



**Health Centers & Veterans  
Success Stories & Best Practices  
Updated August 2017**

## **Table of Contents:**

### **Hiring/Workforce Development**

1. [The Army PaYS Program: Horizon Health Care.....3](#)

### **Health Services**

2. [Oral Health Services for Veterans: Zufall Health Center.....5](#)
3. [Easily Accessible Primary Care Services: Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center.....6](#)
4. [Animal-Assisted Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder \(PTSD\) Therapy: Peninsula Community Health Services of Alaska.....8](#)
5. [Quality Community Dental Services: Family Health Center of Marshfield.....10](#)

### **Other Partnerships**

6. [Homeless Shelter Clinic Residency Rotation: Brockton Neighborhood Health Center.....12](#)

## Hiring/Workforce Development

### The Army PaYS Program: Horizon Health Care

<b>Location:</b>	<b>Howard, SD</b>	
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Name and Role:	John Mengenhausen, CEO, Horizon Health Care
	Phone:	(605)772-5907
	Email:	jmengenhausen@horizonhealthcare.org
<b>Type of Veterans Activity:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment (Recruit, Hire, Retain)</li> </ul>	
<b>Brief Description of Activity:</b>	<p>Horizon Health Care has partnered with the US Army and their Army PaYS (Partnership for Youth Success) Program. The PaYS Program guarantees Soldiers a job interview and possible employment after their Army service is completed. The Army established the PaYS Program as a means to share qualified individuals with employers. Soldiers possess technical skills, work ethic, discipline, teamwork, communication and leadership ability.</p>	
<b>Critical Partners/Collaborators:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Center</li> <li>• Local Veteran Service Officer</li> <li>• US Department of Veterans Affairs</li> <li>• US Department of the Army</li> </ul>	
<b>What Makes This Effort Work?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The partnership between the health center and the Army is creating employment opportunities that enable Veterans to return to their home communities. The Army maintains a database that matches the job needs of the health center with the job skills possessed by individual Army Reservists and/or Regular Army Service Veterans. All of these factors contribute to qualified individuals being able to choose jobs which match well with their skills and experiences.</li> </ul>	
<b>What are the Challenges with this Effort?</b>	<p>For Horizon Health Care, as with many organizations in rural and frontier communities, it is the limited number of job opportunities that exist in each community. Another challenge is attracting the Veteran to return home or to another similar community, instead of being forced to look for job opportunities in larger urban settings.</p>	

**What are the results of this effort?**

Since the signing of the agreement, Horizon Health Care has hired 4 Veterans under this program, not a large number, but it has provided a quality employment opportunity for a Veteran wishing to return to his/her home community. Horizon Health Care has gained employees who have developed professional work habits and have been held to the highest standards. These employees are professionally trained and experienced. It saved us precious training and human resource recruitment dollars by becoming a PaYS partner.

## Health Services

### Oral Health Services for Veterans: Zufall Health Center

<b>Location:</b>	<b>Dover, NJ</b>	
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Name and Role:	Eva Turbiner, CEO, Zufall Health Center
	Phone:	973-328-9100
	Email:	eturbiner@zufallhealth.org
<b>Type of Veterans Activity:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Care Access/Service Delivery</li> <li>• Outreach</li> <li>• Other—Access to Oral Health Services</li> </ul>	
<b>Brief Description of Activity:</b>	<p>Zufall Health Center (ZHC) made a commitment to work with the appropriate, local Veterans Affairs staff and providers to develop a way to offer Veterans access to oral health services. ZHC used a comprehensive outreach strategy to connect with Veterans in the community. Elements of the outreach effort included dedicated outreach worker, co-location of the ZHC mobile van with a Veterans CBOC, mobile van appearances at Veterans events and media coverage. Once the connection was made and oral health services began to be provided, ZHC worked to make sure that care provided was coordinated with the VA.</p>	
<b>Critical Partners/Collaborators:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Center</li> <li>• Local Veteran Service Organization</li> <li>• Community Organization</li> <li>• US Department of Veterans Affairs—Community-Based Outpatient Center (CBOC)</li> </ul>	
<b>What Makes This Effort Work?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong relations with VA staff</li> <li>• Complementary not competitive</li> <li>• Well-planned, carefully coordinated, sustained outreach effort</li> </ul>	
<b>What are the Challenges with this Effort?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtaining grant funding to support outreach and service activities</li> <li>• Establishing the health center/local VA relationship</li> <li>• Sustained outreach to Veterans—putting together a program is not sufficient—it must be “sold” to the Veterans</li> <li>• Patience and persistence</li> </ul>	
<b>What are the results of this effort?</b>	<p>Veterans are getting access to high quality, affordable oral health services in their communities and in a timely fashion.</p>	

