



National Center for  
**Healthcare Advancement  
and Partnerships**

2024

# Public Annual Report

---

VHA National Center for Healthcare  
Advancement and Partnerships

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Table of Contents

Letter from Chief Officer and Nurse Executive .....	3
Introduction .....	4
About HAP .....	4
Strategic Alignment .....	4
Fiscal Year 2024 Overview .....	4
Partner Engagement.....	4
Looking Ahead .....	4
Acknowledgments .....	4
Strategic Framework and Alignment with VA Priorities .....	6
Strengthening Partnerships .....	7
New Partnerships.....	7
Strategic Partnerships Enhancing Veteran Health .....	8
A Snapshot of VHA Partnerships Facilitated by HAP .....	11
Progress in Healthcare Advancement Initiatives .....	14
Stellate Ganglion Block for Veterans with PTSD .....	15
Veteran Sponsorship Initiative (VSI).....	16
Veteran Community Partnerships Initiative .....	17
VCP Successes.....	18
VHA National Community Partnership Challenge 10th Anniversary .....	20
10th Anniversary CPC Winners.....	21
Impact Stories: How Partnerships Empower Veterans and Their Families....	23
Expanding Awareness and Outreach.....	25
Newsletters .....	25
Videos .....	25
Articles .....	26
Resources .....	27
Looking Forward .....	27
Recognition of HAP Team Accomplishments.....	28

## Letter from Chief Officer and Nurse Executive, Dr. Chien Chen



The Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Office of Discovery, Education, and Affiliate Network (DEAN), National Center for Healthcare Advancement and Partnerships (HAP) team is excited to share several innovative accomplishments and initiatives for fiscal year 2024 (FY24), covering October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024.

HAP continues to expand the reach of Veteran services by facilitating non-monetary partnerships between VHA and community organizations that support access to health care and resources to meet the unique needs of Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. These partnerships reinforce VHA's commitment to providing excellent customer service, restoring public trust, and delivering personalized, proactive, patient-driven health care.

Throughout FY24, HAP demonstrated commitment to enhancing the health and well-being of Veterans by facilitating impactful partnerships and Healthcare Advancement Initiatives (HAI). These partnerships and HAIs have enhanced access to critical services and resources, addressing key social determinants of health (SDOH) that affect Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. This year's report reflects our dedication to delivering on the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) core values of integrity, commitment, advocacy, respect, and excellence (I CARE) and demonstrates how VHA partnerships and HAIs drive meaningful outcomes.

In FY24, we focused on growth and innovation by adding new partnerships, renewing existing ones, building on HAIs, and supporting the Veteran Community Partnerships Initiative (VCP). The realignment of VCP under HAP this year allows us to better support VA medical centers (VAMC) and community organizations, providing more ways for Veterans to receive the care and support they need.

This year, we celebrated the 10th annual VHA National Community Partnership Challenge (CPC) and the inaugural VHA National Partnership Showcase, a significant milestone for HAP that commemorates a decade of recognizing exceptional partnerships that address crucial SDOH and enhance Veteran care. The inaugural virtual partnership conference featured remarks from esteemed VA senior leaders and celebrated creative solutions and collaborations that have bridged service gaps and improved the quality of life for Veterans nationwide.

As we move forward into fiscal year 2025, our team is excited to continue growing and strengthening partnerships and HAIs that advance VA's strategic goals and to remain at the forefront of addressing Veteran's SDOH. The dedication of VHA employees and community partners plays a crucial role in this effort, and we thank you for your unwavering commitment and support to our nation's Veterans.

Together, we will continue to bridge gaps, expand access to care, and enhance the health and well-being of Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. We look forward to celebrating and recognizing more Veteran-centric partnerships at our 2025 VHA National Partnership Showcase and the continued success of HAP in driving progress and innovation.

In good health,

**Chien Chen**  
DNP, MS, RN, PMH-BC, NPD-BC, NEA-BC, FNAP, FAAN  
Chief Officer and Nurse Executive, VHA HAP

## Introduction

As the largest and most complex health care system in the United States, VHA's mission is to honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. VA's vision is to lead the future in delivering unparalleled health and wellness to our nation's Veterans. With over [1,300](#) health care facilities, VA medical centers (VAMC), and VHA outpatient clinics, [300](#) Readjustment Counseling Centers (Vet Centers), and over [100](#) community living centers, VHA exemplifies the nation's commitment to thank and care for millions of Veterans.



**1,300+**  
**PARTNER  
FACILITIES**



**300**  
**COUNSELING  
CENTERS**



**100+**  
**COMMUNITY  
LIVING CENTERS**

## About HAP

HAP is a national program office within VHA operating under DEAN that expands the reach and impact of non-monetary VHA partnerships with non-VA organizations, including academic institutions, public or private organizations, and other government agencies. HAP facilitates VHA's formal and informal partnerships at the national program office, Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN), and local VA medical facility levels. HAP also supports HAIs, VCPs, and administers the CPC on behalf of the VHA Under Secretary for Health.

HAP plays a pivotal role in expanding access to resources and services that improve the health and well-being of Veterans and their families, caregivers, and survivors through impactful partnerships and HAIs across the nation. These collaborations aim to expand and enrich the services provided to Veterans, addressing SDOH, such as education, employment, health care access, and housing. By working together with other experts and community partners, HAP helps ensure VHA partnerships provide coordinated, high-quality care and services that meet Veterans' unique health needs and preferences.



### Mission

Ensure partnerships and health care advancements support Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors across social determinants of health.



### Vision

Expand the reach and impact of innovative and meaningful partnerships and health care advancements to improve the quality of life for Veterans and their families.



### Scope

Empower the community and VHA staff to develop non-monetary partnerships at the national, regional, and local levels, offering guidance, expertise, and support to foster meaningful and impactful collaborations.

These efforts align with the VA and VHA mission and the strategic goals outlined in [VA's 2022-2028 Strategic Plan](#), FY 2022-2025 [VHA Long-Range Plan Framework](#), and DEAN's [focus areas](#).

## Strategic Alignment

HAP's activities are aligned with VA's and VHA's strategic priorities, including the principles of a High Reliability Organization (HRO); Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access/Accessibility (IDEA); and I CARE values. These guiding principles are embedded in HAP's initiatives, ensuring that HAP's work addresses Veterans' immediate needs and contributes to VA's long-term strategic goals.

## Fiscal Year 2024 Overview

Fiscal year 2024 was marked by significant milestones, including the 10th anniversary of the CPC. This key event highlighted a decade of recognizing exceptional partnerships that address crucial SDOH and enhance Veteran care. The inaugural HAP virtual VHA National Partnership Showcase celebrated the innovative solutions and creative collaborations that have significantly impacted Veterans' lives nationwide.

Throughout the year, HAP added new partnerships, renewed existing ones, and continued progress in key initiatives that drive measurable improvements in the health and well-being of Veterans and their families. HAP's commitment to expanding the reach and impact of its partnerships remains unwavering, ensuring that Veterans receive the comprehensive care and support they deserve.

## Partner Engagement

Central to HAP's success are the partnerships and collaborations with community organizations, academic institutions, and other contributors. These relationships extend the reach of VHA's impact, ensuring that even Veterans who do not receive VA care have access to critical resources. HAP's efforts are crucial in forging connections which enhance the overall impact of VHA's mission.

## Looking Ahead






As we look forward to fiscal year 2025 and beyond, HAP is committed to further expanding VHA partnerships and continuing to champion innovative solutions that drive progress in Veteran care. The program office will continue to align its initiatives with VA's strategic goals, focusing on creative collaborations that bridge gaps in service delivery and improve the quality of life for Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.

