

Breaking Barriers to Care

Caregivers: Working Well with Your MS Providers

MSCOE Caregiver Education & Support Group

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Top Challenges Faced by Caregivers of Veterans



Bing Images

Each experienced by at least 2/3 Caregivers:

1. Not knowing what to expect medically with Veteran's condition
2. Not being aware of Veterans Affairs (VA) services that could help
3. Not knowing how to address PTSD or mental illness
4. Difficulty getting through bureaucracies to obtain services
5. Not knowing where to obtain financial assistance
6. Not knowing where to turn to arrange a break/respite from caregiving
7. Not knowing where to obtain specialized care

(Caregivers of Veterans – Serving the Homefront Study, 2010)

Overcoming Barriers to Care: It's All About Communication!

- **Veteran Centered Care**
 - Provider/Caregiver listens to needs and concerns of Veteran
 - Caregiver/partner key role
- **Institute of Medicine (IOM) Research:**
 - Communication = Better Outcomes
 - Fewer Medical Errors
 - Better patient and Caregiver satisfaction
 - Better adherence to TREATMENT PLANS
 - Fewer medical malpractice suits

VA PHILOSOPHY OF CARE

- Veteran Centered Care:
 - Shared-decision making
 - Define health problems & targeted goal setting
 - Self-management /self-care techniques
 - Information sharing and effective communication (use of technology)
 - Ask Provider about VA Telehealth options!
 - Coordination across the health care system

