



A FORUM ON
WOMEN VETERANS

Homeless Services for Women Veterans

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Overview of Homeless Services for Women Veterans*

Women comprise roughly 5% of the 107,000 homeless Veterans**

HUD-VASH program:

- HUD Housing Choice vouchers with VA supportive services
- Provides for permanent housing for homeless Veterans and their families
- Currently, 11% of HUD-VASH Veterans are women
- Nearly 30,000 Housing Choice vouchers are currently allocated for homeless Veterans

Homeless Grant & Per Diem program:

- Funds grants to community agencies to offer transition housing and supportive services for homeless Veterans
- 7 programs provide specific enhanced services for homeless women and women with dependent children
- More than 200 GPD programs have the capacity to serve women

Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program:

- Provide a 24-hour, 7 days per week, supervised therapeutic milieu for Veterans with multiple and severe psychosocial deficits.
- Deliver specific treatment for mental illnesses and addictive disorders

*Programs that offer gender specific services within the VA Homeless

continuum- all VA Homeless services have the capacity to serve women

**On any given night – CHALENG 2008 Annual Report



Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Programs (MH RRTP)

Safety and Security of Women Veterans in MH RRTPs:

- January 2008: Field mandated to implement:
 - Keyless entry for all MH RRTPs
 - Locks for female bedrooms and bathrooms
 - Use of closed circuit monitoring of public areas
 - \$2.7 million allocated to the field for implementation
- Staffing must provide 24/7 on-site supervision of MH RRTPs
- Separate and secure sleeping and bathroom arrangements
- Annual Safety and Security Assessment in all MH RRTPs will be conducted jointly with the Women Veteran Program Manager (WVPM) and will focus on the needs of women veterans

MH RRTP Handbook (May 2009)

- All MH RRTPs must maintain environments to support women Veterans' dignity, respect and safety
- Gender-specific treatment and rehabilitation services must be available
- Services provided to women Veteran must be on par with services for male Veterans



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Focusing on the Needs of Homeless Veterans and Families

- 131,000 Veterans are estimated to be homeless on any given night.
- Women comprise roughly 5% of the homeless Veteran population
- VA has initiated programs to address the prevention of homelessness among Veterans with families including,
- HUD- VASH:
 - Provides for permanent housing for homeless Veterans and their families with VA supportive services
 - Currently, 11% of HUD-VASH Veterans are women
 - 20,000 Housing Choice vouchers are currently allocated for homeless Veterans
- Supportive Services for Low Income Veterans in Permanent Housing*
 - Provides grants and technical assistance to community non-profit organizations to work with Veterans and their families in order to maintain them in their current housing and prevent homelessness
- At-Risk Pilot with HUD for Veteran Families*
 - A multi-site three-year pilot project designed to provide early intervention to recently discharged Veterans and their families to prevent homelessness.

*Implementation to begin FY 2010



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Homeless Women Veterans

- 5% of homeless Veterans are women
- Risk factors for homelessness among women include:
 - Trauma
 - Combat
 - Sexual
 - Poverty
 - Lack of affordable housing
 - Limited child care support

VA offers an extensive, specialized continuum of care to address the unique needs of homeless women Veterans.



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Stand Downs

- Stand Downs are events held by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in conjunction with many community agencies in an effort to reach and provide service to homeless Veterans.
- During calendar year 2009, there were 190 Stand Down events held (a 21% increase) from the previous year.
- 48,805 Veterans and Families were served (a 40% increase) from the previous year at events in 46 states, DC, and Puerto Rico.
- 3,028 female Veterans were served
- 4,653 spouses of Veterans were served
- 1,770 children of Veterans were served



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2009 CHALENG Estimate Homeless Veterans with Families

- CHALENG VA Medical Center Point of Contacts (POC) report an increase in the number of homeless Veterans with families(i.e., dependent children) being served. POCs reported seeing a total of 2,368 homeless Veteran families.
- CHALENG report estimated serving 1,282 homeless Veterans' families. Some of this increase may reflect the impact of HUD-VASH expansion, which allows VA staff to work with Veterans and their families in HUD-VASH housing.