## Acknowledgments

HAP extends its gratitude to the dedicated VHA employees, community partners, Veterans, and others whose contributions were vital to our successes this year. Your unwavering commitment to serving our nation's Veterans is the cornerstone of our continued progress.

### A Snapshot of HAP's Healthcare Advancement Initiatives

HAP's HAIs are projects that use a novel health care practice and partnership implemented in the field to directly improve the health and well-being of VA beneficiaries.

- 
**Mental Health and Suicide Prevention**  
 Support VA and VHA's top clinical priority – suicide prevention
- 
**Employment and Economic Stability**  
 Support Veteran health and well-being across SDOH domains
- 
**Veteran Health and Well-being**  
 Improve Veteran health and well-being
- 
**Military-to-Civilian Transition**  
 Support Veterans through the military-to-civilian transition
- 
**Digital Health**  
 Leverage the latest digital health technology to support Veteran health and well-being



## Strategic Framework and Alignment with VA Priorities

Partnerships are a powerful tool VA uses to accomplish its mission, objectives, and priorities. Some examples of how HAP and VHA partnerships help VA accomplish its strategic goals include:

**Goal 1: VA consistently communicates with customers and partners to maximize performance, evaluate needs, and build long-term relationships and trust.**

HAP helps ensure communications are clear and messages are consistent across VHA and the ecosystem of Veteran-supporting partners. HAP also supports information delivery about services that VHA and its partners provide to Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors the way they prefer to receive it, ensuring VA beneficiaries understand their eligibility for and how to obtain these resources. By engaging internal and external partners across a variety of sectors, HAP helps VA connect people to resources and services they need and identify gaps that must be addressed.

**Goal 2: VA delivers timely, accessible, and high-quality services to meet the unique needs of Veterans and all eligible beneficiaries.**

A priority for VA is ensuring Veterans, their families, caregivers, survivors, and service members have access to high-quality, timely benefits, care, and services tailored to the individual. By collaborating with external partners that enhance services and resources across SDOH, VHA provides more comprehensive care no matter where an individual lives or what their needs are. HAP facilitates VHA partnerships and HAIs that cover a broad range of topics, including legal assistance, animal-assisted therapy, recreation therapy (such as fly-fishing and adaptive sports), healthy food, employment, career development, caregiver support, and housing. VHA partnerships make it easier for more VA beneficiaries to get the services and resources they need to meet their health and wellness goals.

**Goal 3: VA builds and maintains trust through stewardship, transparency, and accountability.**

VHA partnerships are built on a foundation of trust, transparency, and accountability. By providing guidance to VA staff and external organizations, HAP drives ethical behavior and trust across the organization and throughout the ecosystem of partners. In support of VHA partnerships at the local, regional, and national level, HAP provides training on completing due diligence to ensure external partners align with VA's mission, values, principles, goals, and priorities. HAP also communicates internally and externally to ensure VA, external organizations, and the public know about active partnerships and HAIs, what they provide, and how to access expanded resources.

**Goal 4: VA ensures governance, systems, data, and management practices improve experiences, satisfaction, accountability and security.**

VA is committed to its customer-centric approach to health care to enhance Veterans' experience, ease of access, and security. HAP uses high-quality, accessible, trusted, and data-driven approaches to understand critical problems; supports the development and implementation of creative, safe, and Veteran-centric solutions; and improves the quality of life for Veterans and other beneficiaries. HAP helps make it easy for VHA staff and community partners to access and understand non-monetary partnership guidance, policy, and best practices that protect the confidentiality, integrity, and accessibility of partnership information and outcomes. HAP empowers VA and trusted partners to safely and more easily leverage resources and services as a force multiplier to understand Veterans and other customers, anticipating unique needs and preferences.

## Strengthening Partnerships

VHA remains steadfast in maintaining current and establishing new non-monetary partnerships with external organizations that focus on advancing the health and well-being of Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. HAP plays a vital role in ensuring VHA partnerships at various levels have clear goals and outcome measures that align with VA and VHA strategic goals and health care priorities. Since 2016, HAP has facilitated numerous national-level partnerships between VHA and external organizations.



## New Partnerships

### [AmeriCorps](#)

AmeriCorps and VHA partnered to provide a framework for AmeriCorps members and senior volunteers to support adaptive sport and creative art events that aim to optimize Veterans' independence, community engagement, well-being, and quality of life while increasing awareness of community support through national service programs.

### [Connected Warriors](#)

Connected Warriors offers free trauma-conscious yoga to Veterans, service members, and their families and trauma-conscious training to certified yoga instructors. Trauma-conscious yoga promotes relaxation, healing, and an enhanced sense of well-being. The VHA-Connected Warriors partnership addresses VA's goal of delivering accessible and high-quality care that meets Veterans' unique needs.

### [Paralyzed Veterans of America \(PVA\)](#)

This partnership educates the public and promotes rehabilitation, good health, and active lifestyles through wheelchair and adaptive sports for Veterans by jointly participating in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG). Through this partnership, VA and PVA co-present the NVWG and collaborate in planning the event.

### [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#)

This partnership establishes a general framework for cooperation between VHA and USDA. The partnership supports working together toward the common goals to serve, educate, and empower Veterans and to improve the quality of life with respect to both nutrition security and food security education.

### [Veterans Yoga Project \(VYP\)](#)

VYP supports recovery and resilience in Veterans, military families, and the community by offering a full range of mind-body practices and programs, including yoga, meditation, and mindful resilience practice. VYP-trained instructors and clinicians provide programs, resources, and connections, and teach over 100 free yoga classes each week. The collaboration between VYP and VHA expands access to and increases awareness of the benefits of yoga and mindful resilience among Veterans. This VHA-VYP partnership supports VA's goal to provide whole health services to Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.

## Strategic Partnerships Enhancing Veteran Health

### American Kidney Fund (AKF) partnership – Raising awareness and supporting Veterans with kidney disease

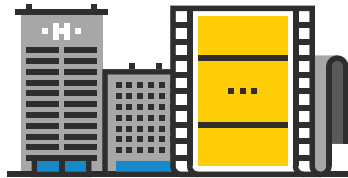
#### Overview

VHA's partnership with AKF focuses on increasing awareness of kidney disease among Veterans and supporting those diagnosed with chronic kidney disease (CKD). The collaboration aims to provide high-quality care and information to Veterans.

#### Alignment with VA priorities

This partnership aligns with VA's priority to connect Veterans with the soonest and best care by providing resources and quality care to Veterans who are diagnosed with CKD.

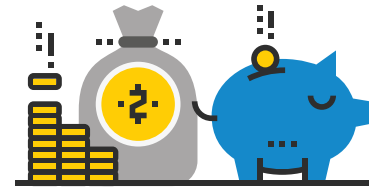
**1,700**  
VA CLINICS  
HAVE SHARED  
EDUCATIONAL  
AKF VIDEOS



#### Impact

- Financial assistance: Over 6,000 Veterans have received financial assistance.
- Educational campaigns: The Know Your Kidneys campaign videos have been shared in approximately 1,700 VA clinics nationwide.
- Resource development: Developed resources to slow the progression of kidney disease, including a downloadable guide to the benefits and recorded sessions from Kidney Action Week.

**6,000+**  
VETERANS  
HAVE RECEIVED  
FINANCIAL  
ASSISTANCE



### Arthritis Foundation partnership – Combatting osteoarthritis among Veterans

#### Overview

VHA's partnership with Arthritis Foundation supports Veterans' health and wellness by increasing access to care, education, and support for Veterans with arthritis. Initiatives such as FastOA and the Walk With Ease (WWE) program, aim to reduce the impact of osteoarthritis among Veterans.

#### Alignment with VA priorities

This partnership aligns with VA's priority to increase Veterans' access to quality, timely health care.

