

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



Choose VA

# VA Caregiver Support





# THE VHA CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

## Mission Statement:

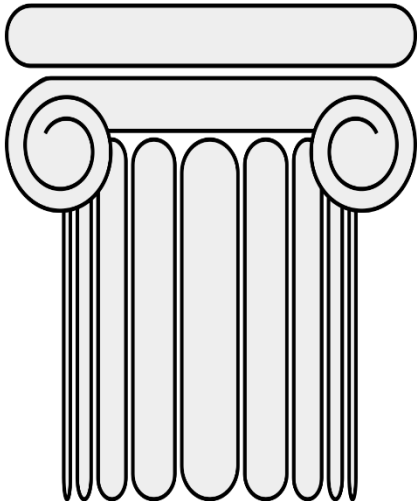
*“To promote the health and well-being of family caregivers who care for our nation’s Veterans, through education, resources, support, and services”*



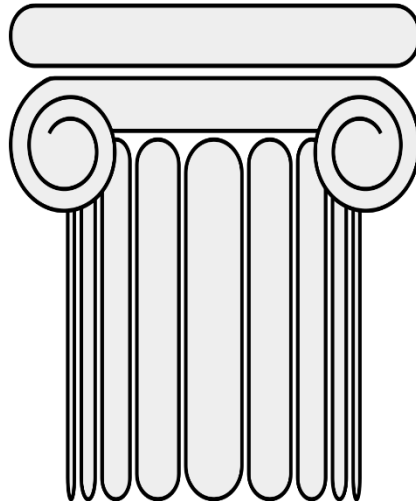
# THE VHA CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

## VHA Caregiver Support Program Pillars

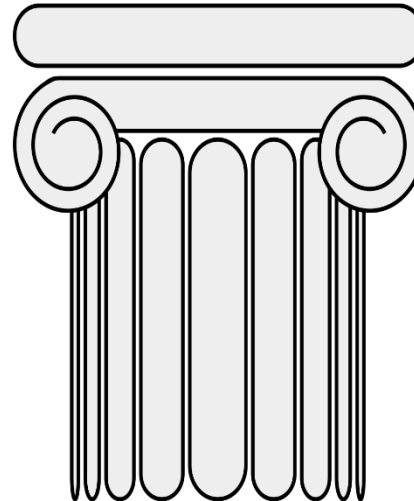
**Inclusive  
Care**



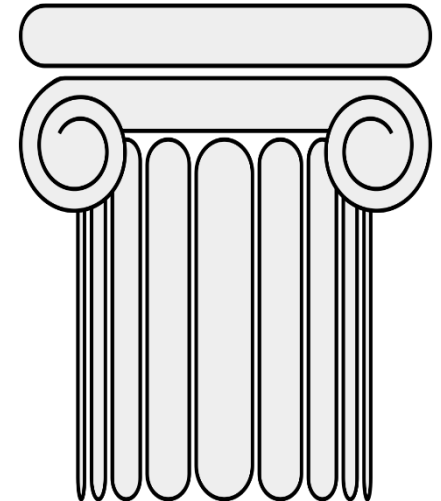
**Education  
& Training**



**Trusted  
Partnerships**



**Service  
Excellence**





# INCLUSIVE CARE

- **Empowerment:** promoting a strengths-based approach to foster caregivers' knowledge and confidence in their capabilities
- **Collaboration:** increasing communication and participation between caregivers and Veterans Health Administration (VHA) providers
- **Coordination:** facilitating access to services and benefits for caregivers and the Veterans they support



# EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- **Development:** providing training and support to caregivers to enhance their confidence and abilities to care for both themselves and the Veteran
- **Outreach & Awareness:** creating awareness and providing education to both VHA staff and community partners regarding caregiver support services



# TRUSTED PARTNERSHIPS

- **Advocacy:** recognizing and promoting the importance of the caregiver role and the unique needs of caregivers, within VHA and in the community, increasing visibility, involvement and support
- **Transparency:** demonstrating strong ethics and accountability through policy development and program administration



