



## **We Honor Veterans- Partner Networking Call 12/16/2015**

### **AARP: Create the Good**

Carole Ricks and Randee Bloom

- “Create the Good” program began in 2009; the program was developed to be a volunteer match-based program.
- In the health care environment many people want to volunteer under their specialty (nurse, social worker), but the potential volunteer does not have the time to ‘knock’ on the hospice door.
- AARP is asking organizations that are interested in recruiting volunteers to use this program, to create a database where potential volunteers can get in touch with facilities in their area based on their skill set.
- The program has created specific directions for individual volunteers to post profiles of their interests into the “Create the Good” database. They have created tools that organizations can use to post volunteer opportunities available in their facility. They have also provided additional personalized materials and tools that will match organizations to potential volunteers. Finally, the program has developed educational videos that will guide organizations on how to create personalized accounts.
- This program is beneficial to the We Honor Veterans Partners as it will assist our partners in building their Veteran-to-Veteran Volunteer Program.
- Please visit [Create the Good](#), to learn more.

### **Q & A**

- Q: Is this program available for everyone, or just Non-profits?  
A: The program is available for all organizations as long as the volunteer is a traditional volunteer, meaning they are not receiving a paycheck.

### **WHV Capitol Hill Briefing**

Tony Kudner, Director of Grassroots Advocacy and Digital Strategy, NHPCO

- The Hospice Action Network (HAN) put together a briefing in late October. The event was a panel discussion to educate the members of the Hill about the We Honor Veterans Program.
- Jon Keyserling from NHPCO discussed the programmatic side of the program. Dr. Thomas Eads from the VA spoke about how this program benefits Veterans and why Veterans need specialized care at the end of life. Lt. Col. Dave Benhoff from Heartland Hospice in Warrenton, VA spoke about what We Honor Veterans looks like on the ground.
- The briefing had full support from Senate VA committee. About 80 Staff members were in attendance.
- As part of HANs outreach and promotion, HAN has offered to play matchmaker between members of Congress and Hospice Partners involved with the We Honor Veterans program.

- The HAN team was able to match 20-30 congress members and/or staff to meet with a WHV Hospice partner on Veterans Day.
- If you are interested in reaching out to a member of your Congress please email [veterans@nhpco.org](mailto:veterans@nhpco.org) and a member of the HAN team will follow up.
- Please visit <http://hospiceactionnetwork.org/we-honor-veterans> to learn about the Hospice Action Network and We Honor Veterans collaboration.

### **Veteran-Specific Questions (formally FEHC-V)**

Kristi Dudash, Research Manager, NHPKO

- The Center of Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) initiated the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey in April 2014. With this initiation Hospice programs are now required to survey using CAHPS as the FEHC survey has become outdated.
- The new Veteran-Specific Questions (VSQ) are the same six FEHC-V questions that hospice organizations used to survey their Veteran patients. NHPKO just changed the name to reflect the ending of the FEHC Survey.
- CMS has allowed hospice programs to add the six VSQs to their CAHPS survey. You will need to contact your Vendor to add these 6 questions.
- WHV has posted a telephone script as well as a data analysis workbook that hospice partners can use to gather their responses.
- Learn more about [Veteran-Specific Questions](#).

### **VA Updates**

Dr. Scott Shreve

National Program Director, Hospice and Palliative Care, VA

- Currently working through the bureaucracy in getting volunteers to assist at VA medical centers.
- In regards to reimbursements: on January 1<sup>st</sup> there will be a huge shift in Medicare Hospice Benefits. The VA will not be in a place to deal with the service intensity add-on by January 1<sup>st</sup>, but they are in the process of transitioning to that point. They anticipate that the VA will be able to use the most per diem rate.
- VA Aging Homeless Network: there is a growing emphasis on ending homelessness for Veterans. If someone finds a homeless veteran, the VA is positive that they can be enrolled very quickly to receive the care they need.
- The average age of death for a homeless Veteran is 51 year old.
- Secretary McDonald has announced a Vietnam War Commemoration that will be held on March 29, 2016. To learn more about the event: <http://www.vietnamwar50th.com>.

### **Veterans Coffee Event**

- The Veterans Coffee Events began on January 1, 2015 when a hospice partnered with Outback Steakhouse and Sheetz Coffee. The first event had 45 Veterans including three generations of Veterans.
- The events are on held on the third Thursday of every month. The events are being held in seven different counties, each event averaging 25-100 Veterans.
- The event gained their credibility from not selling anything or making the Veterans join anything. No politics are brought up at these events, it is a place for Veterans to get to know one another and swap stories.
- On October 25<sup>th</sup> the hospice program partnered with Embassy Suites to hold a "Spirit of '45 WWII Dinner". They had over 100 WWII Veterans and 500 people in total attend the event.

- The hospice program provides educational presentations at the coffee events. The presentations are from legitimate service organizations for Veterans and again, are not there to sell anything.
- On Pearl Harbor Day, the Coffee for Veterans group put together a remembrance for Pearl Harbor. The hospice partnered with Kristy Kremer.
- These meetings fill a void. The challenge going forward is keeping it fresh and encouraging others to do something as well.

### **Partner Networking Updates**

- A funeral home was able to co-chair with a life enrichment center (Villa) that is devoted to memory care. The partnership championed a WWII Veteran with Honor Flight. To make sure the Veteran passed medical clearance, the patient was shown WWII Movies and photographic picture books to ensure that the patient was emotionally ready for both the flight and the event.
- The hospice continuously presents certificates to their Veteran patients. Recently, one of their staff members attended the funeral of a past patient and presented the certificate at the service. It shows the impact that these ceremonies have for both the patient and the family.
- For Veterans Day they the hospice invited their Veteran patients to ride in antique cars during the parade. All Model-A clubs are nationally based and hospice programs are able to contact them for car donations.
- Senator Warner visited a WHV Partner for Veterans Day. Thank you, Tony Kudner, for assisting the hospice connecting Senator Warner and Congressman Hurt to engage with the WHV Partner. The hospice formed a partnership with Northrop Grumman to receive handmade afghans to present to their Veteran patients.
- The hospice presents survivor's certificates for spouses of Veteran patients.
- What to do regarding honoring a Veteran of a non-US force?  
WHV says "go for it." If you have the opportunity to honor a non-US military member, please feel free to do so.
- Circle of Gratitude formed a partnership with a local USO that focuses on current military personnel. Their Veteran patients write letters to active military men and women and thank them for their service. The group also partnered with AT&T and was able to donate 120 pounds of candy after Halloween to be sent overseas.
- Dignity Memorial provides free services to homeless veterans. A hospice partner was recently invited to attend a funeral service of a homeless Veteran. Dignity Memorial researches the history of the Veteran to find at least one of their family members so they can attend the service.
- The California Hospice and Palliative Care Association gave its Heart of Spirit Award to one of Sutter Care at Home volunteers. She is an 80 year old woman and was presented the award in her original uniform that she wore while serving for 35 years.
- One of our Veteran volunteers is a certified pet therapist. The hospice nurse works with the local nursing home to visit Veteran patients at their home, bringing the therapy dog along to present a certificate of thanks.

### **WHV updates**

- The [We Honor Veterans 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Report](#) is available for download on our website.
- The We Honor Veterans program has a new team member, Katherine Kemp. Her primary focus will be working with the VA contract and developing Community Partners.
- Please fill out our survey: [Educational Needs Assessment for WHV](#).