

VA

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Office of Connected CareOffice of Public Affairs
Media RelationsWashington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.gov

Fact Sheet

February 2018

TeleMental Health in the Department of Veteran Affairs

Summary

Since fiscal year (FY) 2002, VA has provided Veterans with access to mental health services through more than **2,749,000 TeleMental Health encounters**. TeleMental Health is defined as the use of information and telecommunication technologies to deliver mental health services when the provider and the Veteran are separated by geographical distance. Given improved access to mental health treatment, admissions to acute psychiatric beds in the VA for new patients receiving Clinical Video TeleMental Health decreased by 31%, and Bed Days of Care decreased by 34% in FY 2017.

FY 2017

Last year VA delivered over **473,000 TeleMental Health consultations** to more than **151,600 Veterans**. While most TeleMental Health was delivered from a medical center to a Veteran inside a VA community-based out-patient clinic (CBOC), in FY 2017, approximately 8,700 Veterans gained access to VA TeleMental Health services using VA Video Connect (VVC) directly from their homes or other non-VA locations. Currently, TeleMental Health services are delivered by providers from multiple mental health professions to treat nearly all diagnoses, employing most treatment modalities (e.g. individual psychotherapies) at multiple sites of care (e.g. VA Medical Center (VAMC), CBOC, Veterans' homes and non-VA sites).

National TeleMental Health Center

Beginning in FY 2010, VA established the National TeleMental Health Center (NTMHC), expanding beyond the typical hub-and-spoke model to a nation-wide model that provides Veteran access to clinical experts throughout the country. The NTMHC clinical national experts (in affective, psychotic, anxiety and substance use disorders) are currently located at the VA Boston/Harvard; VA Connecticut Healthcare System/Yale; Philadelphia VAMC/University of Pennsylvania; and Providence VAMC/Brown. From FY 2010 through FY 2017, the NTMHC has provided national expert consultations and follow-up visits totaling over 21,500 encounters to more than 5,600 Veterans. In FY 2017, the NTMHC provided national expert consultations and follow-up visits, totaling over 2,900 encounters to more than 600 Veterans.

Home Telehealth Remote Monitoring

In FY 2017, VA provided over 5,000 Veterans with access to care using home telehealth monitoring for mental health conditions. Home Telehealth Remote Monitoring is typically done without video interaction between the VA and the Veteran.

High Veteran Patient Satisfaction Scores for VA Telehealth

Not specific to TeleMental Health: In FY 2017, Veteran satisfaction scores were 92% for clinical videoconferencing telehealth and 88% for home telehealth services.