Questions & Answers by Topic

Eligibility

What happens once I have been determined as eligible?

If you are distance- eligible, you can call 866-606-8198 to make your Veterans Choice Program appointment. If you are wait list-eligible, you will receive a phone call from a VA partner to help set up your Veterans Choice Program appointment.

One of the eligibility factors is the inability to get an appointment within 30 days. Can you expand on what this means?

If the VA facility is not able to schedule your appointment to occur up to 30 days from your clinically indicated date, you will be eligible to participate in the Choice Program for that particular appointment. If no such clinically indicated date can be determined, you will qualify for the Veterans Choice Program if the VA facility is not able to schedule your appointment to occur up to 30 days from the date you prefer to be seen.

What does clinically indicated date mean?

The clinically indicated date is the date you and your medical provider agree should be the next date you are seen for care. If the VA medical facility is unable to schedule an appointment up to 30 days from that date you may be eligible for the Veterans Choice Program.

Is the 40 mile calculation based on the distance from a Community-Based Outpatient Clinic or the main VA where I am enrolled?

This calculation is based on the driving distance from your permanent residence, or an active temporary address, to the closest VA facility (including Community-Based Outpatient Clinics and VA Medical Centers) that has a full-time primary care provider.

I have to commute to the nearest VA Medical Center by boat; can you explain the Air, Boat and Ferry eligibility requirements?

If your local VA medical facility eligibility staff determines that you must travel from your residence to the nearest VA medical facility by air, boat, or ferry, they will inform you that you are eligible for the Veterans Choice Program. Once you are informed of your eligibility, call the Choice Program Call Center at 866-606-8198.

I didn't get my Choice Card, what do I do?

You do not need your Choice Card to access the Choice Program. If you didn't receive a Choice Card, call **866-606-8198** to find out if you are eligible and to make an appointment.

If I do not qualify for the Veterans Choice Program, are there other options I can use to access fc_jrf a_pc msrqgbc rfc T?=

Yes, there are other Care in the Community care programs you may be able to use. Each program has its own eligibility requirements. Talk to your VA medical provider or visit http://www.va.gov/purchasedcare/ for more information about these programs.

Questions & Answers by Topic

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Veterans Choice Program

Procedures

Can I call my non-VA doctor to make an appointment?

No, please call the Choice Program call center at **866-606-8198,**

If my appointment is over 30 days or I live more than 40 miles away, can I see my doctor at the VA?

Yes, the Choice Program is an opportunity for Veterans to choose how they would like to receive care. Even if you are eligible for the Program, you may see your doctor at the VA.

My doctor doesn't currently participate in the Choice Program, can he/she join?

Yes. VA is actively seeking to expand its network of community providers. As of December, 2015, VA has created more flexibility in the types of providers who may participate in the program – if your provider was previously ineligible to participate, please encourage them to look at the new guidelines. Your doctor can call **866-606-8198** to learn more about the Veterans Choice Program and to become an approved Choice Provider. If your preferred provider is not available under the Program, we will recommend other providers in your area. Your doctor can find more information here:

http://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/for_providers.asp

If I cancel an appointment and then reschedule, how will that change the clinically indicated date?

If you cancel or reschedule, your provider will specify a new clinically indicated date. If the re-scheduled appointment is more than 30 days from that date, then you may be eligible for the Choice Program.

How do I get my prescription filled if I use the Choice Program?

The Choice Program non-VA Provider will issue a prescription to the Veteran with up to a 14 day supply of an urgently or emergently needed National Formulary drug. The Veteran may have the 14 day supply prescription filled at any non-VA pharmacy of his/her choosing and may submit a request for reimbursement to VA. For prescriptions that are not urgent or emergent, please follow standard procedures to fill a prescription at the VA pharmacy.

Can I use the Choice Program and see my doctor at my local VA medical facility?

Yes. The Choice Program is not an "either/or" situation. If you use the Choice Program to receive one type care, you can still continue to receive care at the VA for other types of care. For example, if you qualify for the Choice Program to see a urologist under the 30 day eligibility requirement, you can go see your VA physician for any other type of care.

Questions & Answers by Topic

Covered Care

If I can't get a primary care appointment in 30 days, can I use the Choice Program?

Yes, primary care is covered under the Choice Program.

Is Emergency care covered by the Choice Program?

No, emergency care is not covered under the Choice Program. All care under the Choice Program is required to be preauthorized. VA has other options for you if you require emergency care. Please contact your local VA medical facility for more information.

Do I qualify for the Choice Program for specialty care or elective surgery, such as cataract surgery?

Yes, you can be referred to the Choice Program for any type of care except emergency and long- term care.

I use prosthetics; can I use the Choice Program?

Yes.

As a female Veteran, I require obstetrics and gynecology services, but the nearest VA medical facility doesn't offer this care. Can I go ahead and use the Veterans Choice Program to get an appointment outside the system?

The Choice Program mileage eligibility is based on the distance between your place of residence and the nearest VA health care facility that has a full-time primary care physician. However, you may be eligible to use the Program if the VA can't schedule your appointment within 30 days of the clinically indicated date, or if no such date can be determined, your preferred date.

Insurance Information

Do I submit my personal insurance information if I qualify for the Choice Program?

Yes, the Veterans Choice Program requires Veterans with other health insurance to provide that information.

Are there any other health insurance plans that are excluded from Choice Program billing?

The only other health insurance excluded from the Choice Program billing process are government health benefits plans, such as Medicaid, Medicare, and TRICARE.

Will copays be collected by the community provider?

VA copays will not be collected at the time of the appointment but will be billed by VA after the appointment, in the same way as receiving care at your local facility. If you are subject to copayments now, you will be subject to the same copayment requirements under the Choice Program. Your copay amount will be determined after the service is received.

Am I responsible for my private insurance deductible if I get care through the Choice Program?

Yes, if you are receiving non-service connected care. Your private health insurance will be the primary payer for non-service connected care and you may be responsible for the health insurance deductibles cost-shares. If you are receiving service connected care, you will not be responsible for your deductible as VA is primarily responsible for service connected care received through the Choice Program.

Can I use the Choice Program if I don't have personal insurance?

Yes. While submission of private health insurance is a requirement of the Choice Program, not having private health insurance does not exclude you from the Program.

Is my private insurance charged for service connected care?

No, under the Choice Program service connected care is covered by the VA.