Hospice-Veteran Partnership Program
Content

• Overview of the Hospice-Veteran Partnership Program
• Making the case to form an HVP
• Strategies for HVP success
• Tips for Getting Started and Succeeding
• Examples
• Resources
Message from Tom Edes
Department of Veterans Affairs

• “We in the VA depend on you, community hospice agencies to deliver home care for our terminally ill patients. The VA does not intend to replicate the excellent system that is already in place for home hospice care and we in the VA must learn to collaborate with and learn from you.”
National Collaboration

- VA Hospice and Palliative Care Program Office
  - Dr. Scott Shreve, National Director
  - HPC program office staff
  - VISN Program Managers and Clinical Champions
- NHPCO We Honor Veterans campaign
  - Emil Zuberbueeler, Director, National Veterans Program
  - WHV program staff
- Veterans Advisory Council
- Council of States
Hospice-Veteran Partnerships

• **Home:** State hospice organization, coalition, VA VISN or facility

• **Leadership:** Co-chairs, generally representatives from community hospice and VA

• **Structure:** State-wide organization and coordination with local or regional HVPs around the catchment areas of VA facilities
HVP Partners

- State Hospice Organizations
- End-of-Life Coalitions
- Community hospice agencies
- VISNs and VA facilities
  - VA Medical Centers
  - Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs)
  - Vet Centers
- State Veterans Homes
- Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs)
- Community Veteran Organizations
Why Are HVPs Important?

• More than 1,800 veterans are dying every day
  – ...but not much is known about end-of-life issues for this special population

• The vast majority of veterans do not receive their health care from VA
  – ...but community healthcare providers and organizations often don’t know who they are or how to reach out to them

• Significant barriers exist
  – ...but they can be overcome through communication and collaboration
Volume of Veteran Deaths

• Number of veteran deaths reached an all-time high in 2006 (664,842 projected Veterans deaths)
• At least 600,000 deaths a year through 2016
• Less than 4% Veteran deaths (about 21,000/yr) will occur in VA facilities
• HVPs are solving care coordination problems at the local, state and national levels

www.va.gov/vetdata/Veteran_Population.asp
# Projected Veteran Deaths (2011)

\[ n = 648,354 \]

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www.va.gov/vetdata/Veteran_Population.asp
How Can HVPs Help VA?

• Honors veterans’ preferences
• Expands the interdisciplinary team
• Increases VA staff knowledge of the Medicare Hospice Benefit
• Frees up inpatient beds for incoming veterans
• Shares the job of caring for Veterans with the community
How Can HVPs Help Community Hospices?

• Clinical Care
  – Honors veterans’ preferences
  – Improves communication and continuity
  – Expands understanding of veterans unique end-of-life issues

• Administrative
  – Increases referrals
  – Improves payment for services
  – Clarifies interface between VA and community hospice policies and procedures
How Can HVPs Help Veterans?

• Honors Veterans’ preferences
• Standardizes VA response to community hospices
• Informs community response to Veterans’ unique end-of-life issues
• Contributes to continuity and quality of care
• Eliminates “charity care” for Veterans
Getting Started with the HVP Toolkit

• Begin with a Planning Committee
• Identify potential partners
• Form a Leadership Committee
• Conduct Needs Assessment
• Develop strategic objectives and measure outcomes
• Plan educational, program development and outreach activities
• Work together to build solutions (www.wehonorveterans.org)
Potential HVP Projects

- Community Outreach
- Legal and Regulatory Issues
- Education and training for providers
- Research and Evaluation
- Member Recruitment
- Fundraising
Regional HVPs

• HVP survey can identify perceptions and misunderstandings
• Roundtable sessions drill down and identify barriers and opportunities
• Solutions and best practices can be shared and “hard wired” into performance
• Relationships strengthened through routine meetings and collaboration on specific tasks and objectives
Resources for HVPs

• We Honor Veterans website
• Military History Check List
• Military History Pocket Card
• Peace at Last: Stories of Hope and healing for Veterans and Their Families (Deborah Grassman, 2009)
• State Hospice Organization websites