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# News Release

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## VA holds first virtual Women Veterans Forum

**WASHINGTON** – Acting Deputy Secretary Pamela Powers on Tuesday led VA’s first virtual Women Veterans Forum, which helped women Veterans from across the country learn about the care and services they can receive at VA, and how VA is changing to better serve the growing population of women Veterans.

“You have a voice in VA, and we’ve learned a lot over the last few years about how to better serve you,” Powers told more than 1,500 women Veterans who joined the event by phone or online.

Powers said that about 60% of VA’s employees are women, and that these employees and the growing number of women leaders at VA are working to change the culture of the department to make sure women are comfortable at VA. “We have women across this department helping to shape this department every day,” Powers said.

VA has made progress by increasing the range of services available to women, including mental health care that is tailored specifically to women Veterans. These changes have resulted in an increase in the trust women Veterans have in VA – that trust has grown by 10% for women in the last six months, compared to a 6% increase for men.

Despite that progress, Powers said VA is working hard to make sure women Veterans are served well across the entire VA, and she encouraged all women to enroll for the benefits they’ve earned by serving their country. “We’re here for all of our Veterans, and we hope that you choose VA,” she said.

The Women Veterans Forum allowed several women leaders at VA to explain the work they’re doing to ensure all VA facilities are inclusive.

- Chief Veterans Experience Officer Dr. Lynda Davis explained how her office is set up to continuously poll women Veterans to learn more about their experience at VA, which gives VA the information it needs to improve services for women.
- Center for Women Veterans Executive Director Jacqueline Hayes-Byrd and Deputy Director Elizabeth Estabrooks explained how the Center coordinates the delivery of care, benefits, services and programs for women Veterans, and advocates for culture change at VA to ensure it serves women. They discussed the “I Am Not Invisible” campaign, which is aimed at increasing awareness and dialogue about women Veterans.
- Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits Margarita Devlin discussed the compensation, pension, education, insurance, housing and other benefits available to women who served, and how VA extended the process for applying for some of these benefits because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- And Chief Officer for Women’s Health Dr. Patricia Hayes outlined the growing range of care options for women Veterans, including primary care, fertility and maternity care and gynecology. She noted that every VA medical center has a dedicated Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program coordinator.

For more information on resources for women Veterans, [visit VA here](#).

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