that plan or if that plan conflicts with national or local policies related to prescription of medications. VA providers will explain to you their reasons for changing or refusing a treatment or medication plan.

If you receive controlled substances on an ongoing basis, close monitoring is required by one designated provider. Dual care is avoided unless your community provider and VA provider both agree that this is in your best interest.

**Patient Responsibilities**

Your PACT will work with you to coordinate your care when you have non-VA providers. You need to tell both your VA provider and your private provider that you want to have your care coordinated.

You need to give your VA provider the name, address, and telephone number of all your private providers. You should also give your private providers the same information about your VA provider.

You must have all necessary records and documents from your private provider sent to the VA. If you would like information from your VA medical record sent to your private provider, you may contact the Release of Information office and sign a release form to have that done.

For your safety, let your VA provider know about all medicines you’re taking, including prescriptions written by your private provider, over-the-counter
medicines, vitamins, supplements, and herbals. You will also want to tell your
private provider about any medicines prescribed by your VA provider.

You need to tell your VA provider about any changes in your health, or changes
in treatment or medicines made by your private provider. You will also want to
tell your private provider about any changes made by your VA provider.

You must pay any required VA co-payments.

Please feel free to talk further with your VA primary care provider about co-
managed/dual care health benefits.
Care in the Community

*Note: For the latest information about VA Community Care Programs, go to: https://www.va.gov/communitycare/

What is Veterans Choice Program (VCP)?
- VCP was established on August 7, 2014 to improve access to care.
- VCP is managed by a Third-Party Administrator (TPA).
- VCP offers Veterans care in their community based on certain criteria and guidelines.

Do you qualify for VCP?

The VCP legislation ends June 6, 2019. The Mission Act will be implemented after the VCP ends.

- The local VA medical center cannot schedule an appointment for your care within 30 days.
- A VA provider says care is urgent in less than 30 days and VA cannot schedule the appointment.
- You live more than 40 miles from the closest VA medical center.
- You live 40 miles or less from the closest VA medical center and have to travel by air, boat, or ferry to the VA medical center.
- You face major difficulties (excessive burden) in traveling to the closest VA medical center.
- You live in a state without a VA medical center that provides hospital care and emergency services.
- You require difficult surgical care and reside more than 20 miles from the VA.

If you have questions regarding eligibility for the Veterans Choice Program, please call 1-866-606-8198
How do I set up an appointment?

- All care in the community is required to be initiated and authorized by the VA. Talk to your Primary Care provider/PACT Team about what is available to you, and if care in the community is the right option for your care needs.
- Use the online tool to see what doctors are in your area, www.va.gov/opa/apps/locator/.
- Ask for your preferred doctor that you found using the Veterans Choice Locator tool.
- Tell VA if there is a provider you would like to see that is not listed so they can contact that provider to become part of the VCP network.

How do I pay for services?

- VA is the primary payer and will provide the community provider with the authorization for payment, therefore you should NOT receive a bill from the community provider.
- You will have the same copayment under community care as your current non-service-connected care, and the VA will bill you if appropriate after the appointment.

What if I have private insurance?

- Veterans who use VCP are required to provide other health insurance to VA.
- Having private insurance does not change your ability to use the VCP.
- Your other health insurance is considered if you receive non-service-connected care through VCP.

Will VCP impact my existing VA health care or any other VA benefit?

No, VCP does not impact your existing VA health care or any other VA benefit.
Can I just take my Veterans Choice Program Card to any provider in my community and have them work with VA for payment?

- No. These cards are not meant for a Veteran to go wherever they want for health care and this is not a fee-basis card for emergency treatment. If you are having an emergency please call 911.
- You must call your local VA provider and get pre-approved for care before using the Veterans Choice Program.

How do I get medication or fill a prescription written by a VA community care provider?

- Non-urgent prescriptions must be filled following normal procedures at a VA pharmacy.
- More information on prescriptions can be found at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/access/prescriptions.asp.
- You may have urgent prescriptions filled by a community pharmacy for up to a 14-day supply on a one-time basis. This cost will be reimbursed by VA.
- Reimbursement is limited to a 14-day supply of urgent medication.
- The prescription must be from services authorized under VCP.

How to submit a prescription to VA for reimbursement and what is the reimbursement amount?

- Submit the receipt, prescription information, copy of the VCP authorization to the local VA medical center.
- Urgent prescriptions for service-connected disability will be reimbursed for the full amount paid.
- Veterans with no other health insurance will be reimbursed for the full amount paid.
• The community pharmacy will file the claim with the Veteran’s other health insurance first for Veterans with a non-service-connected disability.

**Why would a family member or representative need to contact the VCP on behalf of a Veteran?**

Reasons a family member may need to contact the Veterans Choice Program on behalf of a Veteran may include:

• Veteran is hospitalized,
• Veteran has a difficult time making calls independently,
• Veteran’s care is complex and requires assistance.

The Third Party Administrator (TPA) may require an “auth to disclose” form.


and return to the address on the form for a family member or representative to call on their behalf.

**Why would you need to file a grievance or complaint?**

A grievance can be filed with the TPA for reasons such as:

• The quality of care given by a provider
• The attitude or behavior of providers and their staff
• Incorrect or not enough information provided by VA about the Veterans Choice Program
• Problems in processing authorizations
• Feeling unsafe at a facility or provider’s office
• Privacy concerns

**Who do I contact in the event of an Emergency or what role does the TPA have regarding Urgent Care?**
• The VCP (TPA) does not manage Emergency authorizations since all care going through the VCP needs to be pre-approved by the VA.
• The VA must receive notification of an Emergency Room (ER) visit preferably within 72 hours of the visit, or prior to.