#### Impact

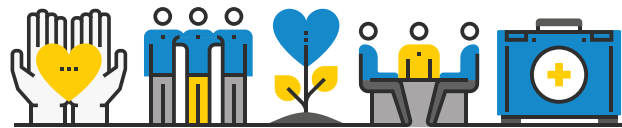
- FastOA initiative: Identifies risk factors for rapid progression to osteoarthritis, aiming to fast-track effective treatments.
- WWE program: Over 15,000 participants last year, promoting an active lifestyle and improving joint health.
- Educational resources: A new webpage created in collaboration with VA provides Veterans with valuable information and resources to manage arthritis symptoms.



### OnStar partnership – Enhancing suicide prevention efforts

#### Overview

VHA's partnership with OnStar, a subscription-based in-vehicle communication service and smartphone application (app), was renewed in FY24 to enhance suicide prevention for Veterans. The partnership aims to improve access to preventive and emergency services by training OnStar operators on performing "warm transfers" to VA's [Veteran Crisis Line](#) and using the OnStar in-vehicle emergency button or OnStar Guardian smartphone app in safety planning.



VA's top clinical priority is preventing Veteran suicide

#### Alignment with VA priorities

This partnership aligns with VA's top clinical priority of preventing Veteran suicide, demonstrating a commitment to Veterans' mental health and well-being.

#### Impact

- Training and awareness: OnStar operators receive specialized training to assist Veterans in crisis, ensuring a smooth transfer to critical VA resources.
- Increased accessibility: Veterans can access emergency services directly through their vehicles or smartphones, providing timely support during crises.

### Parkinson's Foundation partnership – Enhancing the lives of Veterans living with Parkinson's Disease

#### Overview

VHA's partnership with Parkinson's Foundation (PF) underscores VA's commitment to enhancing the health and well-being of Veterans living with Parkinson's Disease (PD). Over 110,000 Veterans with PD receive VA care.

#### Alignment with VA priorities

This partnership aligns with VA's priority to empower and equip Veterans to take charge of their health and well-being and live life to the fullest.



#### Impact

- Events hosted: VHA's Philadelphia Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinical Center and PF hosted 2 events, "Veterans and Parkinson's: Environmental Exposures" and "Veterans and Parkinson's: Planning for the Future," with 1,635 registrants and 1,575 web views combined.
- Resources for Veterans: PF updated multiple resources for Veterans living with PD and their care partners.
- Team Training: VA and PF created an intensive team training designed to increase knowledge about PD and build capacity for comprehensive

## Salesforce partnership – Empowering Veterans through education and employment opportunities

### Overview

VHA's partnership with Salesforce focuses on addressing the employment and education needs of Veterans, service members, and their spouses. The partnership increases learning opportunities, provides technology sector skills training and certifications, and offers career advancement opportunities. It also helps educate service members, Veterans, and their spouses who may not already be engaged with VA about VA benefits and mental health resources

### Alignment with VA priorities

This partnership aligns with VA's priority to support Veterans' whole health by enhancing access to programs that address crucial SDOH like education and employment.

**155**  
CERTIFICATIONS



### Impact

- Learning and certification: In FY24, there were over 9,300 registered members, nearly 4,700 members completed one training module, 403 members completed a full training path, and 155 earned a Salesforce certification.
- Veteran-specific modules: [Trailhead](#), Salesforce's free online learning platform, introduced several Veteran-specific modules to help Veterans, transitioning service members (TSM), and their spouses in career development and advancement including [Veteran Mental Health and Resiliency Resources](#) and [VA Benefits for Veterans](#).
- Ongoing support: Over 13,000 TSMs, Veterans, and military spouses have completed the Veteran Mental Health and Resiliency Resources module, and over 7,000 individuals completed the VA Benefits for Veterans module.

## The Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) Association partnership – Supporting Veterans with ALS

### Overview

VHA's partnership with the ALS Association addresses the higher incidence of ALS among Veterans compared to the general population. Renewed in FY24, this partnership aims to provide timely, high-quality care by enabling Veterans to access a broader range of VA resources and services, including ALS Centers of Excellence and ALS Coordinators.

### Alignment with VA priorities

This partnership aligns with VA's priority to enhance health care access for Veterans by expanding available resources and services to Veterans living with ALS.

### Impact

- Increased support: Over 170 ALS coordinators have been placed across VHA facilities nationwide.
- Expansion of services: The number of VA ALS Centers of Excellence has increased by a third.
- Comprehensive care: Veterans living with ALS benefit from a coordinated approach to care, enhancing their quality of life.

**170+**  
COORDINATORS  
NATIONWIDE



## A Snapshot of VHA Partnerships Facilitated by HAP



### American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP)

AAKP is dedicated to improving the lives and long-term outcomes of kidney patients. The partnership with AAKP focuses on the needs of and enhancing the quality of life for Veterans living with kidney disease.

### American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP)

ACEP promotes the highest quality of emergency care and is the leading advocate for emergency physicians, their patients, and the public. VHA and ACEP partner to meet VA's goal of addressing Veterans' unique health care needs by educating community emergency medicine clinicians about Veteran-specific conditions and care needs.

### American Kidney Fund (AKF)

AKF focuses on increasing awareness of risk factors, causes, complications, and treatments of kidney disease. VHA and AKF partner to increase awareness of kidney disease among Veterans and to support those who have been diagnosed with CKD.

### AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps and VHA partnered to provide a framework for AmeriCorps members and senior volunteers to support adaptive sport and creative art events that aim to optimize Veterans' independence, community engagement, well-being, and quality of life while increasing awareness of community support through national service programs.

### The ALS Association

The ALS Association works to address the growing concern that Veterans are more likely to be diagnosed with ALS than non military personnel. VHA's partnership with the ALS Association enables Veterans to access a broad range of VA resources and services, including ALS Centers of Excellence and ALS Coordinators.

### Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation leads the fight to end arthritis in the United States. The Arthritis Foundation-VHA partnership supports Veterans' health and wellness by increasing access to care, education, and support for Veterans with arthritis.

### Connected Warriors

Connected Warriors offers free yoga classes to Veterans, first responders, and active-duty service members and their families as a way to heal and grow. Their partnerships with VHA offers Veterans trauma-conscious yoga, which promotes relaxation, healing, and an enhanced sense of well-being.

### Crohn's & Colitis Foundation (CCF)

CCF is dedicated to finding cures for Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. The VHA partnership with CCF provides inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) literature, webinars, and other related resources to Veterans. CCF also offers a webpage specifically developed for Veterans and a support group for Veterans who have IBD.

## A Snapshot of VHA Partnerships Facilitated by HAP (cont.)

### Expiration Term of Service Sponsorship Program (ETS-SP)

ETS-SP supports service members, Veterans, and their families during their transition back into civilian life by connecting new Veterans to VA resources, and community-based resources including trained sponsors living in their destination community. The VHA-ETS-SP partnership and ETS-SP's military transition program, Onward Ops, help proactively reduce suicide risk factors and support the health and well-being of Veterans and their families by offering enhanced support for service members and Veterans across SDOH as they transition out of the military.

### Global Liver Institute

The Global Liver Institute improves the lives of Veterans impacted by liver diseases. VHA's partnership with the Global Liver Institute offers educational resources, webinars, and support groups for Veterans living with liver diseases.

### GO2 for Lung Cancer

GO2 for Lung Cancer provides assistance, supportive connections, treatment information, and help finding the best care close to home for those affected by lung cancer. VHA and GO<sub>2</sub> work together to increase awareness of the importance of lung cancer screening for Veterans with an elevated risk for the disease.

### Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing

The VHA and Johns Hopkins University's (JHU) School of Nursing partnership increases awareness of and access to myPlan, a free smartphone app to help with safety decisions if someone is or may be experiencing violence in an intimate relationship. The partnership with JHU increases Veterans' access to the app to support and enhance safety for those who experience intimate partner violence.

