

VETERAN FACING SERVICES – DIGITAL HEALTH MODERNIZATION

Understanding our user persona

Health Hub

5/3/2022

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

MOVE

VETERAN FACING SERVICES – DIGITAL HEALTH MODERNIZATION

Demographic review

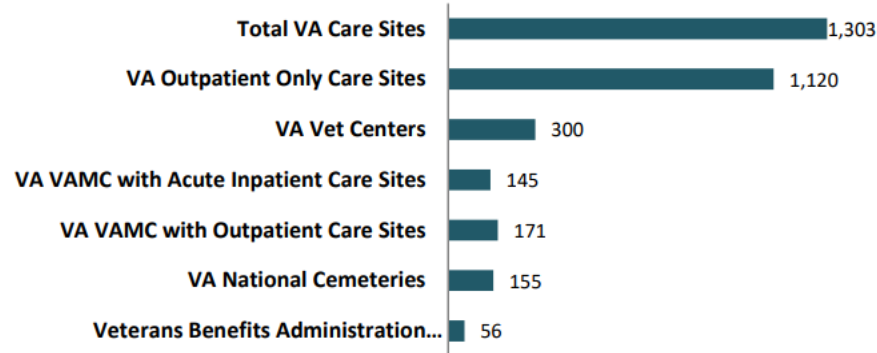
Fast Facts

Fiscal 2017 demographic information from the VA's Veteran Population Projection Model 2016. The VA reports there are 20.0 million veterans living in the United States.

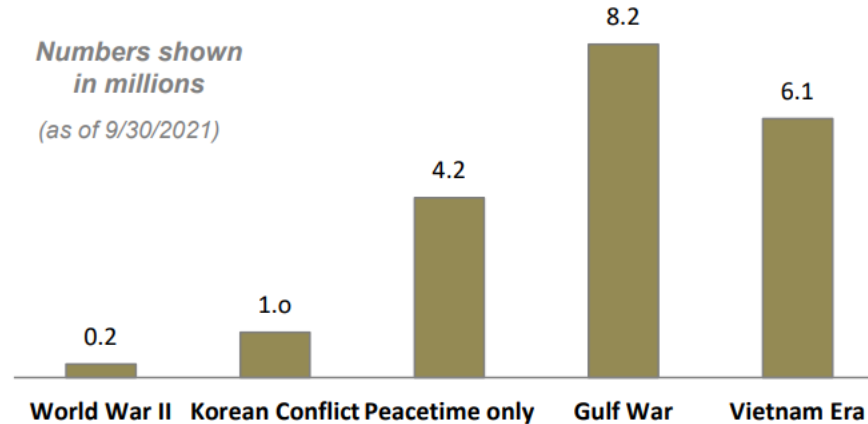
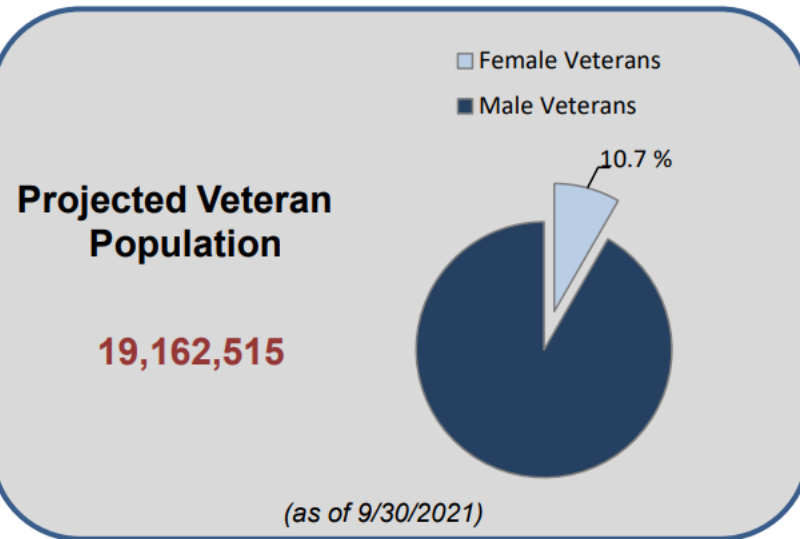
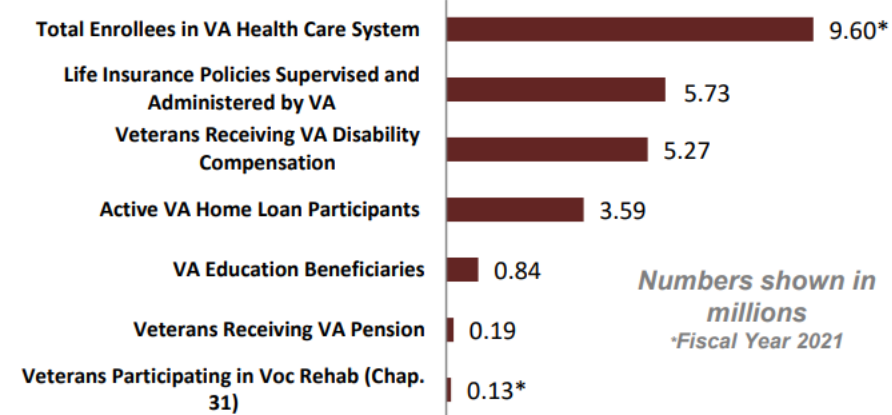
Department of Veterans Affairs Statistics at a Glance

