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VA announces final community care regulations under MISSION Act

WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the publication in the [Federal Register](#) of two final regulations as part of its new Veterans Community Care Program under the [VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks \(MISSION\) Act of 2018](#).

Signed into law on June 6, 2018, the MISSION Act strengthens VA's ability to deliver trusted, easy to access, high quality care at VA facilities, virtually through telehealth, and in Veterans' communities. The law makes several improvements to VA care that begin on June 6, 2019.

"President Trump promised to give Veterans greater choice," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "We are honoring that promise by making sure Veterans have access to timely, high-quality care, whether from our VA facilities or our community providers."

A key component of the MISSION Act is a new [urgent care benefit](#) that provides eligible Veterans with greater choice and access to timely, high-quality care. With urgent care, Veterans have a new option for care for the treatment of minor injuries and illnesses, such as colds, sore throats and minor skin infections. The benefit is offered in addition to the opportunity to receive care from a VA provider, as VA also offers same-day services.

VA also published the final regulation for the [Veterans Community Care Program](#) governing how eligible Veterans receive necessary hospital care, medical services, and extended care services from non-VA entities or providers in the community. The new Veterans Community Care Program replaces the Veterans Choice Program, which expires June 6, 2019.

VA previously published an interim final rule for [Veterans Care Agreements](#) (VCA) on May 14, 2019. VA may use VCAs to order care when that care is not otherwise feasibly available through VA's contracted network. VCAs are intended to be used in limited situations. VA will purchase most community care for Veterans through its contracted network as part of its strong partnerships with third party administrators. Currently, these administrators are TriWest Healthcare Alliance and Optum Public Sector Solutions.

VA is implementing improvements to its community care program as required by the VA MISSION Act. Veterans can find detailed information on urgent care eligibility, community care eligibility and MISSION Act implementation at www.missionact.va.gov

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