



**SUMMIT 2011** National Training Summit  
on Women Veterans



# Homelessness Among Women Veterans

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# Veteran Homelessness

Veteran Homelessness: A Supplemental Report to the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress published in January 2011, estimates that on any given night in 2009 there were approximately 76,000 homeless Veterans. An estimated 136,000 Veterans were homeless over the course of a year.

“We will provide new help for homeless Veterans because those heroes have a home – it’s the country they served, the United States of America.”  
-President Obama (March 16, 2009)

“Those who have served this nation as Veterans should never find themselves on the streets, living without care and without hope.”  
- Secretary Eric K. Shinseki (November 3, 2009)

# Homeless Program VA Mission and Strategy

## Overarching Mission:

- Reduce the number of homeless Veterans to zero  
(Joint HUD – VA OMB High Priority Performance Goal; Eliminate Veteran Homelessness Initiative Target)

## Strategy:

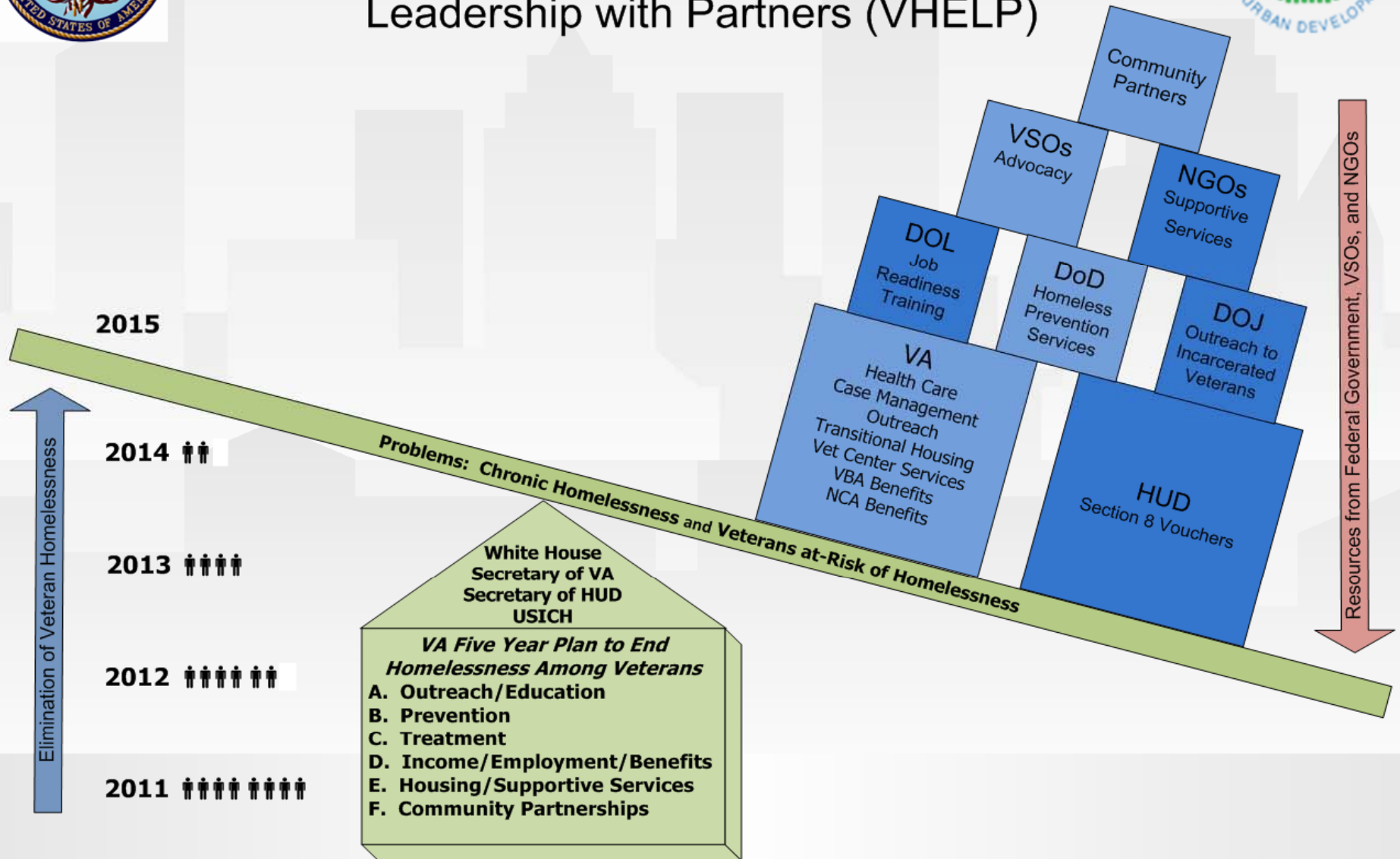
- Transformed from temporary and shelter-based options to prevention, employment, and permanent housing solutions -- HUD/VASH is the largest, most effective option
- Engaged HUD, HHS and DoL in unprecedented public partnerships
- Leveraging private sector skills, know-how, and best practices, i.e., grass roots organizations, neighborhood groups, and local community agencies
- Partnerships enhance “no wrong door” philosophy as Veterans access an increasing array of federal-community programs and services