To notify the VA of an ER visit, the veteran or representative need to call the VA Office of Community Care’s Network Authorization Office at 888-795-0773.
Your Medicines

How do VA pharmacists help Veterans?

Pharmacists are medication experts that work closely with your health care provider to ensure your medications are appropriate and working correctly. For more information on their specific duties, refer to VA’s mobile application “Ask a Pharmacist”

https://mobile.va.gov/app/ask-a-pharmacist

What are pharmacists’ responsibilities?

Pharmacists provide education about prescribed medications and ensure safe use for individual Veterans. The pharmacist will:

- Check for allergies
- Make sure new medicine can be taken with your other medications
  - Record medications you get from outside the VA, including over the counter items such as antacids, laxatives, herbals, and vitamins.
- Ensure medication dose is appropriate
- Make sure the prescription label has the correct directions on how to take the drug
- Look at medical information to make sure the drug is prescribed for the right reasons
- Verify the medication is on the VA National Formulary (VANF) or has received approval otherwise
- Contact the physician to double check any concerns
- Verify that the prescription is filled with the correct drug and strength.
What medications can I get from the VA?

Veterans Affairs National Formulary (VANF) is a listing of products (e.g., drugs and drug related supplies) that must be available for prescription at all VA medical facilities, and cannot be made non-formulary by a VISN or individual VA medical facility. If your current medication is not on the VANF, a medically similar alternative may be prescribed by the VHA provider if you do not meet requirements for dispensing a non-formulary medication. Under certain situations a drug that is not listed on the formulary may be prescribed. Your VHA provider would need to request this medication by completing a non-formulary request. Specialists review the request and determine approval. Both you and your provider are informed if this request for non-formulary medication is approved or denied.

VA National Formulary – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

VA National Formulary – Search Tool
www.pbm.va.gov/apps/VANationalFormulary/

Note: Unlike Department of Defense (DoD), VA medications are listed by generic name (and VA drug class) because several brand names may exist or become available in the future for the same generic drug (i.e. ibuprofen instead of Motrin). The use of the generic name as the standard for listing agents allows VISNs and facilities to carry the product with the best value for the generic agent. In some cases the brand name drug is included in parentheses when it is important to use the brand product only, or as an example for complicated generic name combinations.
Can VA fill any prescription?

Veterans enrolled in the VA Health Care System can obtain medications and medical supplies, prescribed by authorized providers in conjunction with VA medical care. VA health care providers are under no obligation to prescribe a medication recommended by a non-VA provider for dispensing by a VA pharmacy. By law, VA pharmacies cannot fill prescriptions that are written by a private physician with no connection to VA. In order to fill outside prescriptions at the VA, your primary care physician would need to rewrite the prescription.

Veterans can fill VA prescriptions at commercial pharmacies. In this situation, you are responsible for the full cost of the prescription; VHA is not responsible for the cost of prescriptions filled from non-VA pharmacies.

Don’t forget to tell your VA provider or pharmacist about any medications you get filled at a pharmacy other than the VA, any other medicine (like antacids, laxatives, pain medicine), herbal supplements or vitamins you purchase on your own, or prescriptions from non-VA providers.

Pharmacy copayments

VA pharmacies use a tiered copayment system to determine Veterans’ costs for each medication.

Medication copayments apply to you if:

1. You are a Veteran receiving outpatient treatment for a non-service connected condition and your annual income exceeds the applicable National Income Threshold (found at www.va.gov/healthbenefits). This threshold changes on an annual basis. For the current threshold amount, contact the Enrollment Coordinator at your nearest VA health care facility.
2. You are a Veteran with a service-connected condition rated less than 50 percent disabled but are receiving outpatient treatment for a non-service-connected condition and your annual income exceeds the specified threshold.

Additional information such as exemptions from medication copayments is also available at:


**How do I request refills of my prescriptions?**

To prevent waste and reduce the risk that unneeded medications could fall into the wrong hands, **VA does not automatically refill medications**. In order to receive a medication refill authorized by your VA prescriber, you must actively request a refill using any one of the methods described below. To allow sufficient time for your refill to be processed and mailed to your home, it is critical that you request your refill at least 10 days before you will run out of your medication. You may request your refill well in advance of the date you will run out of your medication, but the VA will not begin to process it until 10 days before you are scheduled to run out.

There are several ways Veterans can request VA prescription refills:

- **By phone**
- **By mail**
- **Online via My HealtheVet, Vets.gov, or Rx Refill mobile app**

**By phone:** Most VA pharmacies have automated telephone refill lines. The phone number of your local VA pharmacy can be found on your prescription
label. To order refills by phone, you will need the prescription number (shown as RX # on the prescription label) and your Social Security Number.

Call: 970-263-2800, option #1

**By mail:** VA pharmacy provides a refill request form with each prescription filled. To refill by mail, please complete the request form and mail it to your VA pharmacy at the address listed on the form.

**Online:** You can use My Health<e>Vet, Vets.gov, or the VA Rx Refill mobile application to request prescription refills online. These tools require you to have a personal MyHealth<e>Vet advance or premium account. The VA Rx Refill mobile app requires a DS Logon.

