

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Webinar Series

VA POC Quarterly Call

February 18, 2014 3:00PM 4:00PM (Eastern Time Zone)

**Audio can be accessed through the following
conference line:**

1-855-767-1051

Conference Id: 97579540

Presenters

- Jackie Smith, LCSW, SSVF Quality Supervisor
- Adrienne Melendez, MLD, SSVF Regional Coordinator
- Tamara Wright, MPA, SSVF Regional Coordinator
- Mike Wehrer, LCSW, SSVF Management Analyst Detail

Facility POC representatives:

– Keisha Kerr, LCSW

- Lebanon Pennsylvania VA Medical Center
- HCHV Program Coordinator and POC

– Luis Paulino, LCSW

- Houston Texas VAMC
- HCHV Program Director and POC

Webinar Format

- Webinar will last approximately 1 hour
- Participants' phone connections are "muted" due to the high number of callers
- Questions can be submitted during the webinar using Instant Messenger
- Following this webinar, you can always submit questions to SSVF@va.gov

Please note: SSVF Regional Coordinators are the best Points of Contact at the local level

Objectives

- Share SSVF Program Updates and Reminders
- Identify coordination best practices between SSVF grantees, VAMC SSVF Points of Contact, and SSVF Regional Coordinators
- Create a communication plan
- Review SSVF resources



Reminders

Available @ www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf.asp:

- 2014 NOFA announcement and information
 - FAQ's
 - Recorded webinar trainings
- Continued SSVF VASH/GPD Coordination & Waivers
- Enhanced eligibility guidance published in 12/19/13
- Veteran feedback survey transitioned to online survey
- Update on regional meetings with grantees
- News on monitoring visits

Our Shared Mission:

- To provide housing stability to homeless and at-risk Veterans and their families
 - Make the best use of existing VA and community resources
 - Engage eligible Veterans to address immediate housing needs with case management and other resources



Value of Partnership

- We know that being the SSVF POC is just one of the thousand things you do
- Benefits of this investment in collaboration?
 - Better services to homeless Veterans
 - Less duplication of services
 - Better management of precious resources
 - Increase positive working relationships now and in future
 - Learn from each other
 - You are not on your own, you have a partner

Quick Re-cap: Role of Point of Contact

- Each VAMC has a SSVF POC
 - Help to integrate the SSVF grantee into local VAMC
 - Facilitate presentations by SSVF grantees at local VAMCs to educate staff about accessing services and resources
 - Connect SSVF grantee to VA eligibility resources
 - Participate in planning meetings with Regional Coordinator
 - Participate in planning meeting with SSVF Grantees to standardize processes

Role of SSVF Point of Contact

- Assist with SSVF Grantee's community coordination effort
 - You know your community's needs
- Work with Regional Coordinator to facilitate coordination efforts
 - Participate on SSVF Regional Coordinator Calls (optional)
 - SSVF RC could participate in POC meetings/calls
- Act as a liaison between the SSVF Grantees and VA services
 - Educate grantees on benefits and other resources
 - Facilitate grantee education of VA staff

SSVF Point of Contact

SSVF Points of Contact are busy people, and so you are **NOT...**

- Responsible for determining Veteran eligibility
- Responsible for monitoring the contract
- Responsible for receiving reports from the grantee
- Responsible for setting service boundaries
- Responsible for giving SSVF programmatic guidance
 - SSVF RC gives all SSVF program guidance

Role of the Regional Coordinator

- Nine Regional Coordinators
 - Assigned by geographic regions
 - May overlap VISNs or VAMCs
- Assist with coordination and implementation of program
- Resource person for POC and Grantee
- Monitor performance/provide Technical Assistance
- Liaison with Network Homeless Coordinator

Role of Regional Coordinator

- Key role in facilitating the coordination efforts
 - Assisting grantees to develop local connections
 - Participate in coordination meetings
 - Facilitate VA and SSVF grantee coordination
 - Communicating with SSVF Grantee any best practice strategies that have been developed
- Review coordination meeting plans and reports
 - Submitted by SSVF grantees to Regional Coordinator

Field Practices in Referrals

Local VAMC or Community Based Outpatient Clinic

– Referrals to SSVF

- Collaborate on a process for grantees to get VA referrals
- Facilitate grantee's education of VA providers on SSVF benefits and referral process

