Combating Homelessness Among Our Nation’s Veterans: A Collaborative Effort Between VA and Community Agencies

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Presentation Overview

• Current population demographics
• Administration’s goals
• Five Year Plan
• A Veteran’s Story
• Wrap-up
EVERY GOOD SOLDIER

NEEDS A BUTT KITTY.

WeirdNutDaily.com
Levels of Homelessness

Unsheltered: People who are sleeping outside, in a vehicle, or an abandoned building.

Literally Homeless: All of the above plus people sleeping in emergency shelter.

HUD's Definition: All of the above plus people sleeping in transitional housing for the homeless.

Broader Definition: All of the above plus people who are doubled up or couch surfing due to the loss of housing or economic hardship.
Homeless Veterans Numbers FY 2014 (YTD)

Where are we right now:

- A little over 57,000 Veterans are estimated to be homeless; higher numbers are at risk
- Mean age is 51.7
- 93% are not married
- 10% are female
WWII, Korean War, Vietnam-era (50%)

Other service periods (27%)

Gulf War-era I (13%)

Gulf War-era II (10%)
Homeless Veteran Demographics

- **Mental Health Diagnosis**
  - 50% Serious Psychiatric
  - 70% Substance Dependence
  - 35% Dually Diagnosed

- **Medical Diagnosis**
  - 51% of individual homeless Veterans have disabilities
  - 58% Serious Medical Condition
  - 66% Past Psychiatric or Substance Abuse Hospitalization

- **Residence Prior to intake**
  - 7.0% Own apt.
  - 19.9% Doubled up
  - 14.0% Institution/Jail

- **Length of Time Homeless**
  - 22.0% Greater than 2 years
  - 9.0% 1 – 2 years
  - 11.0% 6 mos. – 1 year
  - 26.0% 1 mos. – 6 mos.

- 68% reside in principal cities
- 32% reside in suburban/rural areas
Thank you for seeing me as a veteran and not a homeless man.
The President’s Charge

- Combat Homelessness among our Nation’s Veterans

- Establish zero tolerance policy – goal is to end homelessness among our Veterans

- VA believes one homeless Veteran is one too many

- Addressing and preventing homelessness is one of the VA’s top priorities
VA Five-Year Comprehensive Plan to Eliminate Homelessness Among Veterans

• VA will expand existing programs and develop new initiatives to prevent Veterans from entering into homelessness and to treat those who are currently homeless.
  - Increase the number and variety of housing options including permanent, transitional, contracted, community-operated, and VA-operated
  - Provide more supportive services through partnerships to prevent homelessness, improve employability, and increase independent living for Veterans
  - Improve access to VA and community based mental health, substance abuse, and support services

These program enhancements will provide housing, VA health care and benefits, gainful employment and residential stability to more than 500,000 Veterans
VA’s Strategy to Eliminate Homelessness Among Veterans

No Wrong Door

• Built upon 6 strategic pillars:
  – Outreach/Education
  – Treatment
  – Prevention
  – Housing/Supportive Services
  – Income/Employment/Benefits
  – Community Partnerships
In-Reach/Outreach
Contract
Grant & Per Diem
HUD-VASH
Domiciliary
Employment/Benefits
In-Reach & Outreach

- Housing Clinic
- Homeless Reminders
- Self Referrals
- National Homeless Hotline
- Street Outreach
- Community Education
• Transitional Housing
• Targets Chronically Mentally Ill
• Six Month Stay or Less
• Provides therapeutic treatment
Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD)

- Transitional Housing
- Up to two years
- Average 158 days, length of stay
- 47% treatment stays determined successful
- 34% that complete are employed
- 71% housed at discharge
The HUD-VASH Program is a proven program in assisting VA meet this goal.

HUD-VASH is now the Nation’s largest supported housing initiative that targets homeless Veterans.
• Program Goal: To move Veterans and their families out of homelessness

• Program Objectives
  • Permanent independent community-based housing
  • VA case management services, designed to improve the Veteran’s health and mental health, and to enhance the Veteran’s ability to remain stable, housed, and community-integrated
Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans (DCHV)

- 2146 Operating beds
- Over 5,900 Veterans served
- ALOS: 109 Days
- 72% Successfully completed Program
- Average age: 44 years old
- 5.0% Women

- 92% Substance Abuse
- 64% Serve Mental Illness
- 59% Dually Diagnosed
- 40% Orthopedic Problems
- 34.3% Hypertension
Vocational Rehabilitation

Work Readiness Program

- Job Placement Assistance
- Mock Interview
- Employee Networking
- Computer Lab

Supportive Employment
VA Initiatives

Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO)

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO)

• VA has programs in place to provide services to the Veteran who is re-entering society to readjust to life in the community, establish appropriate housing, and prevent a return to incarceration

• VA is working with the courts, prisons, and law enforcement agencies to offer treatment as an alternative to incarceration
GOAL:
To assist Veterans being released from state and federal prisons to readjust to life in the community and to avoid behaviors resulting in re-incarceration.
Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program

Services Provided by Grant Recipient:

• Outreach

• Case management

• Limited financial support paid to third parties, up to 20% of grant award

• Assist or directly provide a range of other services for the veteran and their family

Financial Supports Available

All payments time-limited and are incorporated into a sustainability plan.

• Rent arrears
• Utility payments
• Security deposits
• Moving costs
• Child care
Homeless Call Center

1-877-424-3838

Call for yourself or someone else
Free and confidential
Trained VA counselors to assist
Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
We have information about VA homeless programs and mental health services in your area that can help you.
A Veteran’s Journey
“Heroes don’t always wear capes, badges, or uniforms. Sometimes they support those who do.”
Questions?