## Resources:

- Funding total for specialized homeless programs in FY11 is \$799 million
- The Presidential Budget Request for FY12 is \$939 million
- The total for all of homeless treatment programs in FY11 is \$3.4 billion



# Tipping Point Veteran Homelessness Elimination thru Leadership with Partners (VHELP)



# FY 2011 Specific Accomplishments

## Outreach

- Health Care for Homeless Veterans outreach totaled 50,127 Veterans
- Justice Outreach (VJO) program served 5,228 Veterans and Prison Re-Entry served 4,111 Veterans
  - VJO funded for FTE 120 ; 117 FTE hired/selected (97.5%)
  - Prison Re-Entry funded for FTE 44 FTE; 40 hired/selected (91%)
- So far 85,757 Veterans have been served in specialized housing programs
- VBA homeless completed 5,063 hours ; VBA justice completed 220 outreach hours

## Call Center

- 12,992 total calls received – surpassed last year's total
- 11,305 callers identified as Veterans – surpassed last year's total
- 3,254 Veteran callers identified as being homeless
- 7,240 Veteran callers identified as being at risk of homelessness -- significant increase from last year's total

## National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans

- Collaborated with HUD to produce *Veteran Homelessness: A Supplemental Report to The Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress*
- Developed screening tool to identify at-risk Veterans, currently being piloted in VISNs 4, 8 and 22
- Coordinating efforts to develop Homeless Operations Management and Evaluation System (HOMES). Expected release date April 20, 2011

## Grant and Per Diem

- More than 550 operational projects nationwide
- Current total number of beds is 13,233 (1,050 bed increase from October 2010)

## Homeless Veterans Supported Employment Program (Anticipate majority hired/selected by 3rd QTR FY 11)

- VA funded for 400 positions (must recruit from formerly homeless, homeless, or at-risk of homelessness);
- 200 FTE hired/selected

# Women Veteran Specific Information

# What Current Data Shows --- Homelessness among Women Veterans

- Female Veterans are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population
- Women who are Veterans are at much higher risk of homelessness than male counterparts
- Women comprise roughly 6% of the 116,000 Veterans that were provided VA Homeless Services in FY2010
- Currently, 12% of HUD-VASH recipient Veterans are women
- Female Veterans are almost 3x (2.7) more likely to be in the homeless population than non-Veteran female population

# Women Specific Programs for Homeless Women Veterans

- Seven programs provide specific enhanced services for homeless women and women with dependent children
  - Vietnam Veterans of San Diego – San Diego, CA
  - Vietnam Veterans of California, Inc. – Sacramento, CA
  - United Veterans of America, Inc. – Leeds, MA
  - United States Veterans Initiative, Inc. – Long Beach, CA
  - Salvation Army, a California Corporation – Los Angeles, VA
  - West Side Catholic Center – Cleveland, OH
  - Mary Walker House - Coatesville, PA
- More than 200 Grant Per Diem (GPD) programs have the capacity to serve women
  - 5% of Veterans in GPD are women



