



VETERAN DIRECTED CARE (VDC) PROGRAM - OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

WHAT IS THE VDC PROGRAM?

- ✓ The VDC program is a self-directed model of home and community-based care designed to support Veterans who need assistance with activities of daily living or instrumental activities of daily living.
- ✓ VDC enables Veterans to remain in their homes with greater independence and dignity.
- ✓ Rather than receiving a fixed set of services, Veterans develop a flexible, Veteran-centric spending plan based on an authorized budget to determine who provides their care and what supports best meet their individual needs – including the ability to hire family members, friends, or neighbors as paid caregivers.
- ✓ This emphasis on autonomy is a cornerstone of the program's design and is frequently highlighted by participants as transformative.
- ✓ VDC is a collaborative initiative between the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Administration for Community Living, delivered in partnership with VA Medical Centers (VAMCs) and local aging and disability network agencies.

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE



137
VAMCs offering VDC



50
states with active programs



3
U.S. territories with active programs



362
community partners certified to serve veterans



15,468
Veterans served (cumulative)

VDC IMPACT

QUALITY OF LIFE OUTCOMES

A qualitative study of Veterans enrolled in VDC found that participants described regaining a sense of self, reconnecting with family, returning to meaningful activities, and avoiding the institutional care they feared. Several Veterans who had experienced psychiatric hospitalizations prior to enrollment reported that stable, trusted care provided through VDC was a turning point.

15%-19%
lower odds of hospitalization

99%
satisfaction with choice & control

37%
decrease in nursing home use

"If I had gone into a nursing home, I don't think I'd still be here. Being home is everything."
— Ron Gasper, 90-year-old U.S. Coast Guard Veteran

"The future for us was very uncertain. With the VDC program, it allows me to keep my husband home in a caring environment while I care for him. I thank everyone at the VA and the Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas and love this program!"
— Wife and caregiver of a Vietnam-era Navy Veteran

THE SENATOR ELIZABETH DOLE 21ST CENTURY VETERANS HEALTHCARE AND BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT

On January 2, 2025, the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act was signed into law, marking a landmark moment for VDC that:

- Grants VDC statutory authority under Title 38 of the United States Code and ensures its long-term sustainability;
- Requires VDC to be made available in all U.S. territories;
- Expands availability of VDC program services to eligible Native American Veterans receiving care through the Indian Health Service, an Urban Indian organization, the Native Hawaiian health care system, or a Title VI tribal health organization; and
- Reflects a federal commitment to broad access for Veterans.