

November 7, 2019

To NACHC's Veterans Interest Group –

Thank you for your continued interest in and dedication to serving Veterans in your communities. NACHC's Veterans Interest Group is an informal networking and information group intended to share promising practices, policy updates and operational information regarding increased access to care and services for the Veteran populations served in community health centers.

Saluting our Veterans! Veterans Day 2019 is celebrated on Monday, November 11th.

- NACHC will be posting a statement from our President and CEO, Tom Van Coverden, recognizing and honoring the men and women who have been in service defending our nation at home and abroad. Tom's statement will affirm the commitment of health centers to continue to be part of the national network providing access to quality health care for Veterans across our country. To that end, Tom will acknowledge that health centers currently serve close to 400,000 Veterans and that health centers are prepared to serve even more military Veterans.
- In addition to Tom's statement, NACHC's Veterans Day messaging will include a podcast spotlighting one of our "Health Center Success Stories"—the Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center's Veterans Resource Center!! Check out the full compilation at <https://cdn1.digitellinc.com/uploads/nachc/articles/fa902dcd5dff4baca01109c31926c310.pdf>
- We know that many of you are planning activities to recognize Veterans and celebrate Veterans Day 2019—please share those activities with us!!

Improving Efforts to Accurately Identify Veterans Being Served by Health Centers

- A pilot project involving an Iowa health center, the Iowa PCA and the VA is shedding light on how to correctly identify whether a person is a military Veteran. An article published in the Journal of Community Health (October 2019) chronicles the work in Iowa and highlights the importance of the findings in terms of health care delivery and workforce training and development. See the article at: https://www.nachc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Article_Identificationof-MilitaryVeterans_J-Comm-Health.pdf
- Another implication of this project is that the results are being used to update the Bureau of Primary Health Care's instructions for reporting Veterans in the Uniform Data System (UDS). With proposed changes for the 2020 UDS, we are hopeful that we will see a more accurate reporting of Veterans served by health centers from which needs assessment, program planning and service delivery can be implemented.

Status of the VA'S Community Care Program

- The VA has now awarded contracts to administer the new Community Care Program in all parts of the Continental US, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands; they still need to establish contracts for Alaska and the Pacific Basin. Responsibility for establishing and maintaining robust networks of community care providers now vests with Optum (VA Regions 1,2&3) and TriWest (VA Region 4). In addition to its direct responsibility for

Region 4, TriWest retains its responsibility to serve as the VA's Third-Party Administrator for all parts of the US until new provider networks are established. NACHC continues our ongoing dialogue with staff at both Optum and TriWest to remain up-to-date on the work of the two organizations.

- As community care for Veterans transitions from the CHOICE Act to the MISSION Act, it is important that health centers, health center-controlled networks and primary care associations to stay current on the information coming from the VHA's Office of Community Care. **Please consider signing up for their monthly "Providers Updates" "e-newsletters" directed to community-based providers.** The most recent newsletter was released 11/1/2019. Here's how you sign up:
 - Go to the VHA's Office of Community Care "homepage" at <https://www.va.gov/communitycare/>
 - Scroll down to the Explore Community Care Resources section and Click on the "Providers" option <https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/providers/index.asp>
 - Look on the right hand side of the page for **Community Provider Updates Newsletter** "box" https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVHA/subscriber/new?topic_id=USVHA_1240
 - Click "**Subscribe for Updates**" and complete the subscription process

Thank you for your continued interest in opportunities to collaborate with the U.S. Veterans Health Administration in service to our local Veterans

If you have any questions or ideas, please do not hesitate to reach to the group and/or NACHC's staff leads for Veterans issues: Dick Bohrer or Gina Capra at trainings@nachc.org or call 301-347-0400. Thanks for all you do each day!!!! And a special THANK YOU to our Veterans on this mailing list: your Service and Sacrifice are appreciated.

Sincerely, Gina Capra

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