# Military Sexual Trauma (MST) and Homelessness

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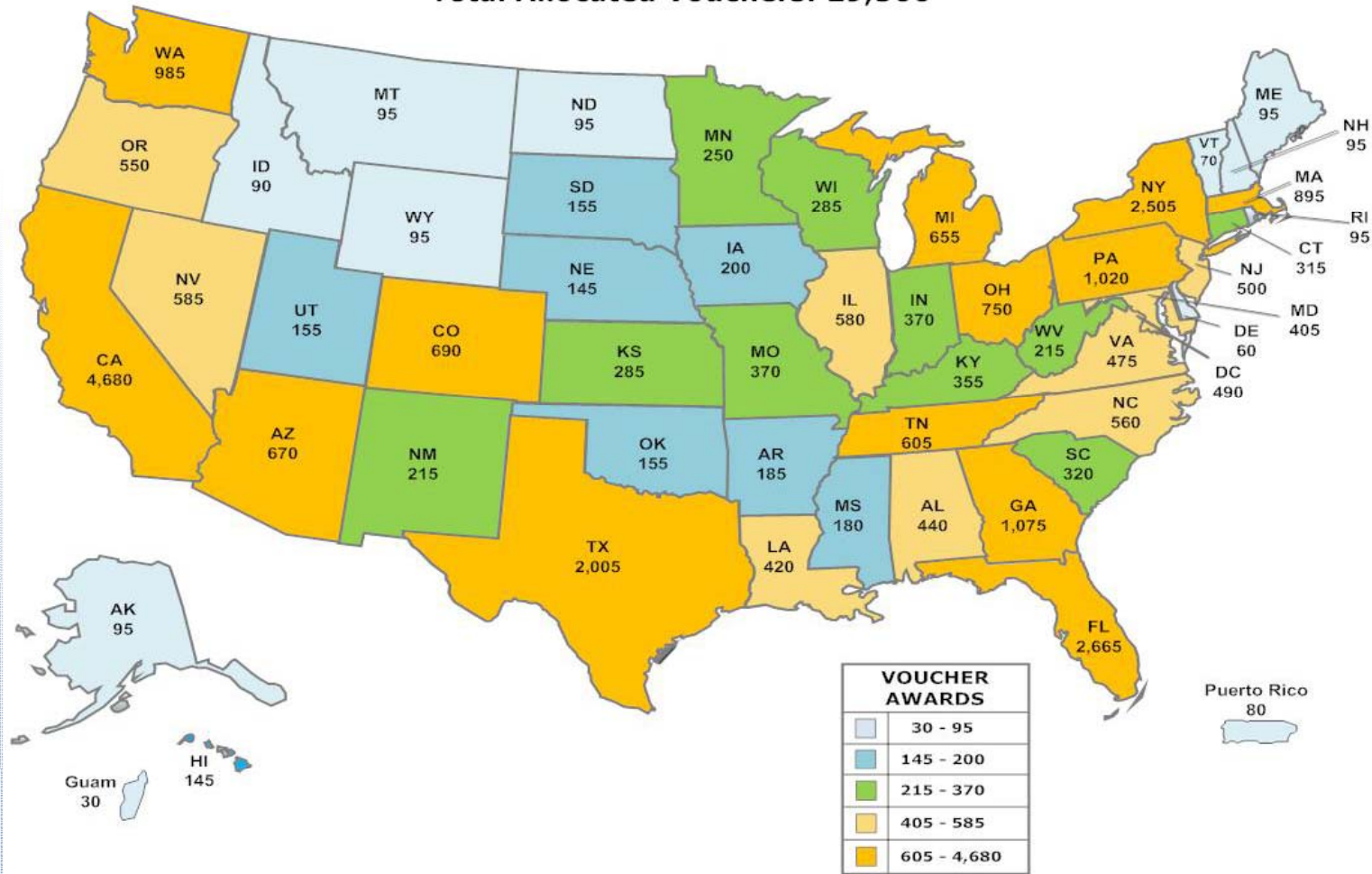
# MST Among All VHA Users and Homeless VHA Users FY 2010

	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>
<b>% of Veterans who screen positive for MST – All VHA Users</b>	22.4%	1.2%
<b>% of Veterans who screen positive for MST – Homeless VHA Users</b>	38.7%	3.2%
<b>% of Veterans with at least one MST- related Mental Health Encounter – All VHA Users</b>	54.4%	37.6%
<b>% of Veterans with at least one MST- related Mental Health Encounter – Homeless VHA Users</b>	87.2%	77.5%

# How Does MST Impact Veterans?

- Across a range of studies, Veterans with histories of MST report:
  - More mental health problems (e.g., anxiety, depression and substance abuse disorders)
  - More physical health symptoms and conditions
  - More problems readjusting after discharge
  - Mental and physical health conditions that can contribute to difficulties with employment (e.g., problems with concentration, difficulty sleeping, physical pain)

**ALLOCATION OF HUD-VASH VOUCHER AWARDS  
FY 2008 - FY 2010  
Total Allocated Vouchers: 29,500**



## Income and Benefits

- VA's Benefit Administration assigns twenty full-time and thirty- seven part- time "Homeless Veteran Outreach Coordinators" (HVOC) to control and expedite the processing of homeless Veteran claims
- VA partners with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to expedite claims for Social Security Disability and with state and local governments for other types of economic assistance to Veterans
- VA works with Department of Labor's Homeless Reintegration Program that aids thousands of Veterans return to employment
- VA's Homeless Veterans Supported Employment Program (HVSEP) is a new effort that employs formerly homeless Veterans to enhance opportunities to obtain and sustain community employment. HVSEP offers supportive employment services targeting homeless and at-risk Veterans with job development activities, skill building for coping with difficulties at work by providing peer support