An advantage of refilling your prescriptions online is that you can view your prescription history and track the delivery status of your package. Prescriptions that require special handling (such as refrigeration) are mailed from your local medical center and cannot be tracked on MyHealth<e>Vet at this time.

**NOTE:** Some of your prescriptions may not be refillable by VA pharmacy. Examples of prescriptions the pharmacy CANNOT refill are:

- Prescriptions from VA providers that you fill or obtain outside the VA,
- Some controlled substances such as certain pain medications, which cannot be refilled,
- Short term antibiotics

Contact your VA health care team if you have any questions/concerns or need more of your medications.

**Please do not wait until you are out or almost out of medicine to order your refills.**
Take your medications as your provider told you to. Keep your medication list up to date and share it with your health care team.

**If you would like to cancel a prescription you no longer use,** please contact your health care team. The VA medical center phone number is the same as the pharmacy phone number on your prescription label.

When a prescription no longer has refills and you need to remain on the medication, a renewal of the prescription is needed. You should contact your VHA provider as soon as possible to have a new prescription ordered. The best way to do this is to check the number of refills remaining in each medication before a visit with your provider. For more information, go to [www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20180423-prescription-refill-options-for-veterans](http://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20180423-prescription-refill-options-for-veterans)

**Delivery time for prescriptions from VA Mail Order Pharmacies**

Prescriptions are electronically ordered by VA providers and can be either picked up at the VHA pharmacy or mailed to your home. Generally, prescriptions that are mailed do not come from the local VHA pharmacy but rather from a Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy (CMOP). Mailed prescriptions usually take an average of 60 hours from filling to delivery.
Figure 1. Life of a VA Mail Order Prescription

Additional information

- Talk to a VA pharmacist
- Talk to your VA provider
- Log on to the Ask A Pharmacist VA Mobile App at https://mobile.va.gov/app/ask-a-pharmacist
- Log on to the Rx Refill VA Mobile App at https://mobile.va.gov/app/rx-refill
- Log on to the My HealtheVet website at www.myhealth.va.gov
- Log on to the National Library of Medicine website at www.medlineplus.gov
Crisis Prevention and Management

Many situations can trigger an emotional or mental health crisis—from troubles in personal relationships to the loss of a job. For Veterans, experiences from military service can make these crises worse.

When emotional issues reach a crisis point, help is available. You can contact behavioral health providers at your local VA by calling 970-263-2824 or simply visiting your local Emergency Department. Also know that any time you need support, the Veterans Crisis Line is available 24/7/365 with trained responders who are there for you. Call 1-800-273-8255 and press 1.

Sometimes a crisis may involve thoughts of suicide. Learn to recognize these warning signs:

- Hopelessness, feeling like there’s no way out
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, or mood swings
- Feeling like there is no reason to live
- Rage or anger
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- Increasing alcohol or drug abuse
- Withdrawing from family and friends

Get help immediately if you are:

- Thinking about hurting or killing yourself
- Looking for ways to kill yourself
- Talking about death, dying, or suicide
- Acting self-destructively, including using drugs, driving recklessly, carrying a weapon, etc.
If you are a Veteran in crisis, or know a Veteran showing any of the above warning signs, you can get free, confidential support from an experienced, caring VA responder 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year:

- Call 1-800-273-8255 and press 1
- Visit the Veterans Crisis Line website at www.veteranscrisisline.net and click on the Confidential Veterans Chat button
- Send a text message to 838255

**Resources**

**VA Suicide Prevention Coordinators**
- Each VA Medical Center has a suicide prevention coordinator to ensure Veterans receive needed counseling and services.
- Resource locator - www.veteranscrisisline.net

**Mental Health**
- VHA provides specialty inpatient and outpatient mental health services at its medical centers and community-based outpatient clinics. All mental health care provided by VHA supports recovery, striving to enable a person with mental health problems to live a meaningful life in the community and achieve his or her full potential.
- For more information on VA Mental Health Services visit www.mentalhealth.va.gov

**Make the Connection**
- MakeTheConnection.net is a one-stop resource where Veterans and their families and friends can privately explore information about physical and mental health symptoms, challenging life events, and mental health conditions. They can also learn about available resources and support.
- Visit www.MakeTheConnection.net to learn more.
Whole Health System of Care

Traditionally, health care providers have focused on *what’s the matter with patients*, zeroing in on their diseases and ailments. At VA, we are working to shift this focus by instead asking *what matters most* to Veterans.

The result is a *whole health approach*, a radical redesign of health care that empowers and equips you to take charge of your health and well-being. Guided by a personalized health plan, VA’s Whole Health System considers the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and environmental elements that work together to provide the best quality of life for you.

We want to start by getting to know you, putting you—rather than the disease—at the center of your health and your health care. This means your health team will get to know you as a person before working with you to develop a personalized health plan based on your values, needs, and goals.

What matters most to you in your life? When you think about these priorities, ask yourself if you are doing everything you can to achieve these goals. The human body and mind have tremendous healing abilities that we can work together to strengthen. Your health team wants to support you in this journey. As you reconnect with what matters most in your life and learn new ways to live life to the fullest, VA health teams will be there each step of the way. THIS is the VA of the future.

The Pathway welcomes you into the Whole Health System. This component empowers you to explore your mission, aspiration, and purpose and to begin your overall personal health plan. We give you the chance to partner with experienced and knowledgeable peers, including Peer Support Specialists, Veteran volunteers, and Whole Health Partners.