### MAZON

MAZON aims to end hunger in every community. The VHA-MAZON partnership increases awareness about the risks associated with food insecurity and offers options to address it through outreach to Veterans.

### OnStar

OnStar is a subscription-based, in-vehicle communication service and smartphone app that provides roadside and emergency assistance. VHA and OnStar aim to enhance suicide prevention efforts by improving access to preventative and emergency services for Veterans experiencing a crisis. This partnership trains OnStar operators to perform "warm transfer" to VA's Veteran Crisis Line when they use the emergency services button in OnStar-equipped vehicles or OnStar Guardian smartphone app.

### Paralyzed Veterans of America

PVA helps Veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D), and diseases, like Multiple Sclerosis and ALS. VHA partners with PVA to address the changing needs of Veterans with these injuries and diseases. PVA and VA co-present the yearly National Veterans Wheelchair Games.



## A Snapshot of VHA Partnerships Facilitated by HAP (cont.)

### Parkinson's Foundation

The Parkinson's Foundation works to improve care and advance research toward a cure for Parkinson's Disease. VHA's partnership with Parkinson's Foundation aims to improve Veterans' health and well-being by providing care and support to those living with Parkinson's disease.

### Pet Partners

Pet Partners provides animal-assisted interventions to give Veterans the connections, comfort, and joy that come from spending time with therapy animal teams, enhancing the health and well-being of both humans and animals.

### Rockefeller Foundation

The Rockefeller Foundation promotes the well-being of people around the world by breaking down the barriers that limit them. The partnership with VHA expands the Food is Medicine programs — medically tailored meals and produce prescription programs — at key VAMCs across the country.

### Salesforce

Salesforce addresses the employment and education needs of Veterans, service members, and their spouses. The VHA-Salesforce partnership increases learning opportunities, provides technology sector skills training and certifications, and offers opportunities for career advancement to Veterans, service members, and their spouses.

### United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The USDA develops and executes federal laws related to farming, forestry, rural economic development, and food. VHA partners with the USDA to improve food security and access to nutritious diets and healthful nutrition for Veterans.

### Veterans Yoga Project (VYP)

VYP supports recovery and resilience in Veterans, military families, and community by offering a full range of mind-body practices and programs. The collaboration between VYP and VHA expands access to and increases awareness of the benefits of yoga and mindful resilience among Veterans.

### White Ribbon USA & National Association of Social Workers

White Ribbon USA aims to reduce and prevent domestic violence and engage more men supporting all efforts to end gender-based violence and discrimination towards women. VHA partners with White Ribbon USA to encourage the collaboration necessary to address domestic violence and create positive impacts for the military community.



## Progress in Healthcare Advancement Initiatives

TSMs, Veterans, and Veteran-serving organizations can access VA and partner organization education resources for higher education assistance, skill development, career advancement, training, and certifications

### Key elements of HAIs include:

- A direct benefit to Veterans, their families, caregivers, and/or survivors
- Application of a new approach, new use of an existing approach, or expansion of an evidence-based approach that is well-known but not widely utilized to improve health outcomes for Veterans and other beneficiaries
- Outcomes align with HAP pillars
- Collaboration with internal or external programs that may partner with external organizations
- Implementation of new approaches or implementation to existing approaches must adhere to the highest standards of patient safety and the principle of “do not harm”



Developed in accordance with HAP guidelines, HAP has a thorough and thoughtful review process to identify HAI proposals that are safe, ethical, feasible to implement, and are aligned with VA, VHA, and HAP’s mission and values.



## Stellate Ganglion Block for Veterans with PTSD

### Overview

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is the third most common psychiatric diagnosis among Veterans seen in VHA. Out of Veterans who use VA health care, 23% were diagnosed with PTSD at some point in their lives compared to 6% of the civilian population. Veterans with PTSD are [more susceptible](#) to sleep disorders, mood changes, reckless behaviors, substance misuse, and social isolation. All of these can lead to medical, mental health, interpersonal, and social difficulties. While multiple treatment options are available, some Veterans may not achieve PTSD symptom relief with traditional treatments.

### Impact

HAP HAIs help VA deliver services and resources that empower and equip Veterans to take charge of their health and live life to the fullest. HAP HAIs are built on a foundation of collaboration that reflect VA's high reliability principles and values, better enabling VA to safely deliver innovative approaches, interventions, and treatments to Veterans with PTSD who have not responded to traditional treatments.

Stellate Ganglion Block (SGB) is an experimental treatment for PTSD that has shown short-term benefits for Veterans with PTSD symptoms. This treatment works by injecting anesthetic medication around the stellate ganglion — a bundle of nerves in the neck responsible for

**221** VETERANS DIAGNOSED WITH  
PTSD RECEIVED SGB TREATMENT



the fight or flight response. Although long-term benefits have not been observed, initial findings suggest SGB has short-term benefits for Veterans diagnosed with PTSD who have tried evidence-based PTSD treatment without symptom improvement.

HAP collaborates with VA Long Beach Healthcare System (VALBHCS) to engage Veterans diagnosed with PTSD using SGB in combination with psychotherapy. In FY24, VALBHCS provided SGB treatment to 221 Veterans diagnosed with PTSD, leading to a short-term reduction in their symptoms.

SGB as an adjunctive treatment for Veterans with PTSD will continue to be explored and offered by the team of experts at VALBHCS. Clinical researchers at VALBHCS are also actively leading a randomized, controlled clinical trial on SGB for Veterans with PTSD to better understand how the treatment works and what outcomes can be achieved. They are also developing resources to make it easier for other VA medical centers that offer SGB for Veterans with PTSD to adopt practices they've identified to make this treatment option more accessible to Veterans.



## Veteran Sponsorship Initiative (VSI)



### Overview

While suicide is a rising national public health issue, the rate of suicide among Veterans is 72% higher than non-Veterans according to the 2023 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report. HAP HAIs help support VA and VHA priorities, including suicide prevention. All partners, individuals, and communities can play a key part in helping VA serve more Veterans and reduce suicide risk factors.

### Impact

The Veteran Sponsorship Initiative (VSI), one of HAP's HAIs, is designed to reduce suicide risk factors by connecting service members and Veterans transitioning to civilian life (TSMVs) earlier, faster, and more easily to VA services, individualized peer support, and resources across SDOH. This HAI aims to prevent suicides by getting upstream of risk factors, particularly for 18–34-year-old TSMVs who are at significantly higher risk for suicide within the first 12 months after separating from the military. Service members at multiple DoD locations can currently sign up for community partner assistance, including an individual, non-clinical peer that has been trained by VA to assist with civilian community re-integration, suicide prevention, and starting the process for enrolling in VA health benefits. With the TSMV's approval, community partners refer them to VHA clinical staff, who assist with enrolling in VHA, triaging needs across SDOH, and scheduling an appointment for primary care. [Research suggests](#) that VSI is successful in decreasing Veteran suicide risk by reducing psychological pain, increasing social connectedness, and helping Veterans be more engaged in health care resources.

Through VSI, VHA and community partners also leverage a [risk calculator](#) developed from the [DoD STARRS longitudinal study](#) (STARRS-LS) to screen for suicide risk factors and proactively offer VA mental health services to TSMVs with scores in the top 30% highest risk. The STARRS-LS results identified that it is within this top 30% of high-risk population that 93% of suicide attempts within the first year post-military discharge occur. TSMVs at acute risk as determined by scores on Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale questions included in the risk calculator are referred by community partners and engaged within 24 hours by VA mental health providers.