(Updated 12/31/2021)

Number of VA Facilities



VA Benefits and Health Care Utilization



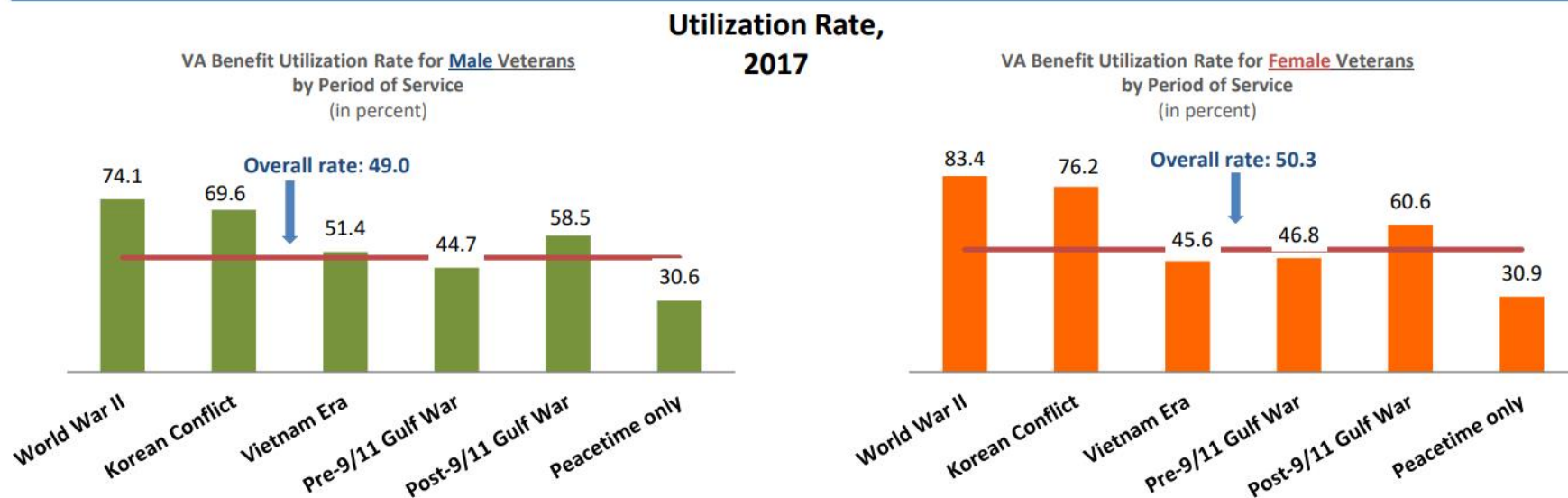
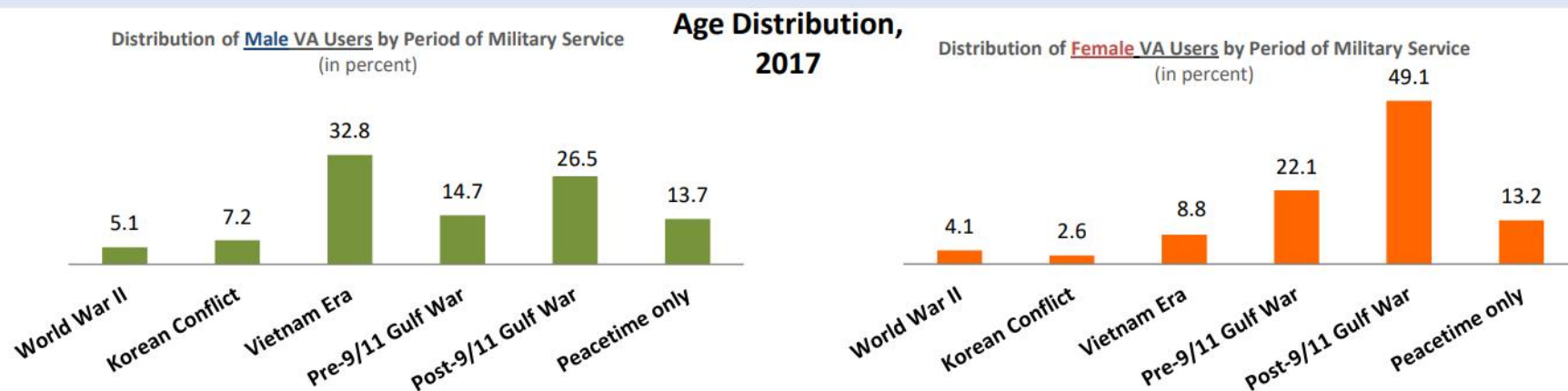
NOTE: Categories are not mutually exclusive. Veterans may serve in multiple periods.