Well-being Programs teach new skills to help you care for yourself. They also support your personal health plan with healthy living and complementary and integrative health (CIH) approaches such as mindfulness, yoga, tai chi, and health coaching.

Whole Health Clinical Care is provided by clinicians who use a whole health approach grounded in a healing relationship. It incorporates CIH approaches and self-care and self-management strategies based on your personal health plan. You can get this care from a VA provider or in the community.

For more information:

- Request a Whole Health consult
- Attend Introduction to Whole Health: Whole Health & Library Center
  Location: Building 1, Floor 2 Phone: 970-263-5014
  Whole Health Online Library Veteran-facing handouts
    http://projects.hsl.wisc.edu/SERVICE/veteran-materials/index.html

Suggested videos for Veterans:
Pathway to Whole Health (6 mins 32 secs)
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nkO-3PA29c&feature=youtu.be
An Overview of the Patient Centered Approach (6 mins)
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Nf4yYoqNe0&feature=youtu.be
Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

The National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP) is a field-based VHA national program office that helps Veterans stay well and well-informed. NCP applies VA’s whole health approach through health education, health promotion and disease prevention.

NCP has five main program areas:

**Health Promotion Disease Prevention (HPDP)**

HPDP gives you information and tools to help you stay healthy, featuring nine **Healthy Living Messages** that can help you live a healthy life:

- Be Involved in Your Health Care
- Eat Wisely
- Be Physically Active
- Strive for a Healthy Weight
- Limit Alcohol
- Get Recommended Screening Tests & Immunizations
- Manage Stress
- Be Safe
- Be Tobacco Free

For more information on these Healthy Living Messages, go to: www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/index.asp.

**MOVE!® Weight Management Program for Veterans**

The MOVE! Program has helped close to 800,000 Veterans better manage their weight and reduce their risk of chronic disease.
There are several ways you can participate in MOVE!. Check with your local MOVE! Coordinator about what options are available for you: 970-263-2847

- **MOVE! Group Sessions or MOVE! Individual Sessions**—available at every VA facility to Veterans receiving care, these sessions are led by a local MOVE! clinician; videoconferencing options are also available
- **MOVE! Telephone Lifestyle Coaching**—for Veterans who prefer one-on-one contact via telephone with their own weight management coach
- **TeleMOVE!**—includes daily in-home messaging for Veterans who may benefit from frequent reminders to stay on track
- **MOVE! Coach**—a mobile app for Veterans who prefer to manage their weight on their own

www.move.va.gov/

**Veterans Health Education and Information (VHEI)**

VHEI supports Veteran-centered health education programs, services, and resources for Veterans, family members, and caregivers across VHA facilities. This helps your care team work with you and share the latest health information.

To help you manage your own health care, VHEI oversees the popular Veterans Health Library. The Library is an “anytime, everywhere” online resource of health information, helping you make healthy lifestyle choices and learn about your conditions and their treatment. It is available 24/7 via computer, tablet, or mobile device.

www.veteranshealthlibrary.org
Clinical Preventive Services (CPS)

How does your VHA health care team get up-to-date guidance about things to protect you against disease? One way is through NCP’s Clinical Preventive Services. The CPS team develops recommendations for screening tests, immunizations, health behavior counseling, and preventive medicines and tools, helping your care team deliver these services to you. This includes offering you things like the right vaccines and screening tests at the right time!

Infection: Don’t Pass It On (IDPIO) Campaign

The IDPIO Campaign leads VHA’s education and communication efforts to teach Veterans and VHA employees the best ways to keep from catching and spreading infections and diseases, including seasonal flu.

References

NCP Internet page: www.prevention.va.gov/
Healthy Living

In VA, we are committed to helping you stay well and well-informed. Check out these nine Healthy Living Messages for information you can use to stay healthy, be empowered and equipped to take charge of your health and well-being, and live your life to the fullest. To learn more, talk with your VA health care team, check out the Healthy Living Messages linked below, or visit www.prevention.va.gov. We’ll be happy to help you.

Be Involved in Your Health Care

You are the center of your health care team. To get the most out of your next visit with your team, play an active role in your care. Plan ahead with questions you want to ask and things you want to discuss. Be sure to leave the visit with information about your care.

www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Be_Involved_in_Your_Health_Care.asp

Eat Wisely

Eating wisely helps prevent chronic diseases like obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, and Type 2 diabetes. A healthy diet can actually help prevent disease. To improve and maintain your health, follow a healthy eating pattern that is right for you.

www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Eat_Wisely.asp

Nutrition & Food Services: Location: Building 1, Floor 3; Phone: 970-263-2847

Be Physically Active

Being physically active is an important step you can take to improve your health. Some physical activity is better than none, and any amount of physical activity can improve your health and fitness.

http://www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Be_Physically_Active.asp
**Strive for a Healthy Weight**

Maintaining a healthy weight can help you feel better and have more energy. It can also help prevent and control many chronic diseases and conditions. Every VA medical facility has a dedicated MOVE!® Program team that can help you manage your weight.

www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Strive_for_a_Healthy_Weight.asp

MOVE! Program: Location: Building 1, Floor 3; Phone: 970-263-2847

**Limit Alcohol**

If you choose to drink alcohol, drink in moderation. Women should drink no more than 1 drink per day (and not more than 7 drinks per week), and men should drink no more than 2 drinks per day (and not more than 14 drinks per week). Your VA health care team can help if you have questions about limiting alcohol. If you are concerned about your drinking, talk with them.