Since 2021, more than 9,000 Veterans and service members have been referred to VA by a network of community partners for assistance with accessing VA health care services that reduce suicide risk factors. To date:

- More than 3,500 TSMVs have been paired with a community-based peer.
- More than 75% of TSMVs enroll in VA within the first six months after their military separation (compared to approximately 50% who transition out of the military as usual).
- More than 53% of TSMVs have attended a primary care appointment in VA within the first six months after their military separation (compared to <31% who transition as usual).
- Approximately 40% of TSMVs have a mental health follow-up after a VA primary care appointment.



## Veteran Community Partnerships Initiative

The [VCP](#) initiative brings VA staff and community partners together to improve health outcomes of Veterans by ensuring they are able to obtain quality health care, understand the benefits offered through VA, and utilize the services VA provides. VCPs through local VA facilities connect with state and local community services and agencies to:

- Develop and foster strong relationships
- Enhance and improve access to care, services, and benefits
- Promote seamless transitions for service members
- Educate community agencies and VA providers
- Support Veterans' caregivers and families
- Measure results through shared reporting

Modeled after [Hospice-Veteran Partnerships](#), VCPs are organized, non-monetary partnership coalitions of VAMCs, Veterans, community health providers, organizations, and agencies collaborating to develop and expand personalized care, services, and benefits for Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. These partnership coalitions ensure Veterans have access to, and a choice of,



equitable care and support services by connecting VAMC programs with diverse community organizations. The VCP model continues to be a low-tech, high-touch, Veteran-centric, and readily adapted approach to optimizing civilian and VA services for Veterans. VCPs are easily replicated, and training is available to assist VA facilities in developing their own VCP with their community.

The VCP initiative began in 2011 with 3 pilot sites and has expanded to 67 sites across the United States. VCPs are present in all 18 VISNs, in 32 states, and in Puerto Rico.

HAP support of the VCP initiative began in 2017 with the VHA Office of Geriatrics and Extended Care.

In FY24, the VCP initiative was approved to be fully aligned under HAP, leading VCP through a leadership workgroup of VAMC- and VA central office-level staff. HAP and the VCP workgroup support VAMC service lines and program offices to manage and establish coalitions of community partners, making it easier for Veterans and other beneficiaries to receive care. The VCP workgroup also develops and offers resources, education, and training for VAMC staff and community partners.

## VCP Successes

### South Texas Veterans Health Care System

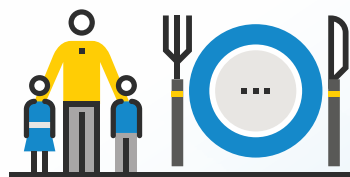
#### Food security campaign

A study of working-age Veterans reported [11.1%](#) lived in food-insecure households between 2015 and 2019, which may contribute to [increased rates](#) of depression and suicidal ideation. Through the HAP-led VCP initiative, the South Texas Veterans Health Care System (STVHCS) implemented a food security campaign to educate, train, and provide resources to the approximately 55,000 South Texas Veterans experiencing food insecurity along with VA beneficiaries and staff and the community. The campaign addresses the issue by providing resources like the Clinician Coaching Food Security Screening Tool, Food Insecurity Script, and the Healthy Teaching Kitchen.

#### Events

- Thanksgiving food drive: In November 2023, STVHCS coordinated a Thanksgiving food drive with the San Antonio Food Bank — through partnerships with Soldiers' Angels and Texas A&M University and with donations from Kroger and Boeing, 200 Veteran families were served.
- June food drive: In June 2024, a second food drive was held in partnership with San Antonio Food Bank. Over 30 community volunteers provided food to 228 Veterans and their families. STVHCS plans to host these food drives monthly to reduce food insecurity among South Texas Veterans and their families.

**200**  
VETERAN FAMILIES  
SERVED AT 2023  
FOOD DRIVE EVENT



### East Bay VCP

#### Building community relationships

Located in Martinez, CA, [East Bay VCP](#) (EBVCP) builds relationships with Martinez VAMC and local organizations to connect Veterans with the education, resources, and support they need.

EBVCP also works with the VA Northern California patient experience team and patient advocates to support health care for Veterans. Patient advocates address challenges Veterans face by acting as a liaison with VA staff while offering resources, guidance, and education about VA health care. Patient advocates at Martinez VAMC are unique in that they also work with community organizations to provide resources when Veterans are receiving care outside of VA.

“The Patient Advocates and the VCP were key in making sure I got the care I needed,” said a Veteran who utilized the patient advocate program. “Their support meant I didn’t have to deal with my health care needs alone. I asked for help, and instead of giving me a number or a list, they dealt with my situation right away.”

#### Annual events

Each year, EBVCP hosts a Veteran’s Benefits Panel where speakers from EBVCP, Martinez VAMC, regional and national VA programs, Veterans Service Organizations, and other community partners provide information to Veterans and their families, caregivers, and survivors about benefits, updates to VA policies and procedures, and tips on navigating VA’s health care and benefits systems. Over 40 community partners and VA staff attended the 2024 event, and organizations that provide health care, housing, employment, and education support offered information about their services.

## VCP Successes (cont.)

### Butler VA

#### Program growth

Butler VA re-instituted the VCP program locally in 2020 and grew the total number of partnerships to 10 in 2022. Today, the program boasts 21 community partners that are part of the Butler VAMC VCP.

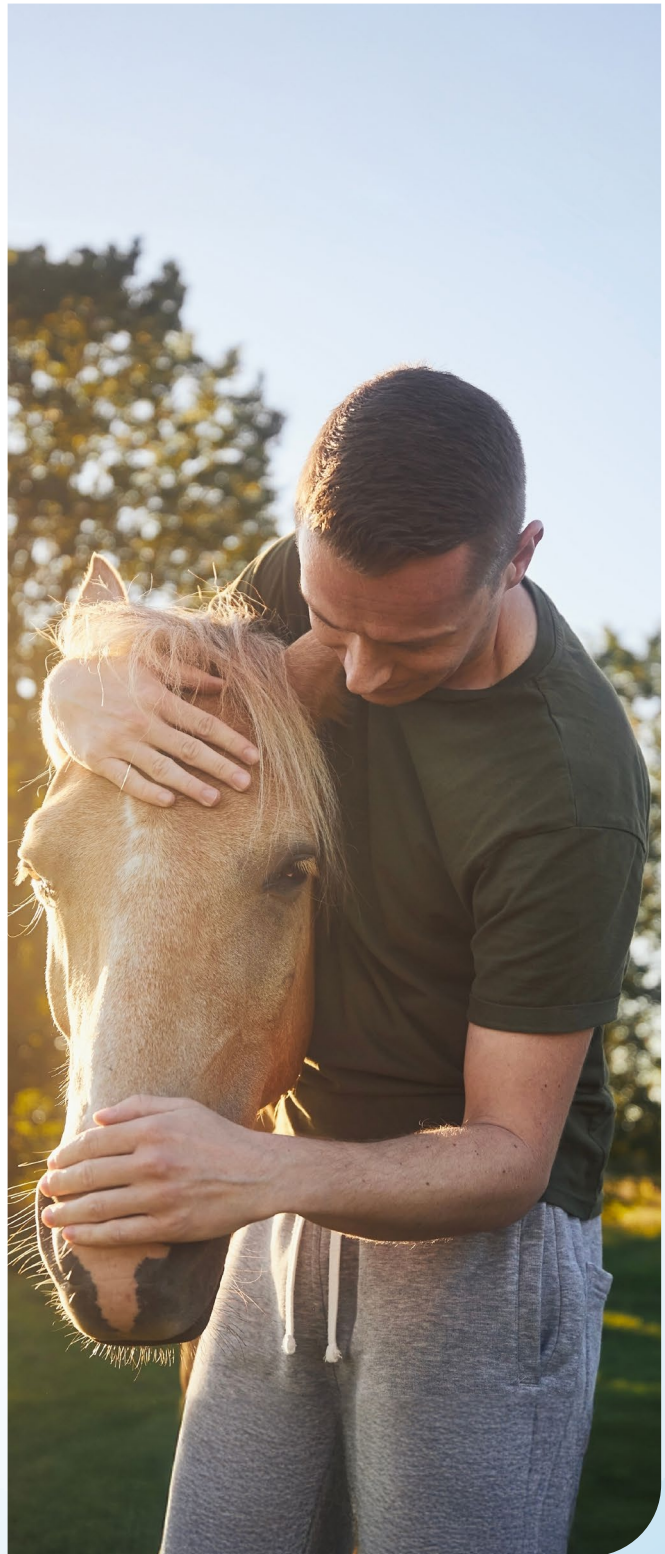
#### Equine therapy

Butler VA's VCP brings together VA staff and community organizations that provide equine therapy to Veterans and their families. Equine therapy improves the Veteran's endurance and strength, self-esteem and confidence, respiration and circulation, and motivation and concentration.

