



Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers

Strategic Review



The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has completed the strategic review of the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) announced on April 17, 2017.

Results from VA's internal review and listening sessions with a variety of stakeholders revealed a need for better communication about eligibility determinations, clinical discharges and the appeals process; improved internal processes and procedures; and additional staff training.

VA has made the following advancements since April 17th:

Improved Information Sharing

- ❖ Increased communication and engagement with Veterans Service Organizations, Military Service Organizations, members of Congress, VA Veteran Integrated Service Network Directors and other stakeholders.
- ❖ Redesigned the Caregiver Support Program website.
 - ❖ Includes a section connecting caregivers and Veterans of all eras to resources and home- and community-based services available through VA's Geriatrics and Extended Care programs.
- ❖ Shared Veterans Health Administration Directive (VHA) 1152, *Caregiver Support Program*, with more than 80,000 subscribers to the Caregiver Support Program list-serve promoting transparency of program operations.

Improved Systematic Execution of the Program

- ❖ Published VHA Directive 1152, *Caregiver Support Program* as a new policy.
 - ❖ The policy lays the foundation for the program operations and outlines staff responsibilities, Veteran and caregiver eligibility requirements, procedures for discharges from the program and available benefits.
 - ❖ Trained more than 600 VA Staff on the new policy and tools.
- ❖ Issued a new, standardized letter to be used by all VA Medical Centers when communicating program discharges with Veterans and family caregivers.
 - ❖ Includes plain language descriptions of the eligibility criteria no longer met by the Veteran and/or family caregiver and guidance on filing a clinical appeal.
- ❖ Implemented a new "Roles, Responsibilities, and Requirements" document demonstrating that family caregivers in the program are to be recognized as collaborative partners with VHA providers in ensuring the overall care and well-being of the Veteran.