www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Limit_Alcohol.asp

Addiction Services: Location: Bldg. 35; Phone: 970-263-2824

**Get Recommended Screening Tests & Immunizations**

It is important to keep up with your screening tests and immunizations to prevent certain kinds of illness. The preventive services you need depend on your age, sex, health status, and family history—every person is different. Your VA health care team will recommend the screening tests and immunizations that are right for you.

www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Get_Recommended_Screening_Tests_and_Immunizations.asp

Primary Care: Location: Building 1, Floor 1; Phone: 970-263-2800 x 1100
Manage Stress

If you are having difficulty coping with the demands in your life, you are experiencing stress. Everyone has stress. While some challenge is healthy, too much stress creates problems in our lives. If you are overly stressed for too long, it can put your health at risk. There are many things you can do to better manage stress, and VA provides resources to help you.

www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Manage_Stress.asp

Mental Health Services: Location: Building 1, Floor 2; Phone: 970-263-2824

Be Safe

You can take steps to protect yourself and those you love from harm and injury. Common safety issues are sexually transmitted infections, falls, and self-harm.

www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Be_Safe.asp

Be Tobacco Free

Quitting tobacco is the single most important thing you can do to improve your health and protect your family’s health. If you quit smoking or using other forms of tobacco, you and your family will experience short-term and long-term health benefits. It’s never too late to quit—your health will improve at any age after quitting tobacco!

www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Be_Tobacco_Free.asp

Addiction Services: Location: Bldg. 35; Phone: 970-263-2824

Remember, for more information about any of these Healthy Living Messages, talk with your VA health care team or visit www.prevention.va.gov.
Eligibility and Benefits

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to informing Veterans about VA health care benefits and services, and publishes various publications to keep you up to date.

We encourage you to refer to these publications when you have questions about your eligibility for specific health care benefits. More help is available

- Eligibility and Enrollment: 970-263-2813
- Online at [www.va.gov/healthbenefits](http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits) and [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)
- By calling toll-free 1-877-222-VETS (8387) Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. ET

Veterans Health Benefits Handbook

When you enroll in the VA health care system, you will receive a personalized Veterans Health Benefits Handbook (VHBH). Your handbook will be tailored specifically to you, with a current, accurate description of your VA health care benefits and services. Safeguard it as you would any other sensitive personal document.

The VHBH includes

- Eligibility and health care benefits information
- Contact information for your local facility
- Information regarding copayment responsibilities
- Instructions on how to schedule appointments
- Guidelines for communicating treatment needs
- Patient rights information
- Guidance on how to obtain copies of medical records
Enrolled Veterans will receive a personalized handbook via U.S. mail; therefore, you are encouraged to ensure a current address is on file with VA. You may call VA toll-free at 1-877-222-VETS (8387) to update your address or to request a new handbook.

**Health Care Benefits Overview**

The Health Care Benefits Overview book provides information you need to understand VA’s health care system, including answers to frequently asked questions about eligibility and benefits. The publication is available for download from:

www.va.gov/healthbenefits/resources/epublications.asp.
Disability Compensation Benefits

What is VA disability compensation?

Disability compensation is a tax-free benefit paid to a Veteran for disabilities caused or made worse by injuries or diseases that happened while on active duty, active duty training, or inactive duty training. Disability compensation is also paid to certain Veterans disabled from VA health care.

Who is eligible?

You may be eligible for disability compensation if you have a service-related disability and were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

How much does VA pay?

The amount of basic benefit paid ranges from $136.74 to $2,973.86 per month (amount may change annually as determined by Congress), depending on how disabled you are. You may be paid additional amounts in certain instances, if

- You have very severe disabilities or loss of limb(s)
- You have a spouse, child(ren), or dependent parent(s)
- You have a seriously disabled spouse

How can I apply?

Use a paper form

Fill out VA Form 21-526, “Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension.” If you have any of the following materials, please attach them to your application

- Discharge or separation papers (DD214 or equivalent)
- Dependency records (marriage & children's birth certificates)
- Medical evidence (doctor & hospital reports)

--OR--
Apply online: www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/apply

Related benefits

Note: Entitlement may depend on level of disability

- Priority medical care
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Clothing allowance
- Grants for specially adapted housing
- Automobile grant and adaptive equipment
- Service-disabled Veterans insurance
- Federal employment preference
- State/local Veterans benefits
- Military exchange and commissary privileges

For more information

- Call VA toll-free at 1-800-827-1000, or visit VA’s website at www.va.gov.
- Compensation & Pension Exam Questions
  Building 1, Floor 3
  Phone: 970-263-2827
- For assistance filing a claim, contact:
  - The Colorado Department of Veterans Affairs: 303-284-6077
  - Moab/Utah Active Re-entry: 435-259-0245
Patient and Community Living Center
Resident Rights and Responsibilities

We are honored that you have selected us to provide your health care. We want to help you meet your whole health needs by providing personalized, patient-driven, compassionate, state-of-the-art care. We will make your visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible.

As part of our service to you, to other Veterans, and to the nation, we are committed to improving the quality of health care. We also train future health care professionals, conduct research, and support our country in times of national emergency.

In all these activities, our employees will respect and support your rights as a patient or resident of a community living center (CLC). Your rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. You will also receive this information in your preferred language. Please talk with your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights and responsibilities.