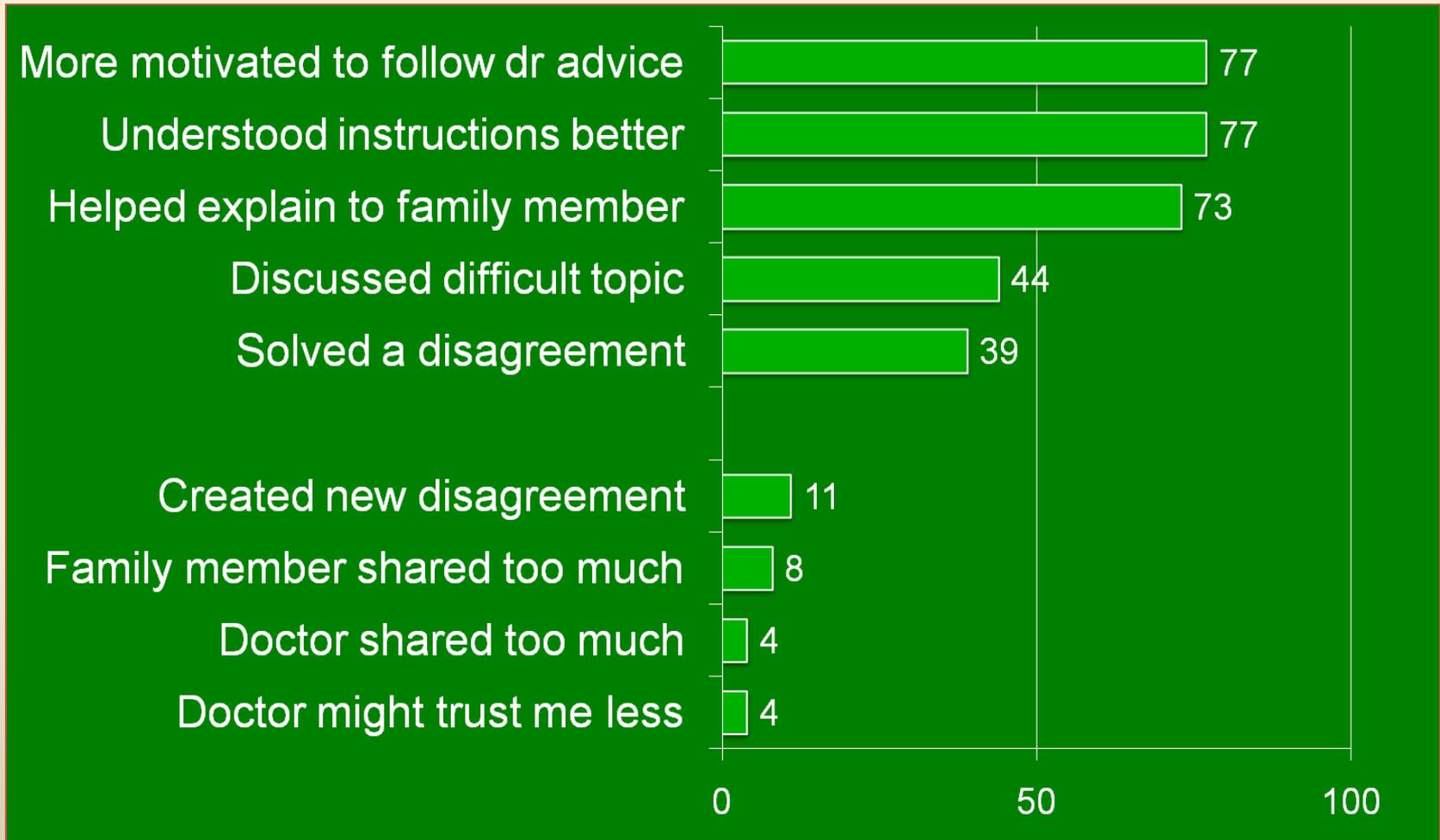
VA PHILOSOPHY OF CARE

- Veteran Centered Care: Provider Role
 - Provider recognizes psychosocial factors that contribute to effective MS management
 - Provider commits to ongoing communication
 - Provider helps you locate and coordinate resources
 - Goal: Veteran and Caregiver Optimal Functioning

