

Dear Members of NACHC's Veterans Interest Group (VIG) —

October 5, 2022

As we move into October, the Summer is quickly becoming a memory, including NACHC's Community Health Institute (CHI) held in Chicago, August 26-30 which included our in-person Veterans Interest Group meeting. I am pleased to provide you with some CHI highlights here, in case you missed it, as well as several broader Veterans-related opportunities that have emerged in the last month (page 2).

Community Health Institute (CHI), August 2022 - This year's event was an overwhelming success as measured by an in-person attendance of over 2,100, 25+ high quality general and educational sessions and a careful and safe re-connection of friends and colleagues after a long pandemic separation. During CHI, we were able to have an in-person meeting of the Veterans Interest Group (VIG) on August 28, 2022, which some of you attended. Our small gathering produced a lively and substantive dialogue. On this end, we remain committed to keeping Veterans topics alive within NACHC and supporting your efforts to serve Veterans! Topics covered included:

- **Veterans' Health Administration (VHA) Program Coordination** – Attendees articulated specific challenges health centers continue to face as they attempt to partner with various units of the Veterans Health Administration. The conversation noted the disparity between the intent of the MISSION Act, with regards to an active role for community providers (including Federally Qualified Health Centers), and the failure of VHA to effectively incorporate community providers into community-based systems of care. Leadership team members from the Union Community Health Center (Bronx, NY) helped focus this discussion by sharing work they have done to elevate some of the challenges and problems. There was also discussion about the opportunity to become an accredited Veterans Urgent Care Center under the VHA Community Care Network (CCN), but again pointed out the difficulty some have experienced in trying to navigate this process.
- **Veterans as the Health Center Workforce** – Attendees discussed the value of Veterans from the perspective of qualified and committed individuals who help meet some of the health center workforce needs. We learned of successful efforts in Missouri (MO Primary Care Association) to translate military experiences into satisfying basic requirements for some clinical positions, which is one of the success stories highlighted in NACHC's updated publication. The group shared ideas about how to get health centers on the "radar screen" of active-duty individuals, as well as Veterans. The group expressed interest in knowing of examples of health centers being able to participate in Transition Assistance Programs (TAP) that are conducted by all branches of the military.
- **NACHC's Updated Technical Assistance Documents** – Previewed in draft at our April virtual VIG meeting, the final publications are now available: "***Serving Veterans in Health Centers: A Compendium of Success Stories***" and "***Community Care Network (CCN) Backgrounder and Toolkit***" featured on NACHC's "Serving Veterans" webpage: <https://www.nachc.org/health-center-issues/special-populations/veterans/> or the Health Center Resource Clearinghouse, www.healthcenterinfo.org

Future Direction of the NACHC Veterans Interest Group - NACHC is preparing its application to HRSA/ Bureau of Primary Health Care's funding opportunity to support national training and technical assistance partners (NTTAP). To inform our application and activities development, we are interested in your input and ideas about how NACHC can support your work with Veterans. **We invite your response to any of the following questions (or additional ideas/suggestions) no later than October 13, 2022, to GCapra@nachc.org**

1. What topics would you like to see the VIG address?
2. How frequently and in what way would you like to see the VIG convene (i.e.: virtual, in-person)?
3. Are there specific ways health centers are serving Veterans that you want to know more about?
4. Are you interested in expanding conversations beyond access and service delivery for Veterans? For example, regarding how Veterans can help alleviate some workforce issues.

Hot Opportunities! Check these out!

- **Webinar – “Oral Health for Veterans: Increasing Access through Sustainable Programs”**
October 6, 12pm ET - Veterans experience poorer health outcomes than non-veterans including in oral health. Community health centers are positioned to support veterans in their communities by creating sustainable health programs that provide access to dental and medical services for veterans. This webinar will describe the inequities and challenges that veterans may experience in dental care. The webinar will also highlight two community health centers that have created programs to improve veterans' dental care access. 1CDE will be offered. **Register here** https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_gyS0U5_IRdyhw9gc8Lol4A
- **Advisory Board Volunteers Needed** - The National Network for Oral Health Access (NNOHA) recently announced a partnership with the American Institute for Dental Public Health to create a resource centered on Veterans' oral health. NNOHA is looking for 2-3 of its members who are Veterans and who would be interested in serving on an advisory board. If you are interested, please contact Candace Hsu Owen, Education Director at candace@nnoha.org.
- **Webinar – “No Wrong Door: Veterans Cultural Competency Training for MLP Teams”**
November 9, 2-3:30pm ET - Partnerships between health centers, the VA, and civil legal services providers help to ensure that veterans can access health care through "no wrong door." To improve the capacity of these partnerships to meet the holistic needs of veterans, medical-legal partnership staff of all backgrounds and skill sets are invited to this free training event on Veteran Cultural Competency. Through this webinar, the audience will learn about current best practices for serving veterans across settings and increase their understanding of how to use the medical-legal partnership approach to address the health-harming legal needs of veterans and their families. **Register here:**
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/9816644623128/WN_Bc9iDP4HT6CnX63zURSuKw

Stay safe, keep up the great work you do and reach out to Dick Bohrer (dbohrer@nachc.com) or me with any questions or requests!

Sincerely, Gina Capra, Senior Vice President, Training and Technical Assistance – NACHC,
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