Nondiscrimination and Respect

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect as an individual. Consistent with Federal law, VA policy, and accreditation standards of The Joint Commission, you will not be subject to discrimination for any reason, including for reasons of age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.
- You will receive care in a safe environment free from excess noise, and with sufficient light to ensure comfort and safety.
- You have a right to have access to the outdoors.
• We will seek to honor your cultural and personal values, beliefs, and preferences. We ask that you identify any cultural, religious, or spiritual beliefs or practices that influence your care.
• You or someone you choose has the right to keep and spend your money. You have the right to receive an accounting of any funds that VA is holding for you.
• We will respect your personal freedoms in the care and treatment we provide you. This includes trying to accommodate your normal sleep and wake cycles, food likes and dislikes, and other personal preferences.
• In the Community Living Center, you have the right to be free from chemical and physical restraints. In the inpatient acute care setting, and only in rare cases, the use of chemical and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.
• In the Community Living Center, you may keep personal items and are expected to wear your own clothes. As an inpatient, you may wear your own clothes depending on your medical condition.
• You have the right to keep and use personal items as long as they are safe and legal.
• You have the right to social interaction and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center or in the Community Living Center.
• You have the right to communicate freely and privately. You will have access to public telephones and VA will assist you in sending and receiving mail. You may participate in civic rights, such as voting and free speech.
• When a loved one is involved in support and care of a VA patient or CLC resident, VA considers a patient or CLC resident's family to include anyone related to the patient or CLC resident in any way (for example,
biologically or legally) and anyone whom the patient or CLC resident considers to be family. If you are an inpatient, any persons you choose can be with you to support you during your stay. Medical staff may restrict visitors for inpatients if medical or safety concerns require it. You will be told promptly about any visitor restriction and the reason for it.

- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients or CLC residents and staff, you and your visitors are expected to avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

**Health Information and Privacy**

- Your privacy will be protected.
- You will be given information about the health benefits you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.
- You will receive information about the costs of your care (for example, co-payments), if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying your portion of any costs associated with your care.
- Your health record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your authorization unless permitted by law (an example of this is State public health reporting). You have the right to have access to or request a copy of your own health records.
- Please respect the privacy of other patients and CLC residents and do not reveal their health information that you may overhear or otherwise become aware of.

**Partnering in Care**

- You have a right to express your preferences concerning future medical care in an advance directive, including designating a health care agent to make health care decisions on your behalf when you can no longer do so.
• You, and any person(s) you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment in your preferred language. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse any treatment. You will be told what is likely to happen to you if you refuse a treatment. Refusing a treatment will not affect your rights to future care but you take responsibility for the impact this decision may have on your health.

• Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over-the-counter and herbals), and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you do not understand something about your care. This will help us provide you the best care possible.

• You will be given, in writing, the name and title of the provider in charge of your care. You have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You also have the right to know the names and titles of those who provide you care. This includes students and other trainees. Providers will properly introduce themselves when they take part in your care.

• You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient or CLC resident. This includes your participation in decision making and care at the end of life.

• If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan, you have a responsibility to tell your provider or treatment team.

• You will be informed of all outcomes of your care, including any possible injuries associated with your care. You will be informed about how to request compensation and other remedies for any serious injuries.

• You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.
As an inpatient or CLC resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.

You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.

You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. If you have ethical issues or concerns, you may speak with the Medical Center’s Ethics Consultation Service for help.

**Concerns or Complaints**

- You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. Any privacy complaints will be addressed by the facility Privacy Officer. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process in your preferred language. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.
- If you believe that you or your family member has been neglected, abused or exploited by VA staff, please report this promptly to the treatment team or patient advocate. You will receive help immediately.
- If you believe the organization has failed to address or satisfy your concerns about health care quality and safety, you may contact the Joint Commission’s Office of Quality Monitoring at 1-800-994-6610. If you believe that the organization has failed to address your concerns about suspected criminal activities, fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement, you may contact the VA Office of the Inspector General at 1-800-488-8244 or email vaoighotline@va.gov.

**Additional Rights and Responsibilities of CLC Residents**

Because the CLC serves as your home for short or long-stay services, you have the following additional rights and responsibilities as a CLC resident:
• Staff will knock on your bedroom door prior to entry.
• You have the right to receive care from the same staff member every day to the extent that consistent assignment is possible.
• You may have visitors at any time of the day or night provided visitors are respectful of you, your need for privacy and the privacy of others. You may refuse visitors at any time.
• You have a right to conjugal visits and you have a right to privacy during those visits.
• Your care will be delivered in a setting that resembles home. Therefore, you will be invited to have your meals in a designated dining area and you will have access to those activities that contribute to meaningful use of time.
• In preparation for being discharged to your own home, you and or your care giver may be invited to participate in activities that prepare you to go home such as self-administration of medications and treatments.
• You and your care givers have a right to attend treatment planning meetings and participate in household or resident council.
Veterans Patient Experience

What is Veterans Patient Experience (VA PX)?
Veterans and their families are at the center of everything we do at VA. Veterans Patient Experience initiatives provide medical center staff tools to improve the quality of each patient interaction by fostering a positive, cohesive experience. These initiatives address common feedback Veterans and caregivers have shared regarding their VA encounters. The goal of the Veterans Patient Experience team is to deliver an excellent patient experience to every Veteran, every time.

