



Veteran Directed Care Program Newsletter

Friday, November 8, 2024

Celebrating Veterans Day

In honor of Veterans Day, we thank you for your support of our Veterans and of the Veteran Directed Care (VDC) program. We are sharing some success stories from the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) of Pasco-Pinellas, located in Saint Petersburg, Florida. These stories show how the VDC program has empowered Veterans to live their lives how and where they choose.

"The future for us was very uncertain," writes the wife of a Navy Veteran. Her husband, a 74-year-old Veteran, has a disability from his time in Vietnam and was diagnosed in 2020 with frontal temporal dementia. The VDC program has allowed him to remain at home with his wife as his caregiver, who notes, "it's challenging at times, but the appreciation I have with the extra support is awesome! I wouldn't want it any other way, and my husband feels the same way. I thank everyone at the VA [Veterans Affairs] and the AAAPP [AAA of Pasco-Pinellas] and love this program!"

"A 71-year-old Veteran has received financial and logistics support from the VDC program that allows his daughter to be his primary caregiver. This has allowed the Veteran to remain comfortable in his home while receiving the attention and assistance he requires daily. In addition to allowing him to receive care from a caregiver who understands his preferences and needs, the VDC program has inspired his daughter to pursue a career in nursing, where she can make use of her skills and compassion to assist others in need. The program's ability to foster such personal growth within families underscores its broad and lasting impact."

To submit your own success stories with the VDC program or the Veterans you serve, please use the form [linked here](#).

ACL Person-Centered Counseling Training

Person-centered counseling (PCC) is a valuable tool for the aging and disability networks that serve Veterans, and it can improve access to care through streamlined partnerships, technology, and resources that put the focus on the needs of Veterans and their caregivers. ACL offers the [Person-Centered Counseling Training Program](#) to those interested in developing or furthering their understanding of PCC. The first course is available for free [using this link](#). For additional information or the full course series, please reach out to NoWrongDoor@acl.hhs.gov.

“As a former nurse with no social work experience, I found the communications tool [in the Person-Centered Counseling Training] to be most helpful. I have a client who is difficult [to communicate with]. Every interaction with this individual made me extremely anxious and fearful. [The PCC communications tools] totally changed the dynamic of our relationship, and I no longer fear our interactions. Thank you so much for providing this training and helping me to be a better support and resource for all of my clients.” - Western Montana 6 AAA

To submit your own success stories with PCC or the VDC program, please use the form [linked here](#).

VDC Expansion

The VDC program, in coordination with the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), continues to expand across the nation to provide more Veterans with access to home-based community care. Since the beginning of VDC expansion in 2022, the VDC Federal Technical Assistance team has recorded that 99 ADNAs, 29 of which are Spokes to 5 Super Hubs, partnered with 79 VAMCs to start the VDC program in their communities. In addition to beginning the program at VAMCs, we've seen a 43% growth in the Veteran Monthly Census and a 41% increase in the Veteran Cumulative Census since the start of expansion.

We look forward to continued growth in the program and new partnerships with VAMCs! The expansion efforts are an exciting opportunity to provide more Veterans with the option to self-direct their long-term services and supports while continuing to live at home and engage in their community.

Reminders

ACL's No Wrong Door (NWD) Website VDC Page: ACL is currently experiencing delays in uploading new resources to the NWD website's VDC page. If you do not find a resource you are looking for on the page, please email veterandirected@acl.hhs.gov for resource requests.

VDC Monthly Reporting Tool: Please continue to report your program's data to the [VDC Monthly Reporting Tool](#) at the end of each month to help us accurately capture the VDC program's reach.

Technical Assistance: Have a question? Need guidance? Want to share good news about your VDC program? Reach out to the VDC Federal Technical Assistance Team at veterandirected@acl.hhs.gov. We look forward to hearing from you!

VDC Email Distribution List: If you or other VDC program staff are not already on the VDC email distribution list, [please enter your information using this link](#) to make sure you don't miss out on important news!