# SERVICE EXCELLENCE

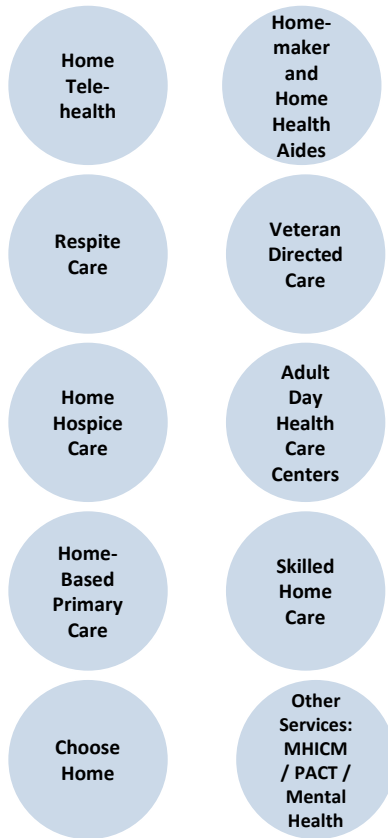
- **Research:** encouraging innovation through best practices
- **Policy Development:** ensuring policy is aligned with regulations and evidence-based practices
- **Stewardship:** establishing responsible policy and program operationalization through quality assurance and program evaluation



# CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM: OVERVIEW

Our mission is to promote the health and well-being of family caregivers who care for our nation's Veterans, through education, resources, supportive services and service excellence.

*Other VHA  
Veteran  
services that  
support  
Caregivers*



- Monthly stipend
- Access to CHAMPVA (if eligible)
- Mental health counseling
- Caregiver training
- Enhanced respite services
- Certain beneficiary travel
- Ongoing monitoring





# THE PROGRAM OF GENERAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERVICES (PGCSS)

The Program of General Caregiver Support Services serves caregivers of enrolled Veterans of *all* eras.

A General Caregiver is defined as a person who provides personal care services to a Veteran who:

- Needs assistance with one or more activities of daily living (ADL) **or**
- Needs supervision or protection based on symptoms or residuals of neurological care or other impairment or injury



# SUPPORT & SERVICES AVAILABLE TO ALL CAREGIVERS

VA is committed to providing services to all caregivers. These services include, but may not be limited to:

- ***Resource and Referral:*** Assistance navigating VA services, including those available as part of the Veteran's healthcare and benefits
- ***Education, Training, and Support:*** Building Better Caregivers™, Caregiver Support Line and monthly education calls, Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers Health (REACH VA), self-care courses, peer mentoring, support groups and the VA Caregiver Support website
- ***Counseling:*** Provided "in connection with the treatment" of a Veteran's disability to further the objectives of the Veteran's medical treatment plan



# VA SUPPORT THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE TO CAREGIVERS

## In-Home Care

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

## Respite Care (Up to 30 Days Per Year)

- Residential (VA Community Living Center or Community Facility)
- In-Home
- Adult Day Health Care

## Equipment & Supplies

- Mobility aids
- Home modification grants
- Communication devices
- Cognitive prosthetics
- Incontinence supplies



\*These supports may not be available at all facilities



# BUILDING BETTER CAREGIVERS™

Building Better Caregivers™ (BBC) is a six week online interactive workshop for caregivers of Veterans. The workshop assists caregivers with:

- Enhancing communication and decision-making
- Managing caregiver fatigue and stress
- Improving caregiver sleep, diet and personal health
- Learning ways to cope with caregiver issues
- Engaging in shared experiences and peer-to-peer support

Following completion of the workshop, caregivers can participate in the ongoing BBC Alumni Community.



# NATIONAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT LINE

The VA Caregiver Support Line responds to calls from caregivers, Veterans and community agencies seeking information about VA caregiver services.

- Monday - Friday 8:00AM - 8:00PM (EST)
- Staffed by VA clinical social workers
- Links callers to their local Caregiver Support Coordinator
- Provides information about assistance through the VA
- Offers supportive counseling when needed

You're there to support your Veteran.