In FY23, Butler VA had partnerships with 4 equine therapy organizations including:

- Storm Harbor Equestrian Center
- Heavenly Gaits Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc. Soldiers and Spur Program
- Elliot Acres Therapeutic Riding Center
- Fly High with Horses, Trails End Conservancy, Inc.

*"It brought me a lot of hope to know there are so many organizations, agencies, people, and resources being used to find people like me, to help Veterans, and to know that we're not alone. Before being involved with the VCP, I would often think that no one cares about me — no one cares about Veterans...since joining the VCP, I now know there are people and resources used every day to help Veterans."*



## VHA National Community Partnership Challenge 10th Anniversary

The CPC is an annual event led by HAP on behalf of the VHA Under Secretary for Health, that celebrates the significant achievements of non-monetary partnerships between VHA and community organizations. The winners of the CPC are honored with the VHA National Community Partnership Challenge Diamond Award, recognizing their exceptional contributions to services for Veterans. Each year, the winners are celebrated at an awards ceremony where they receive formal recognition from the Under Secretary for Health. This year, CPC celebrated 10 years of recognizing the efforts of VHA and community organizations to enhance the health and well-being of Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.

To commemorate CPC's 10th year, HAP hosted the inaugural VHA National Partnership Showcase. The 2-day conference was attended by over 120 staff across VA and featured partnerships and initiatives that exemplify HAP's dedication to high reliability and IDEA, all rooted in the core VA values I CARE. This year's theme, "Bridging the Gap Through Partnerships," reflected HAP's ongoing commitment to innovative solutions and creative collaborations between VHA and community organizations. The Showcase celebrated achievements of the past decade while also looking forward to future advancements.



“The partnerships [that HAP facilitates] play an instrumental role in closing gaps in health care and in improving the health and well-being of Veterans... by applying ingenuity, creativity, and innovative approaches to the issues, VA and its community partners provide key services to help meet Veterans where they are.”

**Dr. Carolyn Clancy, Assistant Under Secretary for Health**

“Throughout my career in VA, I have seen the power of these partnerships to extend our reach meeting Veterans where they are and providing services that we simply would not be able to accomplish alone... Our community partnerships are making a real impact on Veterans lives. They bring resources directly to the communities where Veterans and their families live. I'm incredibly proud of the work we all do together.”

**Dr. Steven Lieberman, Deputy Under Secretary for Health**

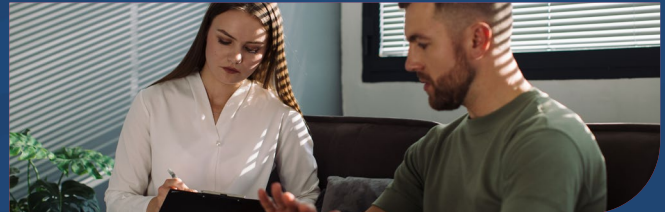


“There's a lot of work to be done in health care... and if we [VA] don't partner with our folks in the community, it would be impossible for us to continue to not only move the dial but also get a lot of this work accomplished.”

**Dr. RimaAnn O. Nelson, Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations**

## 10th Anniversary CPC Winners

Three CPC winners were honored with the VHA National Community Partnership Challenge Diamond Award, recognizing their exceptional contributions to services for Veterans.



### VA Central California Health Care System

#### Partnership and purpose

The VA Central California Health Care System (VACCHCS) partners with Central Valley Veterans (CVV) to address the urgent needs of Veterans who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The partnership aims to provide comprehensive support to Veterans in need.

#### Impact and outcomes

VACCHCS and CVV are dedicated to empowering Veterans by providing a “hand-up, not a hand-out.” This approach supports Veterans in achieving sustainable success. In December 2023, the partnership exceeded its target by placing over 33% more Veterans into permanent housing than initially planned, engaging with 368 unsheltered Veterans, surpassing the goal of 205.

#### Services provided

- o Education resources: Assisting with expenses such as wireless internet bills and providing laptops for Veterans attending college.
- o Employment assistance: Offering transportation to job interviews, coordinating haircuts and appropriate clothing, and advocating for Veteran hiring.
- o Financial support: Offering rent payments to prevent homelessness, clearing overdue electric bills, assisting with obtaining identification, and funding pre-housing background checks.

### VA North Florida South Georgia Health Care System

#### Partnership and purpose

In response to the need for immediate care for Veterans experiencing suicidal ideation or attempts, VA North Florida/South Georgia Health Care System (VA NF/SG) initiated a suicide prevention program. This initiative focuses on providing direct support to Veterans admitted to non-VA hospitals.

#### Impact and outcomes

The initiative has expanded to seven hospitals, assisting over 350 Veterans. Significantly, none of these Veterans have subsequently died by suicide. One Veteran expressed gratitude, noting, “I felt that the VA cared about what was going on even when I was getting care in my local community and not just at the VA medical center.” This program supports VA’s priority of suicide prevention among Veterans.

#### Services provided

- o Coordination of care: Immediate response from a suicide prevention coordinator when a Veteran is admitted to a partner non-VA hospital for suicide-related reasons.
- o Aftercare support: Coordinators provide ongoing support, including post-stay appointments, safety planning, and tailored assistance based on each Veteran’s needs.

## 10th Anniversary CPC Winners (cont.)

### VA San Diego Health Care System

#### Partnership and purpose

To combat food insecurity among Veterans in the San Diego area, the VA San Diego Health Care System launched the Food Empowerment Program in partnership with Us4Warriors. The program addresses the nutritional needs of food-insecure Veterans.

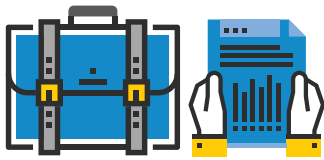
#### Impact and outcomes

Since the inception of the Food Empowerment Program in 2018, nearly 500 food bags have been distributed to Veterans. The program utilizes a biannual food insecurity screening at VAMCs to identify Veterans who may benefit from this support.