Source: Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Data Governance and Analytics, Veteran Population Projection Model (VetPop) 2018; Veterans Benefits Administration; Veterans Health Administration, Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Policy and Planning.

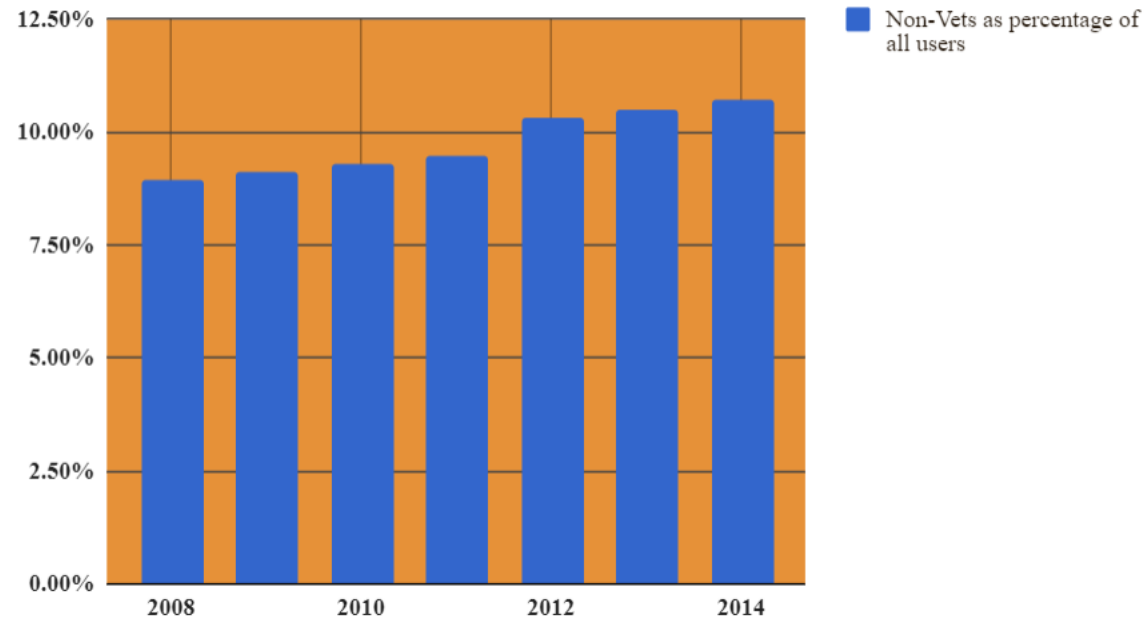
Prepared February 2022



Most male Veterans served during the Vietnam Era and most female Veterans served during the Post-9/11 Gulf War era. WWII and Korean Conflict Veterans are much more likely to use VA benefits and service than other cohorts.



