

How to access Tele-mental Health Care for Veterans on Hospice

The VA, through the Build Community Connections grant, is providing a new opportunity for Veterans on hospice. For Veterans experiencing symptoms that can be helped by mental health interventions, we are increasing access to VA tele-mental health.

This service is intended to be a supportive collaboration with hospice agencies when Veterans' mental health may be difficult to manage at the end of life. Below is a list of referral examples, however this list is not exhaustive.

VA mental health services are eligible to all Veterans on hospice, regardless of their payer source for hospice. If a Veteran is enrolled in VA mental health services they can also choose to continue with their current VA therapist/MH provider when they enroll in hospice.

Examples of Referral Problems:

1. Anxiety related to military experiences or end of life
2. Distressful verbal communications
3. Distressful dreams or images that are upsetting to the Veteran
4. Expressions of remorse from service-related experiences
5. Requests for forgiveness from service-related experiences
6. Difficulty with adjustment to death or acceptance of death
7. PTSD

How to Refer:

Before calling our office please ensure the following:

1. Veteran is currently enrolled in hospice.
2. The Veteran is agreeable to tele-mental health services.
3. The Veteran is enrolled in the Veteran's Health Administration (VHA) or wants to enroll.
4. The Veteran has video capable device (smart phone, laptop, tablet or desktop).
5. The Veteran has a cell phone # and email address that can be used to set up the virtual appointments.

For assistance with enrollment or requesting a VA loaner device see next section

If all of the above are in place, please call your local VA Palliative Care Coordinator to initiate a mental health referral.

If Veteran Needs Video Capable Device for Therapy:

If your Veteran meets all the above criteria and does not have access to a video capable device contact our office and ask for the Palliative Care Coordinator to help determine if the Veteran is eligible for the VA loaner device program.

Veteran's Health Administration (VHA) Enrollment:

Send the following 2 documents to your nearest VHA Health Benefits/Enrollment office:

1. Application for Health Benefits: <https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-10EZ-fillable.pdf>
(Select "Enrollment" in first section)
2. DD 214 (Military Discharge paperwork): <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records>

If you need assistance, call your nearest VA Medical Center Health Benefits office or the national VA Health Benefits office at 1-877-222-VETS (8387)