– Referrals to VA

- Provide information on available VA resources
- Educate grantee on the best way to connect Veterans with VAMC programs and resources

– Facilitate eligibility requests from SSVF

- Educate grantees on how they can help Veterans obtain proof of their Veteran status

POC Key Objectives

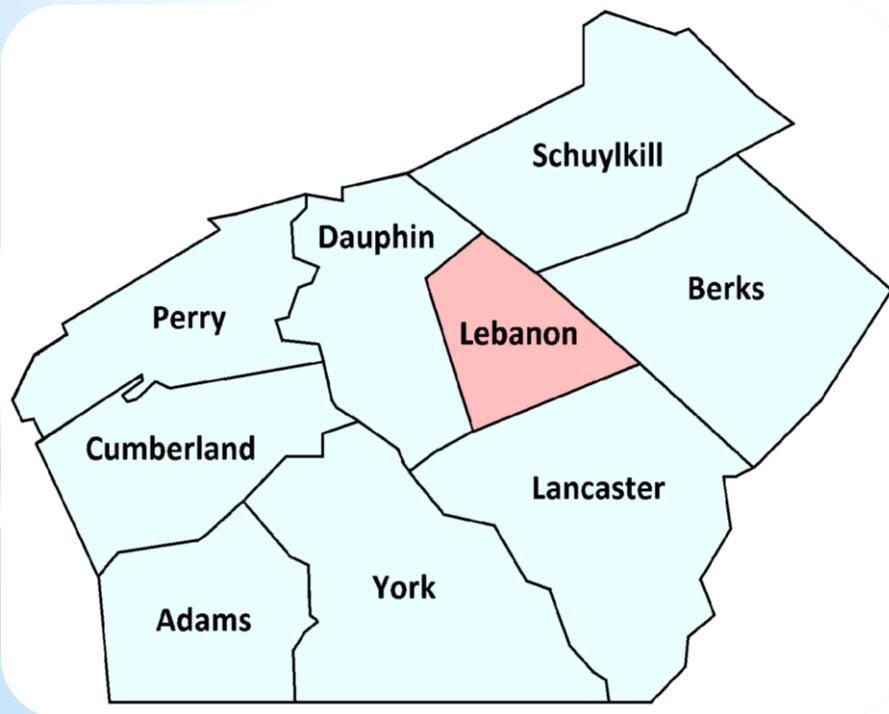
- Connecting SSVF homeless staff to benefits and other resources
- Educating SSVF homeless staff (if needed) on new or unknown VA resources that could assist SSVF grantees in ending homelessness.
- Facilitate the education of VA staff regarding SSVF
- Help coordinate services in your community
- Build relationship with SSVF Regional Coordinator

Examples of SSVF Grantee and POC Collaboration

- Lebanon Pennsylvania VA Medical Center
 - Keisha Kerr, LCSW
 - HCHV Program Coordinator and POC
- Houston Texas VAMC
 - Luis Paulino, LCSW
 - HCHV Program Director and POC



* Lebanon VA Medical Center's Catchment Area



- * Lebanon VAMC is one of 10 Medical Centers in VISN 4
- * Lebanon is located approximately 45 minutes from Harrisburg (PA's state capitol) and approximately 1.5 hours from Philadelphia
- * The majority of the area is rural/suburban with some urban areas in Harrisburg, Reading, York, and Lancaster

* Importance of SSVF

- * Fills a gap of working with Veterans and their families, who often have complex cases
- * Focuses on rapid rehousing and prevention supportive services
- * Community funds for these needs is limited and depletes quickly
- * Enhances partnerships with community providers and the VA

* Champion of SSVF

- * 2010 Learned about SSVF at training
- * 2010 First year several grantees applied, however no one was awarded the grant
- * 2011 SSVF Program Office staff member, spoke at Project CHALENG to encourage community providers to apply
 - * Opportunity House, Inc. was awarded our community's first SSVF grant!
 - * Established a new dimension to this already existing community partnership, as Opportunity House already had Contract Emergency Housing Beds
- * 2012 SSVF was a topic at CHALENG to encourage community partners to work together as grantees and sub-grantees for more effective delivery of services
- * Initiated coordination meeting before memo

* Current SSVF Partners

* 5 Grantees total

* Note: Grantees cover more areas than Lebanon VAMC, but it is important to note that there are 5 grantees that share geography in some capacity.