## Easily Accessible Primary Care Services: Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center

<b>Location:</b>	<b>Kapolei and Waipahu, HI</b>	
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Name and Role:	Nick Hughey , RN , MBA, FACHE Chief Operating Officer Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center
	Phone:	808 269 9182
	Email:	<a href="mailto:Nhughey@wcchc.com">Nhughey@wcchc.com</a>
<b>Type of Veterans Activity:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Access/Service Delivery</li> <li>• Outreach</li> </ul>	
<b>Brief Description of Activity:</b>	<p>Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (a HRSA funded federally qualified health center) worked with VA and TriWest to enable Veterans to more easily receive care at WCCHC through the Choice program. To do this, WCCHC established an agreement with the VA Pacific Island Health Care System which allows Veterans eligible for the Veterans Choice Program to obtain primary care services at any of WCCHC's five clinics located on the Waianae coast and in Kapolei and Waipahu, including primary care services obtained at WCCHC's 24-hour Emergency Department in Waianae. The Agreement also includes x-ray and laboratory services available at WCCHC's main campus in Waianae.</p>	
<b>Critical Partners/Collaborators:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA Pacific Island Health Care System</li> <li>• Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center</li> <li>• TriWest</li> <li>• HUD/VASH</li> </ul>	
<b>What Makes This Effort Work?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Health Center commitment to the Veterans Choice Program</b> including Board, Executive Leadership, Finance Staff, Clinical Providers.</li> <li>• <b>Relationships are key</b> – WCCHC took the time to develop relationships among partners and build trust with face to face meetings when possible.</li> <li>• <b>Partners were educated on the services, quality and history of FQHCs</b>, and given tours of health center sites and explanations of programs.</li> <li>• <b>WCCHC created a singular point of contact to assist Veterans</b> wishing to utilize the health center. The organization initially dedicated a set of providers to provide the service rather than all providers. This helped</li> </ul>	

	<p>create the proficiency in navigating the system and predictability for Veterans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All three partners (VA, WCCHC and TriWest) were committed</b> and willing to continually meet, plan and execute to ensure needs of Veterans were met</li> <li>• <b>The partnership started small and built on successes</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>What are the Challenges with this Effort?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It took time to develop a strong proficiency with the Choice program, and helped both Veterans and providers to have a consistent single point of entry to the system.</li> <li>• Partners did not immediately understand the services and history of FQHCs, and needed to be educated in order to effectively partner with WCCHC</li> </ul>
<p><b>What are the results of this effort?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WCCHC and VA have worked together to create systems that help to identify Veterans in need of healthcare services and give them access to the information they need to receive care. As a part of this, several key staff positions have been created: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HUD/VASH has a liaison that assist Veterans in the program to coordinate care with WCCHC.</li> <li>○ WCCHC identified a dedicated referral specialist to assist Veterans entering the WCCHC system. The referral specialist connects with the Veteran, TriWest and in-house clinic to assist in scheduling initial visits and coordinating prior authorization for specialty and Behavioral Health services if required.</li> <li>○ WCCHC has dedicated Clinical Provider staff that focus on the Veteran population, this allows Provider and support staff to become efficient at navigating the requirements of the Veterans Choice Program.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Because of these outreach efforts, more Veterans in the area have access to community-based healthcare services</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

## Animal-Assisted Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Therapy: Peninsula Community Health Services of Alaska

