VA’s Assistance and Support Services for Family Caregivers

VA Voluntary Service National Advisory Committee
65th Annual Meeting
April 28, 2011
Caregivers of Veterans
Comprehensive Caregiver Support Services

• Allow Veterans to remain at home in the community
• Address specific needs of family caregivers with a menu of programs and services
• Promote Veteran & caregiver health and well-being
• Provide one location to obtain needed information
• Provide training & information on common conditions
• Reduce isolation with professional & peer support
• Provide options to give caregivers respite
• Sensitize health care providers to the caregivers’ role
Menu of Services

In-Home Care
  Skilled Nursing
  Home Health Aide
  Home Based Primary Care
  Veteran Directed Home & Community Based Care

Respite Care

Services to Address Mobility Issues
  Equipment
  Home Modification
  Automobile Modification

Education and Training

Financial Support
  Aid and Attendance
  Caregiver Stipend (Post 9-11)

Information and Referral
  Caregiver Web site: www.caregiver.va.gov
  Caregiver Support Line

Caregiver Support
  Caregiver Support Coordinators
  Support Groups
  Interactive Web site
  Peer Mentoring Program
Caregiver Support Coordinators

- At all VA medical centers
- Clinical experts on caregiver issues including VA and non-VA resources
- Assist with application for new benefits
- Organize caregiver focused activities and services
- Ensure caregiver sensitivity is integrated into all programs
Eligibility for P.L. 111-163
Sections 101-104

P.L. 111-163 Section 101 Veteran Eligibility Criteria:

- Veteran who suffered a serious injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty on or after 9/11/01 including traumatic brain injury and psychological trauma or other mental disorder
- Is in need of personal care services because of
  - an inability to perform one or more activities of daily living;
  - a need for supervision or protection based on symptoms or residuals of neurological or other impairment or injury; or
  - such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate
- General Caregiver benefits include all era Veterans
Eligibility Criteria

Administrative:
• Post 9-11/Line of Duty Injury

Clinical:
• Need clear clinical criteria consistently applied
• Based on functional limitations - need for assistance
• Focus on safety and need for supervision as well as assistance with personal care services
# Current vs. New Caregiver Benefits

## Current Benefits

Available to Veterans of All Eras

- World War II
- Korean
- Vietnam
- Gulf War

**Post-9/11**

- Education and Training
- Family Support Services
- In-Home Care
- 30 Days of Respite Care
- Aid and Attendance
- Additional Benefits

## Additional Benefits under P.L. 111-163

Available to subset of post-9/11 Veterans and Servicemembers

**Primary Caregivers Receive:**

- Stipend
- Health care (if not otherwise available)
- Mental health services
- Family Caregiver Benefits

**Family Caregivers Receive:**

- Travel, lodging and per diem for training
- Respite care during training
- Lodging and subsistence for Veteran’s VA appointments
- Appropriate instruction and training
- Counseling
Application and Assessment

- Joint application for Veteran – family caregiver
- Options for application – on-line/in-person/phone
- Assessment of Veteran and proposed caregiver
- Eligibility transfers from one facility to another
Caregiver Education and Training

Standardized Core Curriculum
- In-person or web-based
- Convenient and easily accessible
- National contract for core training

Specific Training to individual Veteran needs
- In-home return demonstration
- Additional training to ensure success
On-going Support to Veteran and Caregiver

• In-Home initial visit by VA Clinicians
• Well-being checks every 90 days
• Home visits are supportive and instructive
• Evaluation of Veteran and caregiver’s physical and emotional state
• Recommendations for additional training, support, equipment, etc
Primary Family Caregiver Benefits

Stipend
- Direct payment to primary family caregiver
- Centrally funded and managed
- Based on wages of a home health aide in the geographic area where the Veteran resides
- Tiered based on amount and degree of personal care services provided

Health Insurance
- CHAMPVA

Travel and Lodging
- Integrate into existing programs

Mental Health Services
- Individual/Group psychotherapy and counseling
- VA or by contract
Moving Forward

• Interim Final Regulations submitted February 28, 2011
• Caregiver Training Curriculum under development
• Business practices being established
• Outreach to notify stakeholders
• Begin taking applications – early summer 2011
• Program operational summer 2011
Development in Progress

Caregiver Support Line
• February 1, 2011

Caregiver Support Coordinators at each Medical Center
• April 1, 2011

Contract Awarded to *Easter Seals* for Caregiver Training
• April 5, 2011

Caregiver Website with Social Media Capabilities
• May 15, 2011

Additional Evidence-Based Support Programs
• Roll out over next 12 months
How Can You Help?

• Help educate: Servicemembers, Veterans, Caregivers
• Spread the word when VA starts taking applications
• Share the Caregiver Support Line Number
• Share the Web site Link
• Refer appropriate Veterans/caregivers
• Connect to the local caregiver support coordinator
Caring for a Veteran? Call VA’s Caregiver Support Line for help toll-free:

1-855-260-3274

Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 11:00 pm ET
Saturday, 10:30 am – 6:00 pm ET

Department of Veterans Affairs
Questions?

www.caregiver.va.gov

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