Here are some of the patient experience enhancements you may notice prior to or during your visit:

PX Initiatives

**WECARE Rounding**
Our Medical Center Leaders want to know what you think. They periodically make "rounds" so they can speak directly to patients about the care and services they received.

**Own the Moment**
This customer experience workshop encourages VA staff to connect with, understand, and help guide Veterans through the moments that matter on their VA journey.

**Standard Phone Greeting**
You deserve a friendly greeting and key information to let you know you have reached the right number when calling VA. Standardizing the way we answer phones meets both those objectives.

**Employee Badges**
Standardized VA staff badges feature large font names and other interesting information about our staff so you know a little more about who you is helping you.

**Red Coat Ambassadors**
These amazing volunteers welcome Veterans and their families at medical center entrances and direct them to their destination.

**Green Glove Initiative**
This program that encourages staff to help ensure their facility is clean and safe by picking up litter.

How can we do better?
These are just some of the Veterans Patient Experience initiatives in place. If you have a suggestion to improve VA services, please let us know. Your suggestion could become the next VA-wide Patient Experience initiative!

Revised January 2019

Veterans Affairs
The Patient Advocacy Program

If you or a family member have a concern or problem related to your care at a VA facility, we want you to know there is a safe and supportive place where you can get help. Patient advocacy services are available for all Veterans and their families who receive care at VA facilities and clinics. This program ensures that you and your family have someone to talk with about your concerns or issues.

We want you to get the best care possible to improve your health and well-being, and we want you to tell us about your experience—good or bad. If you have a compliment, suggestion, or concern regarding your care, first speak with your health care team. This team includes your provider, nurse, social worker, dietitian, pharmacist, chaplain, therapist, and other professionals who provide your medical care.

If you or a loved one believes your concerns are not being addressed by your care team, you may contact a VA Patient Advocate. A Patient Advocate is an employee whose job is to help resolve issues or concerns you may have about your health care. The Patient Advocate works on your behalf with management and other VA employees to help resolve your issues.

If you need help getting care or getting problems resolved, please contact the Patient Advocate.

Building 1, Floor One, Colorado Corridor
970-263-2826
Monday – Friday, 8:00am - 4:30pm
Ethics Consultation

What is an ethics consultation?

Ethics consultation is a service provided by specially trained VA staff. When there is uncertainty or conflict about the right thing to do regarding the health care of a Veteran or their loved one, ethics consultants work with patients, families, and staff to help them make the right decisions to resolve these concerns.

Ethics consultants will not investigate complaints or allegations of misconduct. These are managed through the Patient Advocate Office.

I’m just not sure… what is the right thing to do? Would an ethics consultation be helpful?

In health care, patients and families often face the difficult question of “what should be done?” The right choice for one patient may not be right for another. If you’re unsure, or if you can’t agree with your health care team or your loved ones about what’s best, you can ask for an ethics consultation.

When should I think about asking for an ethics consultation?

Here are some examples of why Veterans and families ask for, or the health care team might suggest, an ethics consultation:

- “I have to make a serious decision about a treatment that could affect how long I may live. After talking it over with my health care team, I am still not sure the team understands my point of view.”
- “My mother is too sick to make her own decisions. How do I decide what is best for her now?”
- “Our family is unsure and upset. We don’t agree about the right thing to do for our brother’s care. Is there a resource to help us work through this together?”
What happens in an ethics consultation?

Ethics consultants will not make a decision for you, but they will help you figure out what is best for your situation. They will also

- Ask about your concerns
- Gather information from all the people involved
- Determine if other experts are needed (for example, lawyers can be asked for legal opinions, medical specialists can be asked for medical opinions)
- Identify possible options
- Make recommendations to you and the other people involved
- Write a note in your health record if the ethics consultation relates to your medical care
- Ask if you will fill out a voluntary feedback form that helps the ethics consultation team know about your overall experience (your health care will not be affected by whether you fill out this form).

Who can request an ethics consultation?

Anyone can ask for an ethics consultation.

What does an ethics consultation cost?

Ethics consultations are free. You will not be billed for an ethics consultation.

How do I request an ethics consultation?

To request an ethics consultation, contact the Ethics Consultation Service at your VA health care facility.

Ethics Consultation Coordinator:

Contact: 970-242-0731 x 2027; available Monday-Friday 8am-4pm
Advance Directives

As a VA patient, you have a say in the health care you receive. But what would happen if you were too ill to understand your treatment choices or to tell your doctor what treatment you want?

- Who would you want to make health care decisions for you?
- What type of treatments or procedures would you want?
- What treatments or procedures wouldn’t you want?

Questions like these may be hard to think about, but they’re important. That’s why VA wants you to know about a legal form you can complete. It’s called an “advance directive.”

What is an advance directive?

An advance directive is a legal form that helps your doctors and family members understand your wishes about medical and mental health care. It can help them decide about treatments if you are too ill to decide for yourself—for example, if you are unconscious or too weak to talk. *Your advance directive is used only when you are not able to make decisions yourself.*

There are two types of advance directives: a **durable power of attorney for health care** and a **living will**.

What is a durable power of attorney for health care?

This form lets you name the person you trust to make health care decisions for you if you can’t make them yourself—your “health care agent.” He or she will have the legal right to make health care decisions for you. You can choose any adult to be your agent. It’s best to choose someone you trust, who knows you well and who knows your values. You should make sure the person is willing to serve as your agent. If you don’t choose an agent, your doctor will choose...
someone to make decisions for you as required in VA policy, in the following order: legal guardian (if you have one), spouse, adult child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or a close friend. Your health care team, or a court, will make decisions for you in accordance with VA policy if none of the above is available. Ask your care team for more details on this process.