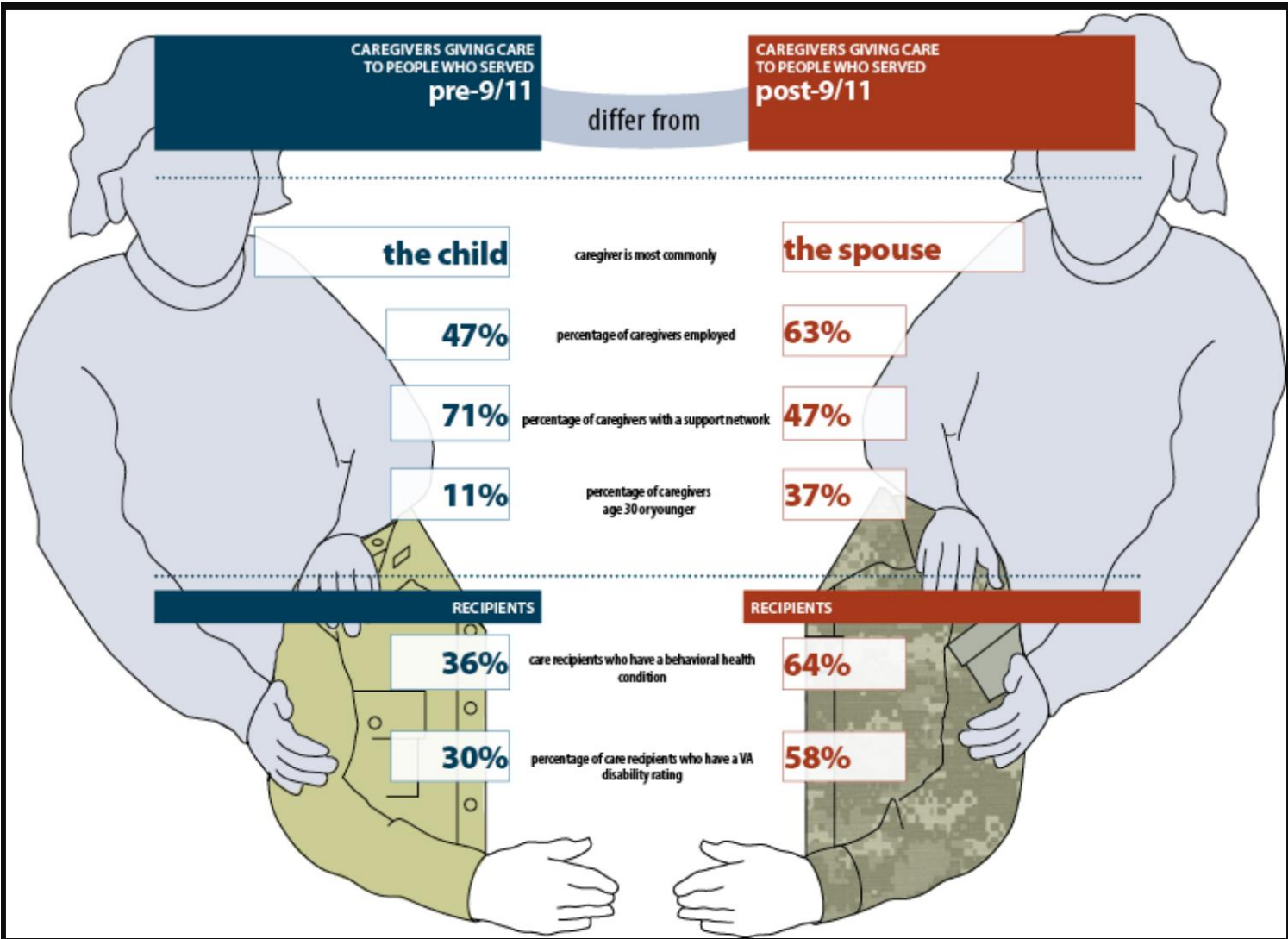
Percentage of Non-Vet Users



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Post-9/11 Military Caregivers Differ from Other Caregivers

Of the 5.5 million military caregivers in the United States, 1.1 million (20 percent) are caring for veterans and service members who served after September 11, 2001. These



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Veteran Uniqueness

What makes being a Veteran Unique

Literature review

Article

Olenick, M., Flowers, M., & Diaz, V. J. (2015).
**US veterans and their unique issues:
enhancing health care professional
awareness. Advances in medical education
and practice**, 6, 635–639.
<https://doi.org/10.2147/AMEP.S89479>

Insights

- Veterans experience mental health disorders, substance use disorders, post-traumatic stress, and traumatic brain injury at disproportionate rates compared to their civilian counterparts.
- Approximately 49,933 American veterans are homeless (~12% of homeless adult population); 51% of homeless veterans have disabilities, 50% suffer from a serious mental illness, and 70% have substance use disorders.
- TBI is “a traumatically induced structural injury and/or physiological disruption of brain function as a result of an external force”.⁵ TBI can be classified as mild, moderate, or severe depending on the length of unconsciousness, memory loss/disorientation, and responsiveness of the individual following the event (i.e., are they able to follow commands).
- According to military casualty statistics, 1,573 veterans have suffered major loss of limb amputations from battle injuries since 2010
- Veterans’ past exposure to chemicals (Agent Orange, contaminated water), radiation (nuclear weapons, X-rays), air pollutants (burn pit smoke, dust), occupational hazards (asbestos, lead), warfare agents (chemical and biological weapons), noise, and vibration increase their risk of health problems even years after the initial assault.

