

Appendix 1

The VHA provides a wide variety of initiatives and services to Veterans and their caregivers. Veterans also receive health care in a variety of settings, including but not limited to inpatient hospital, outpatient clinics, at home, virtually, and in nursing facilities. Aging Veterans with palliative care need often benefit from many initiatives, services, and care settings, many of which were mentioned in this article. Additional details for relevant resources are listed below, though this is not an exhaustive list.

Care settings and associated services

- ❖ GeriPACTs are available at many VAMCs and provide geriatric evaluation and ongoing care for Veterans with more than one chronic disease, declining physical abilities, and/or challenges with thinking or memory.
 - ◆ https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICAL/pages/Geriatic_Patient_Aligned_Care_Team_GeriPACT.asp. Published online Aug 2, 2023. Accessed Oct 19, 2023.
- ❖ HBPC involves team-based services designed for Veterans who have difficulty making regular outpatient clinic appointments due to the severity of illness, who are homebound, or whose caregiver is experiencing unmanageable burden. Available services include home by a primary care provider, care management, social work, rehabilitation, psychology, nutrition, and pharmacy.
 - ◆ https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICAL/pages/Home_Based_Primary_Care.asp. Published online June 25, 2023. Accessed July 24, 2023.
- ❖ Telehealth allows mobile access to providers and health information. Visits can be scheduled either by telephone or VA video connect. Veterans can also receive health information via mobile apps.
 - ◆ <https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICAL/pages/Telehealth.asp>. Published online June 25, 2023. Accessed July 24, 2023.
- ❖ Home health aides are trained in providing personal care services and assistance with ADLs. Home health aides are supervised by registered nurses and work for organizations contracted with the VA.
 - ◆ https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICAL/pages/Homemaker_and_Home_Health_Aide_Care.asp. Published online June 25, 2023. Accessed July 24, 2023.
- ❖ Skilled home health care provides short- or long-term skilled services for Veterans returning home from a hospital or nursing home. Services are provided by a VA-contracted community-based home health agency. Skilled services include skilled nursing, case management, PT, OT, speech therapy, home safety evaluation, wound care, complex medication management, and IV antibiotics.
 - ◆ https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICAL/pages/Skilled_Home_Health_Care.asp. Published online June 25, 2023. Accessed July 24, 2023.
- ❖ Adult day health care is day programming for Veterans to engage in socialization, companionship, and recreational activities. This can take place in VAMCs, state Veterans home, or community settings.
 - ◆ https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICAL/pages/Adult_Day_Health_Care.asp. Published online June 24, 2023. Accessed July 24, 2023.
- ❖ CLCs, which are VA nursing homes, are designed to “restore each Veteran to his or her highest level of well-being”. Featuring subacute rehabilitation, long-term care, and hospice units, they serve to “prevent declines in health and to provide comfort at the end of life”.
 - ◆ https://www.va.gov/geriatrics/pages/va_community_living_centers.asp. Published online June 25, 2023. Accessed July 24, 2023.
- ❖ Respite care is program designed to allow caregivers to have time to attend to personal matters or leave town for a short period of time. It can take place in the home or be provided by a nursing home stay.
 - ◆ https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICAL/pages/Respite_Care.asp. Published online June 25, 2023. Accessed July 24, 2023.
- ❖ Palliative care aims to alleviate suffering and maximize quality of life in the setting of serious illness. The palliative care interdisciplinary team supports Veterans and families in treating symptoms, identifying goals, values, and concerns, and aiding in complex medical decision making. Veterans are seen by palliative care providers in both the inpatient and outpatient setting.
 - ◆ https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICAL/pages/Palliative_Care.asp. Published online June 25, 2023. Accessed July 24, 2023.
- ❖ Hospice care is comfort directed care provided to Veterans and their families when a Veteran has been diagnosed with a life-limiting illness, defined as having a prognosis of 6 months or less if the disease takes its natural course, and is no longer seeking curative treatment. Hospice care can be provided in a Veteran’s

home, in VA-contracted community nursing homes, or in general inpatient hospice unit setting.

- ♦ https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/pages/Hospice_Care.asp. Published online June 25, 2023. Accessed July 24, 2023.

Additional VA services and initiatives

- ❖ VA social work assists Veterans, plus their families and caregivers, as they navigate SDOH related to their health and well-being. For older Veterans with palliative care needs, this is often an integral part of their care.
 - ♦ <https://www.socialwork.va.gov/>. Published online Sept 13, 2023. Accessed Oct 19, 2023.
- ❖ The VA caregiver support program offers services and supports to caregivers of eligible Veterans to help promote health and well-being in their caregiving roles. Caregivers are often a crucial part of the care for older Veterans with palliative care needs.
 - ♦ <https://www.caregiver.va.gov/>. Published online Oct 17, 2023. Accessed Oct 19, 2023.
- ❖ “VA’s rehabilitation and prosthetic services is responsible for the national policies and programs for medical rehabilitation, prosthetic and sensory aids services that promote the health, independence and quality of life for Veterans with disabilities.” Many services are relevant to older Veterans and can be part of a palliative care-focused management plan.
 - ♦ <https://www.prosthetics.va.gov/index.asp>. Published

online Oct 19, 2023. Access Oct 19, 2023.

- ❖ VHA audiology provides important services to Veterans with hearing impairment and other hearing disorders.
 - ♦ <https://www.prosthetics.va.gov/audiology/index.asp>. Published online March 2, 2022. Accessed Oct 19, 2023.
- ❖ Blind rehabilitation services assist Veterans with visual impairment of any degree, including vision assessments, eye examinations, eyeglasses, low vision resources, and more.
 - ♦ <https://www.prosthetics.va.gov/blindrehab/index.asp>. Published online Feb 15, 2023. Accessed Oct 19, 2023.
- ❖ Whole health is VA’s person-centered approach to health and well-being, centering what matters to you, not what is the matter with you.
 - ♦ <https://www.va.gov/wholehealth/>. Published online Oct 18, 2023. Accessed Oct 19, 2023.

Locations and eligibility

- ❖ Veterans can find out if they are eligible for VA health care here:
 - ♦ <https://www.va.gov/health-care/eligibility/>. Published online Sept 30, 2023. Accessed Oct 19, 2023.
- ❖ Veterans can find their closest VA health services here:
 - ♦ <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>. Accessed Oct 19, 2023.