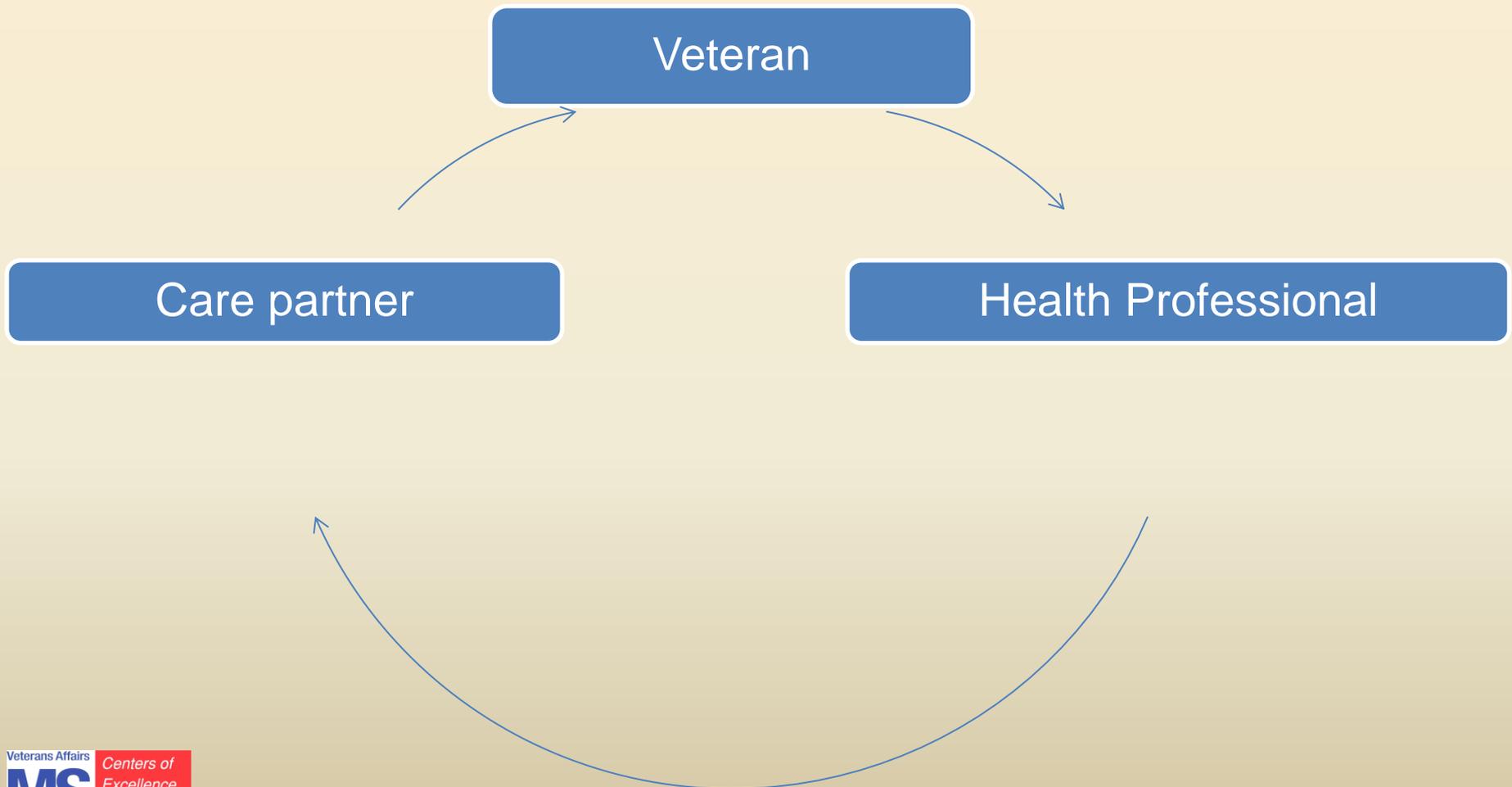
Better Provider Communication Matters

- Improved Communication w/Veteran and Caregiver
- Better emotional health for both
 - Better symptom resolution
 - Improved functional status
 - Improved pain control

When Caregiver is Involved with Medical Team



Focusing on Problem Solving w/Veteran and Care Partner:



Why Does Caregiver Communication Matter ?

- Health Care is a HUMAN RELATIONSHIP
- Chronic Illnesses, no longer one health management issue
- On-going relationship, not just a focus on cure or curing but MANAGING
- Caregivers influence the outcome of health care management, too.

Caregiver: Problem Solving with Provider and Veteran

Listening:

Using active listening to understand the Provider and Veteran's position on the issue

Persuading:

Once everyone feels understood, they attempt to influence the other's position

Caregiver: Problem Solving with Provider and Veteran

Negotiating:

Needs are discussed and everyone reaches a compromise

Compromise:

Everyone agrees to terms that are accepted by all involved in the decision making

Focusing on Problem Solving w/Veteran and Care Partner:

- What's the bottom line for all?
- Define areas of greater flexibility
- Look for a middle/common ground
- Try to understand everyone's point of view (validate)
- Explore common goals
- Explore ways to work towards common goal
- Stay positive

VA Resources for Caregivers

- Get to know your VA Caregiver Coordinator
www.caregiver.va.gov
- Find out who your MS Social Worker is!
- Get to know your Veteran's MS Care Team
- What are the respite care options for Caregivers?
- Talk to VA Provider about telehealth care options:
Clinical Video Telehealth, home telehealth
- Talk to VA Provider about other Caregiver help
- Find out your Veteran's VA benefits
- Check out the resources at the end of this presentation

Resources and References

VA Caregiver Resources

Note: To connect directly to websites listed, make sure you are in “Slide Show” view and hover mouse over hyperlink and click.

❖ VA MSCOE Website:

- www.va.gov/ms/multiple-sclerosis-caregivers-home.asp

❖ VA Caregiver Website: www.caregiver.va.gov

- **VA Caregiver Website Toolbox:** www.caregiver.va.gov/toolbox_landing.asp
- **VA Caregiver Workbook:** www.caregiver.va.gov/pdfs/Caregiver_Workbook_V3_Module_1.pdf

Other Websites for Caregivers

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- **Communication Tips & Assisting a Caregiver:**

www.familycaregiving101.org/assist

www.familycaregiving101.org/assist/communicating.cfm

- **Consortium of MS Centers (CMSC):**

www.mscares.org/cmcs/News/Web-Sights-MS-Caregivers-2.html

- **Paralyzed Veterans of America:**

www.pva.org/site/c.ajlRK9NJLcJ2E/b.6306123/k.B389/Caregivers_Support.htm

- **Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving:**

www.rosalynncarter.org