* Last year: 1 grantee

* This year: 2 renewal grantees this year and 3 new grantees

* 1 renewal grantee now has a subcontractor who had applied previously, was unsuccessful, and decided to partner with the renewal grantee demonstrating an additional level of collaboration

* Opportunity House (subcontractor-Tabor Community Services), YWCA of Greater Harrisburg; Volunteers of America of Pennsylvania, Inc.; Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living, Inc., and Catholic Charities Diocese of Allentown were all awarded SSVF grants

* Every county in the Lebanon VA catchment area is now covered!

* Building Relationships with SSVF Grantees

- * On October 2, 2013 HCHV hosted all SSVF grantees and sub-grantees to introduce them to all HCHV/HUD-VASH Staff and each other
- * All providers shared about the programs and services, any specialties, their service areas including VAMC catchment areas, and their Point of Contacts
- * Opportunity House (renewal) was able to provide information on their past experience with SSVF and helped clarify program requirements and procedures
- * Providers were able to share procedural and documentation ideas
- * Most importantly, lines of communication were now open and flowing amongst HCHV Staff and all SSVF grantees and sub-grantees with opportunities for other non-homeless program connections within VAMC and with grantees

* Identified Problem

- * SSVF Grantees expressed problems with verifying Veterans' eligibility
- * HCHV staff was able to assist by providing VIS and/or HINQ verification
 - * HCHV established a new procedure where grantees could reach out to their HCHV POC to obtain these forms of documentation for Veterans who did not have their DD-214

*Valuing Diversity

- * HCHV learned that despite the common thread of SSVF, each program had certain nuances including specific targets and requirements
- * HCHV staff and SSVF staff also had unique strengths and personalities
- * Awareness and adapting based on personalities and needs to meet people where they were at was key

Example

- * HCHV staff sent referrals for prevention but one grantee stated Veteran was not appropriate or didn't qualify. Instead of getting upset, HCHV scheduled a conference call with all the grantees to ask them what a good referral would look like. Also, addressed the specifics of their programs.
- * All providers and HCHV staff gained clarity, and grantees felt heard.

*What Partnership Means

- * Working together as a team
- * It is easier to ask questions for understanding and to help each other than to break the relationship.
Broken relationships are so much harder to rebuild
- * VA cannot do it alone
- * Our role is to help Veterans get the best service possible, and we can only do this through strong community partnerships

Role of SSVF Point of Contact in Houston

- ▣ KEYS To SUCCESS:
 - Partnership and Collaboration amongst partners
 - Exchanging Knowledge and Resources, Identifying and Overcoming Barriers, Knowing Limits.
 - Constant Communication and Sharing Ideas

- ▣ KEY ROLES:
 - Assist with SSVF Grantee's community coordination effort:
 - ▣ The Houston COC (continuum of care) has representatives at VA HCHV Drop In Center to assist Veterans with housing placements.
 - ▣ SSVF Grantee agency representatives provide presentation on service and referral process to VA Homeless Case Managers.
 - Weekly meetings with Housing Authorities (Houston / Harris County) to reconcile VASH Vouchers and address issues affecting Veterans.
 - VA and SSVF/ COC conduct join Outreach targeting Chronically Homeless Veterans.
 - Educate the community through Homeless Summits since 2010 (Jan 30, 2014) to inform community providers of VA / Homeless Services. Over 69 community agencies participated
 - VA conducts Chaleng, PIT, Stand Down, Quarterly Homeless Summit, Homeless Coalition Coordinating Council.

Our Shared Mission:

- ▣ To provide housing stability to homeless and at-risk Veterans and their families
 - VA cannot do it alone
 - We make the best use of existing VA and community resources:
 - ▣ Collaboration with all community agencies.
 - ▣ VA case managers have a great working relationship with SSVF staff and discuss cases needing assistance.
 - We engage eligible Veterans to address immediate housing needs with case management and other resources:
 - ▣ Educate community, including COC agencies, on what is an eligible Veteran for VA and SSVF services.
 - ▣ Non-eligible are referred to COC agencies for assistance
 - We provide education, information and shared resources.