What is a living will?
A living will is a legal form that states what kinds of treatments you would or wouldn’t want if you become ill and can’t decide for yourself. It can help your health care agent and your doctor make decisions the way you want them to. Writing down what kind of treatment you would or wouldn’t want can help make it easier for those who are asked to make decisions for you. If you don’t have a living will, decisions will be made for you based on what is known about you in general and about your values. It is important to discuss your wishes with your loved ones, your doctors, and your health care team so they won’t have to wonder what you want and if they are doing the right thing.

Must my health care agent always follow my living will?
Most of the time, yes. Your health care agent should try to respect your wishes. But it can be hard to imagine all future health scenarios and say just what treatment you would want at that time. So sometimes your agent may have to interpret your wishes. In a VA advance directive, you can say if you want your agent to do just what your living will says. You can also say that it’s alright for your agent to make the decision he or she thinks is best for you at that time, even if it isn’t what you said you would want.

How do I complete an advance directive?
Fill out VA Form 10-0137, “VA Advance Directive: Durable Power of Attorney and Living Will.” Or you can use any valid state advance directive form. Talk to a health care professional at your local VA health care facility. This might be a social worker or your primary care doctor. Or talk to your spiritual advisor or
attorney. Your VA health care team can make your advance directive part of your medical record.

**Do I need to fill out a durable power of attorney and a living will?**

No. Even though the VA form contains both, you can choose whether to complete the durable power of attorney for health care section, the living will section, or both.

**Can I change my advance directive?**

Yes, you may change or cancel your advance directive at any time. In fact, you should review your advance directive regularly to make sure it’s up to date, especially if there is a change in your health. If you change it, be sure to tell your health care team and have them put it in your health record. Share your new directive with your family members and other loved ones.

**For more information**

Download VA Form 10-0137B, “What You Should Know About Advance Directives”:

Veteran Information Links

Caregiver Support: 855-260-3274
Health Benefits: 1-877-222-VETS (8387)
Homeless Services: 1-877-424-3838
Other VA Benefits: 1-800-827-1000
Office of Inspector General (OIG) Reporting Hotline: 1-800-488-8244
Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255 and press 1
Women Veterans Call Center: 1-855-VA Women (1-855-829-6636)

Caregiver Support Program
www.caregiver.va.gov/
For those who provide care to a Veteran, the Caregiver Support Program offers training, educational resources, and multiple tools to help you succeed.

Compensated Work Therapy
www.va.gov/health/cwt/
A clinical vocational rehabilitation program to match work-ready Veterans to competitive jobs and support them in those jobs.

Geriatrics & Extended Care
www.va.gov/geriatrics/
Geriatric and extended-care services for Veterans, including facility-based, home-based, and community-based settings.

eBenefits
www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage
A single sign-on, central access point for your clinical and benefits information.

ExploreVA
https://explore.va.gov/
Learn about all VA benefits for which you may be eligible.

Health Benefits
www.va.gov/healthbenefits/
Start here to determine VA health benefit eligibility and to apply for care.

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
www.prevention.va.gov/
Advocating for health promotion, disease prevention, and health education for our nation’s Veterans.
Homeless Services
www.va.gov/homeless/
A variety of resources, programs, and benefits to assist Veterans who are homeless.

Make the Connection
https://maketheconnection.net
Connects Veterans, their family members and friends, and other supporters with information, resources, and solutions to issues affecting their lives.

Mental Health
www.mentalhealth.va.gov/
Maintaining and improving the mental health and well-being of Veterans through excellence in health care, social services, education, and research.

MyHealthVet
www.myhealth.va.gov/
“Anywhere, anytime” web-based access to VA health care information and services.

National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
www.ptsd.va.gov/
VA’s center of excellence for research and education on the prevention, understanding, and treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder.

Readjustment Counseling (Vet Centers)
www.vetcenter.va.gov/
Offers services to Veterans and their families to aid in successful transition from military to civilian life.

Rural Health
www.ruralhealth.va.gov/
Improving access to and quality of care for Veterans living in rural areas.

Substance Abuse Programs
www.mentalhealth.va.gov/substanceabuse.asp
Treatments addressing problems related to substance use, from unhealthy use of alcohol to life-threatening addictions.

VA.gov
https://www.va.gov/
Another resource to explore VA benefits and services.

VA App Store
https://mobile.va.gov/appstore/veterans
These apps can help you better manage your care and stay in touch with your VA care team.

**VA Welcome Kit**
www.vets.gov/welcome-to-va/
This resource can help guide you to different benefits and services you might need depending on the point in your life.

**Veterans Crisis Line**
www.veteranscrisisline.net/
The Veterans Crisis Line (Dial 1-800-273-8255 and press 1, or chat online using the link above) is a toll-free, confidential phone support line that connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring VA responders.

**Whole Health for Life**
https://www.va.gov/patientcenteredcare/
Transforming VA’s health system from the traditional medical model, which focuses on treating specific issues, to a personalized, proactive, patient-driven model that promotes whole health for Veterans and their families.

**Women Veterans Health Care**
www.womenshealth.va.gov/
Ensuring women Veterans receive high-quality health care in a sensitive and safe environment at VA health facilities nationwide.