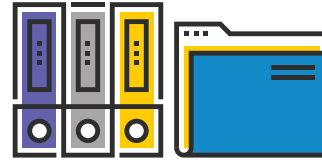


#### Services provided

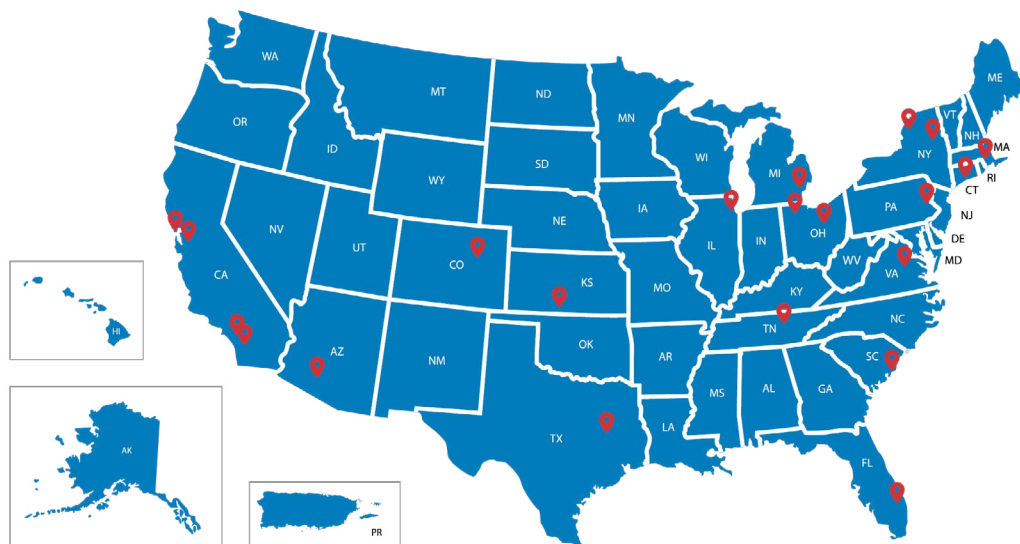
- o Food distribution: Provision of a one-time food bag to Veterans in need, containing non-perishable food items.
- o Resource connection: Information on local food banks, food delivery services for seniors, and additional resources to ensure adequate food availability.



**41**  
**TOTAL SUBMISSIONS  
RECEIVED THIS YEAR**



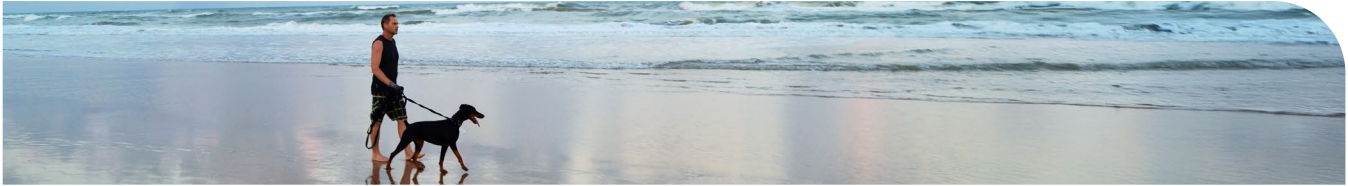
**600+**  
**TOTAL SUBMISSIONS  
RECEIVED TO DATE**



*Figure 1 - 2023 CPC Winner Locations Over Time*

## Impact Stories: How Partnerships Empower Veterans and Their Families

### Enhancing mental health support through Pet Partners



Rodney Ennis, a Veteran, found companionship and a renewed sense of purpose through the VA's partnership with Pet Partners. Participating in the animal-assisted intervention program, Rodney was matched with his companion dog, Soldier. This relationship had a transformative effect on Rodney's life, providing emotional support and helping him reconnect with others.

*"I was really lonely, and [the program] kept me from being lonely... I'm not the person I used to be. I'm more healthy, I'm more active, I found a fiancé — my life has changed because of Soldier. This program saved my life,"*

**Rodney Ennis, Veteran**

Lenne Miller, a Veteran, experienced significant mental health and emotional benefits from his companion dog, Piper. The program helped Lenne adjust to living alone and become more outgoing.

*"I don't know what I'd do without [Piper]. She's helped me mentally and emotionally adjust to living alone... [The program] helps me be more outgoing in terms of meeting people — Piper is a great ambassador!"*

**Lenne Miller, Veteran**

Ennis and Miller both enthusiastically agree that the program is a valuable resource for Veterans. Miller said he "absolutely recommends the program, especially for Veterans who tend to be isolated and feel alone in the world. It's great to have a companion that doesn't judge." And Ennis believes that "if they want a Veteran to be whole again, this program can do it."

### Supporting employment and education

Hanna Peck, a former Army officer, transitioned to a civilian career with the help of the Salesforce Fellowship, a program that provides TSMs and military spouses with hands-on experience. Through this fellowship, Hanna was introduced to Salesforce and quickly found a place where her military skills were valued and fostered.

*"Sales is built on relationships. It's about getting to know people and identifying how to best serve them. Service to others is the foundation of military service, and I immediately identified with it."*

**Hanna Peck, former Army officer**

## Facilitating successful transitions



Terri Tatum, a Navy Veteran, faced numerous challenges as she transitioned from military service to civilian life. Through HAP's VSPN and the community-based Onward Ops program, Terri received invaluable support that significantly eased her transition. The one-on-one assistance she received from her sponsor, Pete Lanham, and the resources provided by VA and Onward Ops, played a crucial role in her successful transition out of the military and back into civilian life.

*"Finding the program was a life saver. The people I met and the resources they provided, like resume writing assistance, helped me get hired less than a month from my retirement date."*

**Terri Tatum, Navy Veteran**

Eric Quarles, a Navy Veteran, leveraged his extensive military experience to transition into a civilian career through the VHA-Salesforce partnership. Trained on Trailhead, Salesforce's free online learning platform, Eric found a welcoming and supportive environment that recognized and valued his 25 years of naval aviation experience.

*"[What] won me over was just how quickly my 25 years of naval aviation experience was recognized and fostered at Salesforce. In contrast to the break-in period we have at a new command, I felt like I was a 100% contributing member from the very first call I joined. Finding a company that recognized me as a full-fledged sales executive from day one has been life-changing."*

**Eric Quarles, Navy Veteran**



## Expanding Awareness and Outreach

Communicating information and resources to Veterans, staff working in the field, partners, and VCP members is a priority for HAP and aligns with VA's strategic goal of building communication and trust with partners and the community it serves. The stories, data, and information shared through HAP's communication efforts ensure Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors understand the resources, benefits, and care available to them through VHA partnerships and health care initiatives.

## Newsletters

HAP disseminates a quarterly newsletter that highlights impacts, accomplishments, and updates.



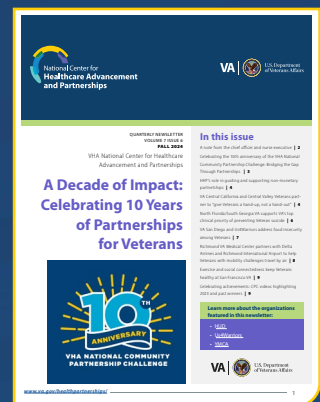
Winter 2023



Spring 2024



Summer 2024

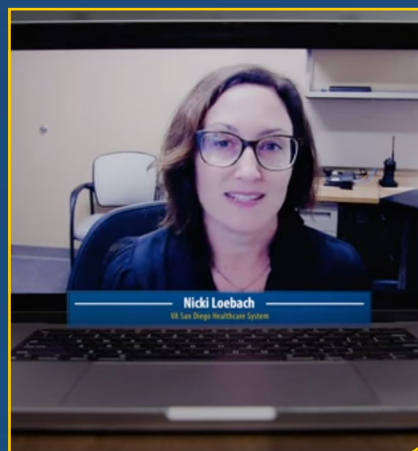


Fall 2024

## Videos



CPC 10th Anniversary Video



CPC All Winners Video



CPC 2023 Winners Video

## Articles

VA News highlighted HAP-facilitated partnerships, HAIs, and VCPs.