Additional Questions?

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Health Care for Homeless Veterans

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POC and Grantee Communication Plan

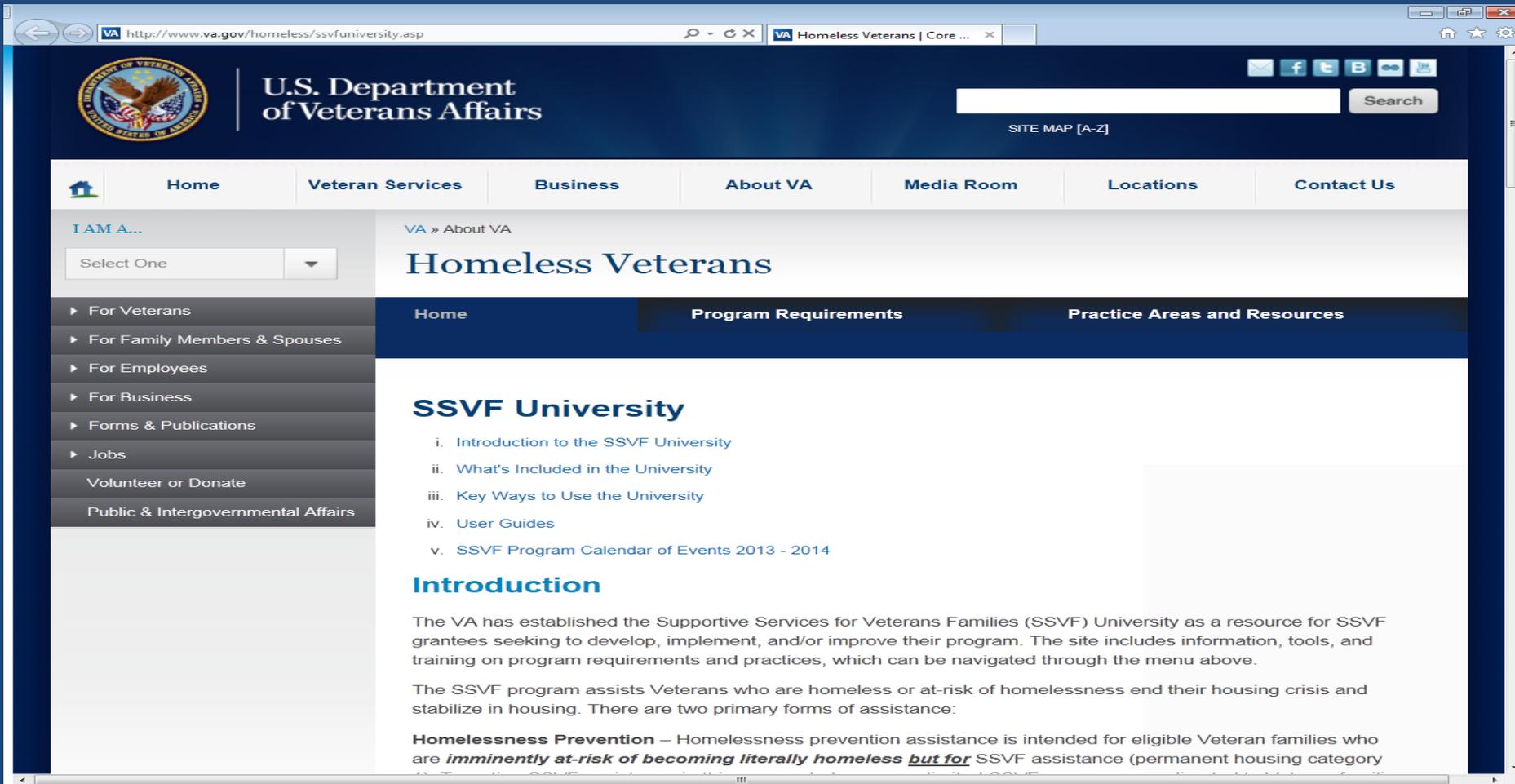
- Should be tailored to fit POC needs and community needs
 - Regular dialogue with SSVF provider regarding cases, resources, opportunities for improvement and successes
- Let your SSVF Regional Coordinator know about meetings and outcomes
- SSVF grantee and Regional Coordinator can benefit from your vast knowledge of your communities