<b>Location:</b>	<b>Soldotna, Alaska</b>	
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Name and Role:	Al Wall, CEO, Peninsula Community Health Services of Alaska
	Email:	<a href="mailto:awall@pchsak.org">awall@pchsak.org</a>
	Phone:	907 262 3119
<b>Type of Veterans Activity:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare access/Service delivery</li> <li>• Outreach</li> <li>• Other--Animal Assisted Therapy Activities</li> </ul>	
<b>Brief Description of Activity:</b>	<p>Peninsula Community Health Services of Alaska assists Veterans with PTSD to recognize and cope with PTSD issues through Animal Assisted Therapy activities, counseling for their physical and mental health needs, and community outreach activities. Participants help with training activities at the therapy center, train one-on-one with dog trainers three times weekly, and receive counseling in both individual and group settings. Through the program, Veterans also learn more about the health care services available to them through VA and the health center, which enables them to seek care more effectively.</p>	
<b>Critical Partners/Collaborators:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Center</li> <li>• Local Veteran Service Officer</li> <li>• Local Community Organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Blue Moose Bed &amp; Biscuit (local canine training facility)</li> <li>○ Local School District</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Local Veteran Service Organization (ie: American Legion; VFW; Disabled American Veterans)</li> <li>• State Primary Care Association</li> <li>• State Office of Veterans Services</li> <li>• US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)--national VA office</li> </ul>	
<b>What Makes This Effort Work?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The close partnership between the various community organizations and healthcare providers is essential. The willingness of the Health Center and VA to work with local organizations to pilot the project and gather the data will allow the service to become deliverable in a wide variety of settings.</li> <li>• Participants are encouraged to join the local canine</li> </ul>	



	<p>training organization’s community activities, which helps to smooth the process of Veteran reengagement into the community after returning from military service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a part of the program, participants organize, run, and manage the Café located at the canine training facility to gain additional skill sets that support potential future employment opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What are the Challenges with this effort?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding the initial funding for the pilot</li> <li>• Developing useful benchmarks to collect data to show the effectiveness and making sure that the data collected is useful to all groups participating</li> </ul>
<p><b>What are the results of this effort?</b></p>	<p>Potential Pilot outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of Veterans and their families receiving healthcare at local VA and at Peninsula Community Health Services of Alaska</li> <li>• Increased awareness of PTS Veterans issues</li> <li>• Decrease in suicidal ideation among Veterans in the community</li> <li>• Increased re-engagement and/or employment activities within the community</li> <li>• Ability to duplicate program in a variety of communities nationwide</li> <li>• Accreditation of additional providers, enabling the providers to offer more therapeutic services for CHCs</li> </ul>

## Quality Community Dental Services: Family Health Center of Marshfield

<b>Location:</b>	<b>Marshfield, WI</b>	
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Name and Role:	Greg Nycz, Executive Director
	Phone:	1-800-782-8581
	Email:	<a href="mailto:nycz.greg@marshfieldclinic.org">nycz.greg@marshfieldclinic.org</a>
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Name and Role:	Terri Kleutsch, Dental Administrator
	Phone:	
	Email:	<a href="mailto:kleutsch.terri@marshfieldclinic.org">kleutsch.terri@marshfieldclinic.org</a>
<b>Type of Veterans Activity:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare access/Service delivery</li> <li>• Outreach</li> <li>• Other—Access to Oral Health Services</li> </ul>	
<b>Brief Description of Activity:</b>	<p>As the FHC prepared to open, in 2006/2007, its second dental center, it learned from county veterans service officers that access to dental care for low income Veterans was the most difficult health related issue they had. With that knowledge, the FHC committed to try to address this problem both within the counties where dental centers were being built and with the adjacent counties. As the FHC's dental capacity grew, the organization adopted the goal that NO Veteran anywhere in the State of Wisconsin need to go without access to quality dental services. Progress towards achieving this goal has required aggressive community education and outreach efforts, including partnerships with statewide veterans service officers and statewide veterans service organizations, e.g., the American Legion.</p>	
<b>Critical Partners/Collaborators:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Center</li> <li>• Local Veteran Service Officers</li> <li>• Statewide and Local Veterans Service Organizations</li> </ul>	
<b>What Makes This Effort Work?</b>	<p>This program is a perfect example of the “ready-aim-fire” approach to dealing with a community/population need. The FHC learned of a real problem facing people in communities they served. Once they learned of the problem, they designed a coordinated plan of action that they hoped would address the problem. The plan was then implemented, including improving/expanding it over time. Key to this effort succeeding was the total commitment of the FHC's management and staff, including the establishment of a “bold” goal.</p>	
<b>What are the Challenges with this Effort?</b>	<p>Since most Veterans are not eligible for dental service coverage, the FHC is constantly searching for resources to cover the cost of providing the needed dental services.</p>	

	Initially, the FHC was challenged to get the word out to Veterans about the availability of this service. Aggressive community outreach and education, especially working with VSOs across the State, overcame this challenge.
<b>What are the results of this effort?</b>	The community outreach and education efforts mentioned in the prior section not only helped reach Veterans in need of access to the service, but it also forged another partnership for the FHC which should be valuable in the future. The FHC has begun to capture and document the personal stories of Veterans who have been impacted by receiving needed dental services; again, another way that the FHC can tell its story of being an essential safety-net provider in the State of Wisconsin.