July 1, 2024  
[Partnership and Social Work: A Support Strategy](#)



June 15, 2024  
[Transition Support Through Partnership Renewal](#)



June 15, 2024  
[VA and Connected Warrior Partnership](#)



May 29, 2024  
[VA Updates Peer Sponsor Training](#)



May 17, 2024  
[Translate Military Experience into Civilian Careers](#)



April 23, 2024  
[VA and American Kidney Fund Partnership](#)



April 21, 2024  
[VA and USDA Food Security Initiatives](#)



April 20, 2024  
[Peer Sponsorship Increases Success of Military-to-Civilian Transition](#)



February 14, 2024  
[South Texas VA Fights Food Insecurity with Community Support](#)



January 17, 2024  
[Salesforce Preparing Veterans, Military Spouses for Tech Careers](#)



January 16, 2024  
[VA and Arthritis Foundation Support Veteran Health and Wellness](#)



December 27, 2023  
[Partnerships Empower Military Spouses with Successful Careers](#)



December 15, 2023  
[VA and Salesforce Help Veterans and Military Spouses Find Careers](#)



November 22, 2023  
[Partnership with ETS-SP Enhances the Transition Experience](#)

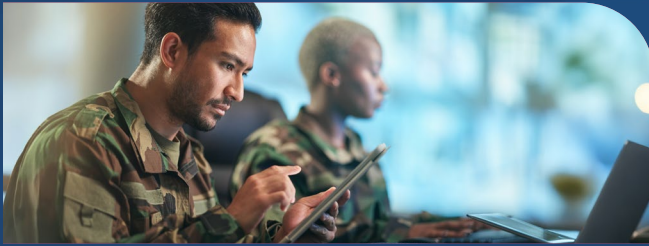


November 12, 2023  
[White Ribbon Pledge to End Harassment](#)



November 2, 2023  
[VA Promotes Health Equity Through Partnerships](#)

## Resources



Below is a comprehensive list of resources available through HAP.



### [HAP Office Overview](#)

An introduction to the mission, vision, and key functions of HAP.

### [HAP Resources](#)

A curated selection of resources provided by HAP.

### [Partnerships](#)

Information about the partnerships HAP facilitates.

### [Partnership Toolkit](#)

Resources for VA staff to develop formalized partnerships.

### [Healthcare Advancement Initiatives](#)

Information on the various healthcare advancements initiatives led by HAP.

### [Veteran Sponsor Partnership Network](#)

An overview of the network aimed at improving the experience and outcomes of Veterans as they conclude their military service and transition back into civilian life.

### [Veteran Community Partnerships](#)

Information on partnerships between VHA and community partners to develop and expand services and benefits for Veterans.

### [VHA National Community Partnership Challenge](#)

Details about the annual challenge that celebrates innovative partnerships between VHA and community organizations.

### [Submission Site](#)

The submission portal opens in January 2025.

## Looking Forward

Reflecting on the successes and milestones of FY24, HAP remains steadfast in its commitment to enhancing the health and well-being of Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. The partnerships and initiatives detailed in this report highlight the meaningful impact of collaboration between VHA and a diverse range of community organizations, demonstrating the power of collective efforts in addressing SDOH and delivering exceptional care to Veterans.

Looking ahead to fiscal year 2025 and beyond, our focus will continue to be on expanding the reach and impact of innovative and meaningful partnerships and health care advancements, aligning with VA's strategic and health care priorities. Continued emphasis will be placed on fostering creative and impactful collaborations that address the evolving needs of the Veteran community. Building on the momentum gained over the past decade, particularly through initiatives like the CPC, will ensure that the services and resources provided to Veterans through non-monetary partnerships and HAIs are comprehensive, accessible, timely, and tailored to their unique needs.

In the coming years, new opportunities will be explored to leverage emerging technologies and innovative practices to advance health care outcomes for Veterans. Our commitment to the principles of IDEA will guide efforts to create a more equitable and effective health care system that serves all Veterans with dignity and respect.

The future is centered on strengthening partnerships and HAIs that support the evolving needs of Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. By continuing to build on a foundation of collaboration, innovation, and commitment to excellence, HAP aims to advance the quality and accessibility of health care for Veterans. The strategic focus remains on driving meaningful change and ensuring that initiatives contribute to the mission of improving Veteran health and well-being.

## Recognition of HAP Team Accomplishments

### HAP presentations delivered on partnerships and HAIs

HAP presentations were delivered at multiple forums including:

1. 2024 Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS) Annual Meeting
  - [Forging Health Equity: Veterans' Wellness Thrives Through Innovative Private-Public Partnerships](#)
    - Dr. Chien Chen
  - [Harmonizing Hope: Transforming Veteran Mental Health via Private-Public Partnerships](#)
    - Dr. Chien Chen
  - Dr. Chien Chen, Dr. Jamie Davis, Ms. Christine Eickhoff, and Mr. Randolph Moler delivered poster presentations on:
    - How HAP supports health equity.
    - How Veterans' wellness thrives through innovative public-private partnerships.
    - How VHA partnerships transform Veteran mental health.
2. VA/DOD Suicide Prevention Conference in Portland, Oregon
  - Leveraging Multi-Sector Collaboration and Technology for Military and Veteran Suicide Prevention
    - Dr. Chien Chen
    - Ms. Christine Eickhoff
  - Strategies to Reduce Suicide Risks and Health Disparities Among US Army Veterans: Implications for Minority Soldiers Outside of the Veteran Sponsorship Initiative
    - Ms. Christine Eickhoff
3. Region 2 Whole Health and Healthy Living Team Conference
  - An Invitation to Join the Fortress: Community Partnerships in Action
    - Dr. Jamie Davis
4. Texas – New Mexico Hospice and Palliative Care Organization We Honor Veterans Conference
  - HAP's role in supporting non-monetary VHA partnerships with community organizations
    - Dr. Jamie Davis
5. AcademyHealth 2024 Annual Research Meeting
  - The Rural Wave (Wellness and Veteran Engagement) Initiative
    - Dr. Jamie Davis
6. Presentation to Dallas Regional Office Public Affairs
  - The Do's and Don'ts of Public-Private Partnerships
    - Dr. Kimberly Pugh
    - Ms. Georgeanna (Georgi) Bady
7. Medical Foster Home National Call
  - Delivered a presentation to the VA Medical Foster Home Program national conference call on the value of community partnership.
    - Ms. Heather Luper
8. Administration for Community Living (ACL)
  - Ms. Heather Luper delivered a presentation to the ACL and their nationwide, community-based partners on the value of partnership with VA and HAP's role in supporting VA partnerships with community organizations.
    - Ms. Heather Luper

## Recognition of HAP Team Accomplishments (cont.)

### Dr. Chien Chen, HAP chief officer and nurse executive, 2024 National Academies of Practice Fellow

Dr. Chien Chen, HAP chief officer and nurse executive, has been inducted into the 2024 National Academies of Practice (NAP) class of fellows. NAP, a nonprofit organization focused on affordable, accessible, and quality health care, honored Dr. Chen for his contributions to interprofessional practice and his leadership in public-private partnerships and innovative therapies. Dr. Chen's board certifications and strategic oversight at VHA highlight his commitment to advancing health care.

### HAP chief officer and nurse executive inducted as an American Academy of Nursing fellow

Dr. Chien Chen was inducted as an American Academy of Nursing (AAN) 2023 fellow for his dedication to advancing equity, promoting inclusion, and nurturing future health care professionals. Recognized at the Academy's Health Policy Conference, Dr. Chen's leadership in creating culturally attuned health care solutions and advocating for diverse Veteran communities underscores his impact in the field.

### HAP Clinical Social Work Certifications

HAP clinical social worker, Ms. Heather Luper, obtained two clinical certifications: Certified Shame-informed Treatment Specialist (CSTS) and Certified Addictions-informed Mental Health Professional (CAIMHP). The specialized training required to earn these certifications bolsters Ms. Luper's expertise in understanding and treating the complexities of grief, shame, and trauma and to have the tools to empower Veterans, their families, and caregivers who struggle with anxiety, addiction, and other mental health disorders.