We're here to support **YOU.**

 Call 1-855-260-3274 toll-free to reach VA's Caregiver Support Line. Ask questions, get support and referrals, and learn how VA can assist you as a family caregiver.



# TELEPHONE EDUCATION CALLS

Social Workers at the VA's Caregiver Support Line facilitate psychoeducational "Care for the Caregiver" groups for caregivers via toll-free teleconference.

- Twelve unique topics are offered annually, such as setting boundaries, asking for help, handling the holidays and managing anger
- Each topic is offered 3 times throughout the month: a morning, an afternoon and an evening session
- Calls are accessed through a 1-800 number from the comfort of one's home
- Additional caregiver-led calls are hosted throughout the year to share personal peer experiences



# REACH VA AND TELEPHONE SUPPORT

Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers' Health in the VA (REACH VA) and Telephone Support are evidence-based programs providing interventional support to caregivers.

- REACH is delivered in four, one-hour core sessions with the option of additional sessions if needed, in person or by telephone/telehealth
- Telephone Support is delivered in six, one-hour core group sessions with the option of additional sessions if needed
- Supports skill building through problem solving, stress reduction, and positive thinking/mood management
- Specialized curricula are available for caregivers of Veterans with ALS, dementia, MS, PTSD, and spinal cord injury
- The VA Memphis Caregiver Center and the VA Office of Rural Health have partnered to provide REACH to rural caregivers





# CAREGIVER SELF-CARE COURSES

Caregiver Self-Care Courses are offered by trained facilitators from the VA Memphis Caregiver Center and are provided in person with caregivers at local VA facilities. Courses are approximately 3 hours in length.

Topics Include:

- Utilizing Technology
- Problem Solving & Communication
- Stress Management
- Stress Management II
- Taking Care of Yourself
- Taking Care of Your Emotional Health







# PEER SUPPORT MENTORING

VA's Caregiver Peer Support Mentoring Program links caregivers of Veterans in a mentor/mentee relationship to provide peer support and guidance

- Experienced caregivers are trained to serve as mentors and matched with less experienced caregivers
- Mentors provide personalized guidance based on experience and knowledge and help alleviate isolation for mentees
- Caregivers of all eras are eligible to participate in the Caregiver Peer Support Mentoring Program, both as mentors and as mentees



[www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov)



# VHA CSP WEBSITE

The CSP website links caregivers to helpful tools, information, resources and stories of caregivers and Veterans.

Includes:

- Information on the VA Caregiver Support Program
- Caregiving tips by diagnosis
- Ways to connect with other caregivers
- Tips and tools for caregivers, such as managing medication or talking with medical providers
- Publications and resources by topic
- Directory of VA Caregiver Support Coordinators by state and U.S. territory
- Access to the application for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers



# NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH

In addition to year-round support, VA also recognizes National Family Caregivers Month in November.

Local facilities organize special events and publicity to celebrate, recognize and honor family caregivers.

Some offerings may include:

- Workshops
- Local resource fairs
- Self-care days
- Special education
- Community awareness





# CARING FOR SERIOUSLY INJURED POST 9/11 VETERANS

The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) offers enhanced clinical support for caregivers of eligible Veterans seriously injured in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001.





# CARING FOR SERIOUSLY INJURED POST 9/11 VETERANS

Veterans may be eligible for this clinical program if they:

- Sustained or aggravated a serious injury in the line of duty on or after 9/11/2001 **and**
- Require personal care services to perform one or more activities of daily living, *or*
- Require supervision and protection based on symptoms of residuals of neurological impairment or injury, *or*
- Require the assistance of a family caregiver to live safely in a home setting



# CARING FOR SERIOUSLY INJURED POST 9/11 VETERANS

Enhanced PCAFC services for eligible caregivers may include:

- Financial stipend
- Access to CHAMPVA health care insurance, if caregiver is otherwise uninsured
- Mental health counseling
- Caregiver training
- Respite care
- Hero Miles
- Travel and per diem compensation when traveling for a Veteran's VA medical appointment



# QUESTIONS



National Caregiver Support Line:

**1-855-260-3274**

Website:

**[www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov)**