



Partners: Hospice and VA Working Together

We Honor Veterans is a national hospice provider awareness campaign conducted by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization in collaboration with the Department of Veterans Affairs. A key component of the campaign is to promote, encourage and support successful and sustainable VA-hospice relationships through the development of Hospice-Veteran Partnerships.

Working together: What this means and why it's important

- Veterans and their families deserve the best quality end-of-life care and services.
- Every hospice in the country is caring for Veterans, whether they are aware of it or not.
- VA Hospice and Palliative Care contact information helps community hospices better serve Veterans.
- Most Veterans are not enrolled in the VA healthcare system and many may not be aware of their VA hospice benefits.
- Given that the ratio of VA facilities to hospice agencies is about 1:32, most community hospice and VA HPC staff do not have one-on-one relationships with each other.
- HVPs offer the most efficient and effective way to serve Veterans and meet their needs at the end of life.
- Having established relationships through HVPs increases Veterans' access to hospice and palliative care services.
- HVPs facilitate communication, collaboration and coordination of care and benefits for Veterans across VA and community care settings.
- HVPs may be coordinated by a state hospice organization, a VA medical center, other community organization or a combination of these.
- HVP activities may include participating in live and virtual meetings, workgroups, and outreach or educational events.

Don't confuse "partnering" with "contracting". Partnering means community and VA staff working together to serve Veterans. Contracting is a formal business relationship that allows VA to pay hospices for their services.

The information on the next page provides suggestions related to WHV partnering activities that can help hospices progress through the four WHV partner levels and increase VA staff confidence when making referrals to community providers.

Ultimately, the goal is to honor Veterans' preferences at the end of life, which can best be accomplished by working together.

More information about We Honor Veterans, partners and Veteran-centric education and activities can be found at www.wehonorveterans.org.

**Community Hospice and VA Facility
Relationship Building Suggestions**

WHV Levels Requirements for Hospice-Veteran Partnerships	What hospice staff can do: Relationship-Building Suggestions	What VA staff can do: Relationship-Building Suggestions
<p>Level One: Identify the designated Hospice and Palliative Care contact person at closest VA medical center and/or Community Based Outpatient Clinic. Review the Hospice-Veteran Partnership Guide.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the VA contact person is unknown to your organization, call the main # for the VAMC and ask for the Palliative Care Coordinator or palliative care team member. • Ask your state hospice organization if a “VA Fact Sheet for Hospice Partners” exists for the VA facility nearest you. • Ask your state hospice organization if VA HPC contact information is available on their website or in a brochure. • Ask other hospices in your area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the “VA Fact Sheet for Hospice Partners” for your facility, in collaboration with community providers. • Work with the state hospice organization(s) in your region and NHPCO to widely disseminate the VA Fact Sheet. • Provide contact information to the state hospice organization. • Place HPC contact information on your facility’s webpage and share the link with community partners.
<p>Level Two: Use the Hospice-Veteran Partnership Guide to develop ongoing relationships with designated VA contacts, one or more Veteran Service Organizations and hospices in your area. <i>Identified in Level One activities.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a local, regional or statewide Hospice-Veteran Partnership in your area. • Work with your state hospice organization, other hospices and VA staff to organize or participate in Veteran-specific educational events in your region. • Organize or participate in outreach activities to VSOs. • Get to know your County Veterans Service Officer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite community hospice staff to participate in health fairs at your facility. • Invite community hospice staff to EPEC, ELNEC and other education/training events. • Jointly plan information or issue specific work sessions with community hospice staff.
<p>Level Three: Use the Hospice-Veteran Partnership Guide to continue ongoing relationship development with designated VA contacts, one or more Veteran Service Organizations, and hospices in your area. <i>Document phone and/or in-person meetings.</i></p> <p>Actively participate in local, regional or statewide Hospice-Veteran Partnership. <i>Document meetings and other activities.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participate in local, regional or statewide Hospice-Veteran Partnership. • Ask your state hospice organization, other hospices and VA HPC contact about HVPs in the community, state or region. • If there is no HVP in your area, work with your state hospice organization, other hospices and VA staff to create a new statewide or regional HVP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the state hospice organization and community hospice contacts if there is an active HVP in your catchment area. • Reach out to and work with the state hospice organization and community hospices to form a regional or statewide HVP.
<p>Level Four: Continue ongoing relationship development with designated VA contacts, one or more Veteran Service Organizations and hospices in your area.</p> <p>Continue active participation in local, regional or statewide HVP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your state hospice organization to include Veteran content in conferences. • Organize or join a workgroup to address and solve local issues. • Share best practices with others through your HVP, WHV, and VA counterparts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate virtually or in person in HVP activities. • Organize or join a workgroup to address and solve local issues. • Share best practices with other VA staff and your community partners.