**SSVF Program Office**

**Role of the Health Care Navigator**

**Health Care Navigator Program Purpose and Outcomes**

The goal to end homelessness among Veterans remains a high priority goal for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Since the inception of the goal, VA has made significant progress through its comprehensive programming that has been closely coordinated with our federal partners and local stakeholders.

One of the major initiatives undertaken by the VA to end homelessness is the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program. The SSVF Program Office works with Technical Assistance partners to provide SSVF grantees and their partners the tools, support, and training to be leaders in local planning efforts and to leverage promising practices toward this end.

One of these practices for grantees to employ designated health care navigator(s) to work with VA Medical Centers and other healthcare systems ensuring appropriate care coordination for Veterans.

SSVF health care navigators will work with Veterans on a variety of issues to assist them in identifying and overcoming challenges to accessing the healthcare system or adhering to recommended health care plans. SSVF health care navigators are trained to assist Veterans with the following:

 Gaining access to health care

 Supporting health care plans by identifying barriers to care

 Providing education on wellness related topics

**Core Function of the Health Care Navigator**

Essentially, the core function of all health care navigators is to assess and address potential and existing barriers to access care and completing the care needed to improve the veteran’s health.

The Veteran may receive physical and behavioral health services from the VHA or a community provider. The health care navigator will help facilitate access to these services regardless of healthcare system.

**Health Care Navigator Functions**

 Communication

 Facilitate Access to Care (VA and non-VA Providers)

 Reduction of Barriers

 Coordination of Care

 Patient Education

 Advocacy