# Prevention

## Justice Outreach Services

### Justice Outreach

- Veterans Justice
  - Gain access to the jail
  - Identify Veterans and Determine Eligibility
  - Conduct outreach, assessment, and case management for Veterans in local courts and jails
  - Provide/coordinate training for law enforcement personnel
  - Linkage to VA and Community Services/Resources
  - Approximately 60 active Veterans Treatment Courts
- Number of full-time VJO Specialists funded: 120 FTE; 117 FTE hired/selected (97.5%)
- Number of 3,365 local jail facilities serviced: Not yet known
- Number of Veterans receiving VJO services:
  - FY 10: 5,854
  - FY 11 (Feb): 6,692

### Prison Re-Entry

- Health Care for Re-Entry
  - Gain access to the prison
  - Educate Veterans' groups about VA and VA services
  - Identify Veterans and Determine Eligibility
  - Reentry Planning (6 mos. pre-release)
  - Linkage to VA and Community Services
- Number of full-time HCRV Specialists funded: 44 FTE; 40 hired/selected (91%)
- Number of state (919) and federal (87) prisons serviced:
  - 1,006 (78%) of 1,295 US prisons
- Number of incarcerated Veterans receiving reentry services:
  - FY 08: 7,733
  - FY 09: 10,851
  - FY10: 9,649
  - FY 11 (Feb): 5,280



# Prevention National Call Center for Homeless Veterans (NCCHV)

- The NCCHV was founded to ensure that homeless Veterans or Veterans at risk for homelessness have free, 24/7 access to trained counselors. The hotline is intended to assist homeless Veterans and their families, VA medical centers, federal, state and local partners, community agencies, service providers, and others in the community
- The call number: **1-877- 4AID VET (877-424-3838)**
  - Free and confidential
  - Trained VA counselors to assist
  - Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- From March 1, 2010 to April 30, 2011
  - 32,061 total calls received
  - 26,429 callers identified as Veterans
  - 8,313 Veteran callers identified as being homeless
  - 15,041 Veteran callers identified as being at risk of homelessness.



# Community Partnerships

- This a cornerstone of the plan. VA strives to create partnerships with national and local governmental agencies and with community partners to enhance opportunities and services for homeless Veterans
- VA has strengthened its partnerships with community service providers: with nearly 4,000 interagency collaboration agreements in place
- These agreements have aided the VA in extending outreach services to 2,418 sites such as shelters, soup kitchens, safe havens, welfare offices or other locations where homeless persons may be located and have spurred the development of additional housing resources
- VA continues to foster interagency collaboration with: United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), Departments of Housing and Urban Development; Labor; Defense; Education; Health & Human Services; Justice and others



# Outreach/Education

## Accomplishments

- Outreach is an essential component of our plan to end homelessness among our Veterans
- Outreach workers engage people in the community who are living on the streets and assist them to acquire appropriate services and housing
- Veterans Health Administration (VHA) provides homeless outreach at all 153 Medical Centers
- As of March 31, 2010, Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Outreach workers have contacted more than 19,600 Veterans in FY2010). In FY 2009 approximately 39,000 received outreach services from the HCHV Program
- In February 2010, funding was deployed to the field for an additional 33 HCHV Outreach Workers to supplement the efforts of the current 340 HCHV Outreach Workers

## Future Actions

- VA will launch an outreach campaign the second week of October 2011, with simultaneous kick-off in 27 communities nationwide

# Newest Initiatives

## Supportive Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF)

- VA's primary prevention program designed to help Veteran families rapidly exit homelessness, or to avoid entering homelessness
  - Grantees will provide
    - case management to family members
    - temporary financial assistance to promote housing stability, including support for rent, utilities, moving expenses, transportation, and child care
    - funds for emergency rental assistance, security and utility deposits, food and other household supplies, child care, one-time car repairs, and other needs will help to keep Veterans and their families housed – as families
- VA's Review of applications underway. Awards expected by July 2011
- An estimated 10,000 Veteran families will be helped by having their homelessness rapidly ended or being placed in housing or will maintain housing and never become homeless

## Veterans Homelessness Prevention Demonstration (VHPD)

- Offers early intervention homeless prevention, primarily to Veterans returning from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Three year HUD-VA prevention pilot is a partnership among VA, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Labor (DOL), and local community agencies . VA provides support services and case management
- Serves the following locations
  - HUD's Office of Special MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida
  - Camp Pendleton in San Diego, California
  - Fort Hood in Killeen, Texas
  - Fort Drum in Watertown, New York
  - Joint Base Lewis-McChord near Tacoma, Washington