

VETERAN OUTREACH PROGRAM: The Veteran Hospice Patient

REASON FOR MEMO

Veterans who enroll in hospice may or may not have benefits through the VA system. If a Veteran has both Medicare and VA benefits they have the right to choose which one will pay for hospice. This is important to know upon admission for several reasons including the following items listed in the table.

Category	VA Covering Hospice Services	Medicare Covering Hospice
General Statement/ Goal about the Veteran hospice patient	VA is paying hospice to help keep the Veteran comfortably in their home versus returning to hospital. How	If Medicare is primary we need to treat them as we would any other patient. The exception to this is that they can still receive care through the VA as they desire. We should still maintain contact with VA Case Manager to ensure their awareness that the patient is on hospice services.
Hospitalizations Can a Veteran return to the <i>VA hospital</i> without loss of the hospice benefit?	Yes. Veteran can return to VA hospital for any kind of treatment or see the doctor for routine care. If the treatment is considered to be outside the hospice plan of care then the VA will decide whether or not to keep the person under hospice care.	<u>If returning to VA hospital</u> then same applies. <u>If going to a non-VA hospital</u> then treat situation as you would all our other patients and use your LOC change packet.
Hospitalized Veteran What do I do if my Pt goes to the hospital?	If in VA- We should visit daily and monitor status. We should speak with the Case Manager and VA Nurse to notify of our visit EVERY DAY and put our notes in their chart (use the Hospitalized Patient Packet/ checklist will provide you info on how to do this).	If in VA hospital same applies.
Doctor Appointments Can the Veteran continue to see the doctor for routine appointments?	Yes. However, the hospice nurse should call the VA Case Manager to see if they would like for us to try to take care of labs or provide verbal updates on status versus them having to return since this can pose a hardship on the patient. If it is important to the patient they he/she return we must honor this with all patients.	If seeing a non-VA physician then call the MD and ask if the appointment is still needed or if there is something we can do in the home that will give them the info they need (such as draw labs). Rationale is that going to the doctors office can pose hardship on patient.
Change in Level of Care	Must have prior approval from VA Case Manager for change to Continuous Care, Respite, and with GIP should have a one-time contract negotiated through VA.	Must have Attending MD or Hospice Medical Director order signed per agency policy.

KEEP IN NURSE NOTEBOOK FOR REFERENCE

Category	VA Covering Hospice Services	Medicare Covering Hospice
Medication Refills	If they have the med shipped to them through VA- Call number on med bottle. This is an automated system where you have to punch in the SS#, RX # (on bottle), and DOB. Meds will be shipped usually within a week. IF THEY DO NOT HAVE A WEEKS WORTH OF MEDS AVAILABLE THEN ORDER A 5 DAY SUPPLY.	Same
Out of a Non-Hospice Covered Med that Pt receives through VA	Look at medical record or ask patient if he has prescription drug coverage outside of VA benefit. If no drug coverage and patient cannot cover cost of med notify ED.	Same
Out of a med that is related to terminal illness but VA has been supplying.	Order one weeks worth through Bradley and call Hospiscript to profile. Call phone number on front of bottle and obtain refill.	Same
Out of Med Hospice has been supplying and delivering.	Obtain refills through Bradley. (such as gels. Remember that we should use gels very sparingly and only for those who cannot swallow) CONCENTRATED LIQUIDS ARE BETTER OPTIONS FOR GOOD SYMPTOM MANAGEMENT.	Same
DME Equipment Supplied through VA	WE <u>SHOULD NOT</u> CHANGE OUT EQUIPMENT IF VA SENT EQUIPMENT TO THEIR HOME.	Order DME through Bradley or other provider in service area that is contracted with Guardian Hospice.

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Category	What Guardian Hospice Offers	Services Provided	Contact Person
<p>Veteran organizations we are involved with include the following:</p>	<p><u>There are 3 organizations:</u></p> <p>Vietnam Veterans of America Ch #953 <i>President- Sgt. Ralph E. Land, Ret. U.S.A.</i></p> <p>AM Vets Ch # 1776 <i>(Open to ALL Veterans i.e., National Guard/Reservist). Post Commander- Sgt. Ralph E. Land, Ret. U.S.A.</i></p> <p>Vietnam Veterans of America Nashville Foundation <i>President- Sgt. Ralph E. Land, Ret. U.S.A.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource material to increase awareness of benefit entitlement • Veteran Service Officers (VSO) that assist the Veteran with claim submission. • Funds available to help veterans in need. • Food Drive (will take Veterans food) • Will help with odds and end stuff like minor fixing of household items. • May be able to assist with transportation to VA for those who do not require ambulance (must have advanced notice) • Veteran support/ companionship. • Meetings monthly (3rd Monday of each month). • PLEASE NOTIFY ALL FAMILY MEMBERS WHO ARE VETERANS OF THIS ADDITIONAL RESOURCE OF SUPPORT. 	<p>Laurel</p>
<p>Chaplain Services</p>	<p>If a Veteran specifically requests a chaplain that is a Veteran we have access to two- one through Guardian and one through Vietnam Veterans of America Nashville Foundation (VVAF). Their visits will be in addition to Scott or Dennis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companionship • Spiritual support 	<p>Linda (Guardian) or Laurel (VVAF)</p>
<p>Benefit Entitlement Research</p>	<p>Veterans may be eligible for additional resources that they may not be aware of and the Hospice should take the lead in helping the Veteran tap into the benefit. The Hospice Social Worker will determine needs upon assessment of the patient and collaborate with the VA Case Manager to help initiate the needed service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be eligible for a few hours of sitter services. • May be eligible for Aid and Assist that will allow a Veteran to have nurse aide services in addition to our hospice aide. • Funeral/ Memorial benefit • Honor Guard Services 	