

VHA National Center for Healthcare Advancement and Partnerships (HAP) and the Young Men's Christian Association of the United States of America (Y-USA)

Supporting Veterans and their Families with Greater Access to Community Resources

Partnership Information

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has partnered with the Young Men's Christian Association of the United States of America (Y-USA) since 2015 to promote the physical and mental wellbeing of Veterans, their families, and caregivers. The partnership increases opportunities for recreational activities and social integration while also raising awareness about community-based mental and whole health services.



Healthier Lives for All Veterans

VHA and Y-USA are collaborating to provide the critical services that enable Veterans and their families to live healthier lives. The availability of these resources and programs increase access to the **social determinants of health** (SDOH)—conditions in the environments in which Veterans live, learn, work, and socialize. Support for positive SDOH is connected to better health outcomes. Local YMCA gyms support positive SDOH for Veterans by facilitating socialization, weight management, education about proper nutrition and physical fitness, and whole health.



This partnership also encourages YMCA staff and affiliates to complete the free suicide awareness training available through [PsychArmor.org](https://www.psycharmor.org).

VHA and Y-USA Programs for Veterans

- Various YMCA membership options are available to Veterans and their families.
- **VA Mobile Vet Centers** offer a wide range of social and psychological services at YMCA locations as a part of a new pilot program.
- Local YMCA's can form agreements with VA facilities to provide are Veteran-specific programming to facilitate socialization and healthy lifestyles.
- YMCA and VA locations can collaboratively host outreach events for Veterans to receive clinical and benefits services outside the four walls of a VA facility, for example, YMCA hosted **MOVE! Weight Management Program** that encourages Veterans to live healthier lives.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
National Center for Healthcare
Advancement and Partnerships

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Physical and Emotional Benefits of Exercise and Social Interaction

- Increased energy to do the things you want to do
- Lowered risk for injury and disease like heart disease and type 2 diabetes
- Better sleep
- Reduced levels of stress and anxiety

VHA Resources

- VA's **Community Provider Toolkit** provides information and resources for providers, staff, and caregivers who support Veterans outside the walls of a VA facility.
- VA's **Whole Health** program helps Veterans develop a personalized health plan based on your values, needs, and goals.
- The **MOVE! Weight Management Program** encourages Veterans to live healthier lives, which can be located within the VA medical center or at the YMCA in some locations.



Y-USA Resources

- **YMCA 360** program – which provides fitness programs and workouts that can be done at home and at any time.
- **Social activities** support a sense of community and companionship for Veterans that want to pursue a new passion.
- The **Healthier Communities Initiative** promotes healthier lifestyles in communities by offering strategic policies and environmental changes (ie. Making streets and sidewalks safer for active transportation).

Innovative Strategic Partnerships Facilitated through HAP

HAP's mission is to serve as a trusted resource and a catalyst for the growth of effective partnerships at the national, state, and community level and advances the health and wellbeing of Veterans through exploration of innovative, safe, and ethical emerging therapies.

To learn more about VHA partnerships, please visit: va.gov/healthpartnerships.

For more information on Y-USA, visit their website: ymca.org.