

VAU.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 25, 2023

Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center
1500 Weiss Street
Saginaw, MI 48602Contact: Tara Scheuer, Public Affairs Officer
(989) 497-2500, extension 13010
tara.scheuer@va.gov

We invite any media interested in interviewing our VA staff to learn more about care and services to contact our Public Affairs Officer at 989-497-2500, extension 13010 or e-mail tara.scheuer@va.gov

Strength at Home (SAH) Program Approved by Battering Intervention Provider Standards Compliance Council of Michigan (BIPSCC-MI)

Aleda E. Lutz VAMC, along with all Michigan VA sites (including Iron Mountain), who provide the Strength at Home (SAH) program have now been approved by BIPSCC-MI.

This certification authorizes VA-Strength at Home to be recognized as a state approved intervention for those who use and those at risk of using violence in their partner relationships. SAH is appropriate for all levels of conflict beginning with difficulty with communication to potential for or use of domestic violence.

VA provides these services free of charge to eligible Veterans whether they are adjudicated or self-referred. Most community agencies charge fees to participate and inability to pay is often a barrier for our Veterans.

SAH is an evidence-based intervention designed specifically for Veterans and active-duty military. It is a 12-week small group intervention and can be delivered face to face or virtually. There is also a couples/partners program for those who are experiencing difficulty with communication and conflict in their partner relationships. Randomized controlled trials support that the intervention also reduces PTSD symptoms and number of drinking days for those who use alcohol.

“We have seen numerous success stories since initiating the SAH program. Veterans report benefits beyond their intimate relationships, describing better work relationships, better communication with friends and family and less stress overall. Unlike community agencies who have rigid schedules creating barriers to access, we will refer to VAs in other time zones, reducing the impact on employment or family life,” stated Kimberly Sawatzki, Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program Manager. “We have referred Veterans to virtual groups in Alaska and Mountain time zones to accommodate their schedules, which promotes stability during treatment. We are ecstatic that the courts can now accept this intervention for those who have domestic violence charges. I would stress however, that this is NOT an anger management program. It is designed to address conflict, up to and including violence, in intimate partner relationships.”

Veterans can request a referral to the SAH program via their provider, social worker, care team, or by contacting our IPVAP Coordinator at 989-497-2500, extension 13632.

The Aleda E. Lutz VAMC in Saginaw, Michigan operates an 81-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation Community Living Center. It provides care to over 40,126 Veterans in a 35-county geographic area, from mid-Michigan to the Mackinac Bridge. Veterans can also receive care at one of our nine VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics located throughout Michigan. More information about this VA can be found at <https://www.va.gov/saginaw-health-care/>.

###