

# IMPROVING THE VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM

*Driving toward a program that is easy to understand, simple to administer, and meets the needs of Veterans and their families, community providers, and VA staff*

Enacted April 19, 2017, a new law made 3 key changes to help improve the Veterans Choice Program

## 1 Removal of Sunset Date

The law removed the August 7, 2017 date for the VCP. The VCP will continue until the funds appropriated by Congress are completely expended.



## 2 Primary Coordinator of Benefits Designation

VA is now Primary Coordinator of Benefits for services provided to Veterans under the VCP. This change eliminates costly time consuming manual processes and more closely aligns the VCP with other VA programs.



## 3 Information Sharing

The law removes barriers to sharing Veteran's health information with community providers while ensuring community providers only use that information to provide care.



## 5 Immediate Legislative Needs

**While we are excited about the recent legislative changes, we know that more needs to be done. VA can not streamline care and improve the Veterans Choice Program without help from Congress.**

### **Consolidation and Redesign of Community Care**

- VA has multiple programs to send Veterans out into the community to receive care.
- **Solution:** Consolidate and streamline the multiple community care programs into one program
- **Impact:** Eligibility and access is easily understood by Veterans and their families, community providers, and VA staff

### **Enhanced Sharing of Patient Information**

- Restrictions prevent VA from sharing critical health information with Veterans' other health insurance
- **Solution:** Further revisions to the law by removing barriers to information sharing for all types of health services provided
- **Impact:** Enhances VA's ability to coordinate care

### **Obligation of Funding**

- Obligating funding at the time of authorization leads to inaccurate accounting
- **Solution:** Obligation of funding at the time of payment
- **Impact:** Improved accounting of community care funds

### **Provider Agreement**

- Contracts create unnecessary administrative burdens for some community providers
- **Solution:** Provider Agreements
- **Impact:** A larger provider network that would increase access to care for Veterans

### **Funding and Funding Flexibility**

- VA Community Care is subject to unnecessary funding constraints
- **Solution:** Funding for VA Community Care and flexibility to meet the needs of Veterans
- **Impact:** Ensuring eligible Veterans can access community care and increase funding transparency

# VA COMMUNITY CARE QUICK FACTS: DELIVERING RESULTS FOR VETERANS

**>49M**  
Appointments Completed

More than 49 million appointments completed via community care since the beginning of FY 2016. More than 25 million appointments have been completed via community care in fiscal year 2017.

**77**  
Sites with Embedded Staff

VCP contractors are embedded on site in 77 locations facilitating closer collaboration with VA staff.

**6**  
Legislative Changes

VA partnered with Congress to change legislation to improve the program

**>555K**  
Network Providers

The total community care provider network continues to grow, with more than 555,000 current providers.

**26M**  
Appointments through VCP

Since inception, Choice funding has purchased nearly 26 million appointments for Veterans.

**119**  
Health Exchange Partners

More than 1.28 million unique Veteran patients are supported by bi-directional health information exchange with 119 community care partners supporting thousands of health care facilities.



**37M**  
VA Community Care Claims Processed

Since the beginning of FY 2016, VA has processed nearly 37 million claims via all community care programs.

**3M**  
Issued Authorizations

So far this fiscal year, VA has issued 3 million total authorizations via all community care programs.

**>1.8M**  
Veterans using VCP

More than 1.8 million unique Veterans have used VCP since the program's inception.

## VA IS USING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO MAKE IMMEDIATE FIXES WHERE WE CAN TODAY

