Keeping our Promises to Veterans with Disabilities

National Conference of State Legislatures
2017 Legislative Summit
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Other Than Honorable (OTH) Urgent Mental Health Initiative

Other Than Honorable Administrative Discharge:
• If not already determined by Veterans Benefits Administration to be ineligible for medical care, an OTH former service member, seeking mental health care in emergency circumstances for a condition the former service member asserts is related to military service qualifies for tentative eligibility under 38 C.F.R. 17.34.
• Follow-up care for their mental health emergency will be authorized within the VA system for an “episode of care” of up to 90 days.
• Billing is legislatively mandatory for former service members ultimately deemed ineligible for VA health care

Bad Conduct & Dishonorable Character of Discharge:
• Such individuals can be treated only in emergencies under VA Humanitarian Care Authority 38 U.S.C. § 1784.
• A former service member presenting under emergent circumstances will be evaluated and stabilized.
• Billing is legislatively mandatory for former service members statutorily barred and/or ultimately deemed ineligible for VA health care
Suicide Prevention

20 Veterans die by suicide each day
➢ 14 of whom are not in VA care
We need to enroll Veterans in VA health care
One of VA Secretary’s top goals: “Suicide Prevention: Getting to Zero”

National efforts:
➢ Veterans Crisis Line
➢ Patient Record Flag → High Risk for Suicide – reevaluated every 30 days

Outreach and Community Relations
Research
Suicide Prevention

Education and Training: employees and community agencies

SIGNS of suicidal thinking
ASK questions
VALIDATE the veteran’s experience
ENCOURAGE treatment

SAVE video  (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iypDBd6keY0)
Coordinated life-long services to Veterans and Active Duty Service Members with SCI in an integrated system:

- Hub and spoke model with other VAs,
- acute care,
- initial and ongoing rehabilitation,
- comprehensive specialty care,
- primary care,
- outpatient care,
- home care,
- virtual care (telehealth),
- respite care, and
- long term care
Veterans with Spinal Cord Injuries (SCI)

- Therapeutic recreation, including adaptive sports
- Vocational rehabilitation for job training and employment
- Driver’s training and evaluation
- Peer mentors

Medications, supplies, and equipment are provided life-long to meet individual needs
REGIONAL VA RESOURCES

5 Polytrauma Rehab Centers:
- Richmond
- Tampa
- San Antonio
- Palo Alto
- Minneapolis

10 Blind Rehab Centers:
- Chicago (Hines)
- Palo Alto
- West Haven
- American Lake, WA
- Waco
- Birmingham
- San Juan
- Tucson
- Augusta
- West Palm Beach

24 Spinal Cord Injury Centers:
- Albuquerque
- Augusta
- Boston
- Bronx
- Hudson Valley
- Cleveland
- Dallas
- Lyons/East Orange
- Hampton, VA
- Chicago (Hines)
- Houston
- Long Beach
- Miami
- Memphis
- Milwaukee
- Minneapolis
- Palo Alto
- Richmond
- San Antonio
- San Diego
- San Juan
- Seattle
- St. Louis
- Tampa
National VA Resources

Mass Veterans Epidemiology Research and Information Center (MAVERIC)
- Million Veteran Program (MVP) – national genomics project
- National repository built at JP - 550,000 Veterans now enrolled

Brain Bank
- Alzheimer’s Disease
- Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE)
- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)
- PTSD

National Center for PTSD
- Behavioral Science
- Women’s Health Science Divisions
Thank you

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