Useful links

- SSVF dashboard
<https://securereports2.vssc.med.va.gov/ReportServer/Pages/ReportViewer.aspx?%2fHomeless%2fHMISDB&rs:Command=Render>
- SSVF University
<http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvfuniversity.asp>
- SSVF website <http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp>
- SSVF Data Collection Guide
- http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvfuniversity.asp?page=/program_requirements/hmis_and_data

SSVF University

- <http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvfuniversity.asp>



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the SSVF University page. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvfuniversity.asp>. The page header features the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs logo and a search bar. A navigation menu includes links for Home, Veteran Services, Business, About VA, Media Room, Locations, and Contact Us. A sidebar on the left contains a dropdown menu labeled 'I AM A...' with options for Veterans, Family Members & Spouses, Employees, Business, Forms & Publications, Jobs, Volunteer or Donate, and Public & Intergovernmental Affairs. The main content area is titled 'Homeless Veterans' and has a sub-menu with 'Home', 'Program Requirements', and 'Practice Areas and Resources'. The 'Program Requirements' section is active, showing a list of links: 'Introduction to the SSVF University', 'What's Included in the University', 'Key Ways to Use the University', 'User Guides', and 'SSVF Program Calendar of Events 2013 - 2014'. Below this is an 'Introduction' section with text explaining the SSVF University's purpose and the assistance provided to homeless veterans.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Homeless Veterans | Core ...

Search

SITE MAP [A-Z]

Home Veteran Services Business About VA Media Room Locations Contact Us

I AM A...
Select One

- ▶ For Veterans
- ▶ For Family Members & Spouses
- ▶ For Employees
- ▶ For Business
- ▶ Forms & Publications
- ▶ Jobs
- Volunteer or Donate
- Public & Intergovernmental Affairs

VA » About VA

Homeless Veterans

Home Program Requirements Practice Areas and Resources

SSVF University

- Introduction to the SSVF University
- What's Included in the University
- Key Ways to Use the University
- User Guides
- SSVF Program Calendar of Events 2013 - 2014

Introduction

The VA has established the Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) University as a resource for SSVF grantees seeking to develop, implement, and/or improve their program. The site includes information, tools, and training on program requirements and practices, which can be navigated through the menu above.

The SSVF program assists Veterans who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness end their housing crisis and stabilize in housing. There are two primary forms of assistance:

Homelessness Prevention – Homelessness prevention assistance is intended for eligible Veteran families who are **imminently at-risk of becoming literally homeless** *but for* SSVF assistance (permanent housing category ...)

SSVF University 101

- SSVF Practice Standards relevant the practice area
- Guidance on key elements of effective practices
- Training resources: links to relevant training produced by the VA, HUD, and other entities
- Toolkit: links to forms, templates, checklists, etc., that can be adapted or adopted by rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention programs.

SSVF-U Practice Area information

- **Practice Area 1: Outreach, Engagement and Admissions Screening/Selection**
- **Practice Area 2: Assessment and Housing Plan**
- **Practice Area 3: Participant Services, Non-Financial**
- **Practice Area 4: Participant Services, Financial Assistance**
- **Practice Area 5: Landlord Supports**

Questions & Answers

- What questions do you have?
- What has worked well for you?
- Did anything resonate with you from the two field practices we heard?
- Examples of Communication Plans?



Next Steps

- **SSVF POC Survey**
 - You will receive an email after the webinar with a survey link for a SSVF Coordination Survey.
 - Each POC must complete the survey by 2/25. Thanks for your help!
- **Continued Collaboration and Dialogue**
 - Share the information from today's webinar with your team and with your grantee.
 - Continue to be a connector and educator, ask questions of your grantee and Regional Coordinator, and schedule a coordination meeting if it has not taken place.
- **Review the resources listed in the power point including SSVF University and the helpful links.**
 - Share the SSVF NOFA with your community.
- **Participate in the next quarterly SSVF POC webinar**
 - Look for an invitation for May/June
 - If your POC has changed, please notify your NHC who will notify the SSVF Program Office.

Thanks for being our partner!



Additional Questions?

SSVF Program Office

Phone:

1-877-737-0111

Email:

ssvf@va.gov

Website:

www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf.asp