## Other Partnerships

### Homeless Shelter Clinic Residency Rotation: Brockton Neighborhood Health Center

<b>Location:</b>	<b>Brockton, MA</b>	
<b>Point of Contact</b>	Name and Role:	Sue Joss, CEO, Brockton Neighborhood Health Center
	Phone:	508-894-3203
	Email:	<a href="mailto:joss@bnhc.org">joss@bnhc.org</a>
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Name and Role:	Dr. Sunny Chavan, Brockton Neighborhood Health Center
	Phone:	508-427-4135
	Email:	<a href="mailto:chavans@bnhc.org">chavans@bnhc.org</a>
<b>Type of Veterans Activity:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residency Rotation</li> </ul>	
<b>Brief Description of Activity:</b>	<p>BNHC has been collaborating with the VA Medical Center in Brockton and Harvard Medical School to offer a primary care rotation for PGY 1 psychiatry residents who are residents at the VA Medical Center. Prior to adding the BNHC rotation to their curriculum, the medicine portion of the residency training program was entirely hospital-based, leaving residents without the crucial primary care training they need for well-rounded medicine education. Dr. Sunny Chavan worked closely with the residency program to develop a primary care didactic and practical curriculum that is giving residents a great overview of primary care and community health. Dr. Chavan and other BNHC primary care physicians have gone out of their way to ensure that residents are exposed to a broad range of sites and services. Reviews from the residents have been very positive.</p>	
<b>Critical Partners/Collaborators:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Center</li> <li>Homeless Shelter</li> <li>U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs</li> <li>Harvard Medical School</li> </ul>	
<b>What Makes This Effort Work?</b>	<p>The project introduces the first year psychiatry residents to vulnerable and low income patient populations. The goal of the project is to familiarize psychiatric providers with the community health setting, offer current BNHC providers teaching opportunities, and potentially recruit new providers to the health center.</p>	

	<p>The project is also a benefit to BNHC physicians as many enjoy teaching so this program can be a valuable tool for retaining these physicians at BNHC.</p>
<p><b>What are the Challenges with this Effort?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freeing up time from busy PCC schedules takes a lot of coordination. This rotation is only 4 weeks and residents often take a vacation week during this rotation, making it challenging to fit all of the training into 3 weeks.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What are the results of this effort?</b></p>	<p>There are 8 psychiatry residents each year. Each of them rotates at BNHC for one month, 4 days per week. Rotations include time in primary care and specialty areas as well as at least 4 hours per week of didactic training, in accordance with Harvard Medical School standards. Training includes 30-minute discussion topics that cover the 20 most common primary care issues. Residents see patients under supervision.</p> <p>One on one educational sessions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EKG rounds</li> <li>• Introduction to social determinants of health</li> <li>• Psychiatry drug interactions</li> <li>• Chronic conditions</li> </ul> <p>Half-day specialty sessions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urgent care</li> <li>• Endocrinology clinic</li> <li>• STD clinic</li> <li>• Harm reduction clinic</li> <li>• HIV clinic</li> <li>• Shelter clinic</li> <li>• Diabetic group sessions</li> <li>• Diabetic cooking class</li> </ul>
<p><b>Patient Story</b></p>	<p>Last year one of our VA resident who was rotating at our homeless shelter clinic, evaluated a patient with mental health issues. He found that this patient had VA benefits, but he was lost to follow up on his care from VA health system. For some reasons this patient opted out to get back to VA clinic. Our resident consoled him and helped our clinic to connect him back VA mental health clinic. This was a great story of patient outreach, which explains the vital role of community health center in helping shelter population and finding them appropriate resources fulfilling their healthcare needs.</p>