South, J. & Lewis E. (2021). **Health of Veterans—Strengths and Challenges**, Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine, 34 (2), 257-263
DOI: 10.3122/jabfm.2021.02.210031

- The veteran population stands between 18 and 20.3 million. That means that veterans now make up only about 5% to 7% of the adult population.
- The 2019 American Community Survey¹ follow-up revealed that 76.2% of veterans were non-Hispanic White, 12.3% were Black, 7.2% were Hispanic, 1.8% were Asian, and 0.8% were American Indian or Alaska Native.
- The percentage of veterans aged 65 or older in 2019 was 50.4%.
- Post-9/11 veterans have a 43% chance of having a service-connected disability—a significantly higher rate than that of veterans from other periods.
- Of the 9 million veterans who are registered for VA healthcare, only 6 million actually receive care from the VHA's 1225 health care facilities.
- An estimated 1 in 4 female veterans and 1 in 100 male veterans in the VA health care system report experiencing MST.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs,
(2021). **Office of Research &
Development: VA research on Loss of
Vision.**

<https://www.research.va.gov/topics/visionloss.cfm#:~:text=VA's%20Office%20of%20Blind%20Rehabilitation,to%20perform%20necessary%20daily%20activities>.

- There are approximately 130,000 Veterans in the United States who are legally blind, and more than a million Veterans who have low vision that causes a loss of ability to perform necessary daily activities.
- VA estimates that as many as 64 percent of service members with traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) also have a vision problem.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs,
National Center for Veteran statistics
(2017). **Minority Veterans Report:
Military Service History and VA**

Benefit Utilization Statistics, Office of
Data Governance and Analytics.
https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/Minority_Veterans_Report.pdf

- Thirty-five percent of all minority Veterans had a high school diploma or less as their highest level of educational attainment in 2014, compared with 51.8 percent of non-Veteran minorities.
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Benefits vary by dynamic service-connected rating

BENEFIT	DERIVATIVE
Non-Compensable 0 percent disability rating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">10 point veteran preference in federal hiringNo cost health care and prescription drugs for service connected disabilities if private bills are filedTravel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facilityCommissary and Exchange PrivilegesUse of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) club facilities, in person and online
Compensable 0 percent disability rating <small>*Note: In some instances there are individuals who file an appeal and have their rating lowered to 0 percent service connected disability only and at the minimum 10 percent (38 USC 2304)</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">10 point veteran preference in federal hiringNo cost healthcare and prescription drugs for service connected disabilities if private bills are filedTravel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facilityWaiver of VA funding fee for VA home loanBurial and plot allowanceCommissary and Exchange PrivilegesUse of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) club facilities, in person and online
Service connected disability rated at 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No cost health care and prescription medications for service connected disabilitiesTravel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facilityWaiver of VA funding fee for home loan10 point veteran preference in federal hiringVocational Rehabilitation & Employment (with a service employment incentive)Burial and plot allowanceCommissary and Exchange PrivilegesUse of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) club facilities, in person and online
Service connected disability rating at 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No cost health care and prescription medications for service connected disabilitiesTravel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facilityWaiver of VA funding fee for home loan10 point veteran preference in federal hiringVocational Rehabilitation & EmploymentBurial and plot allowanceCommissary and Exchange PrivilegesUse of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) club facilities, in person and online
Service connected disability rating at 30 - 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No cost health care and prescription medications for service connected disabilitiesTravel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facilityWaiver of VA funding fee for home loan10 point veteran preference in federal hiring<ul style="list-style-type: none">Direct hire authorityVocational Rehabilitation & EmploymentAdditional compensation for eligible dependents (may include ad and allowance for eligible spouses)Burial and plot allowanceCommissary and Exchange PrivilegesUse of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) club facilities, in person and online
Service connected disability rating at 50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No cost health care and prescription medicationsTravel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facilityWaiver of VA funding fee for home loan10 point veteran preference in federal hiring<ul style="list-style-type: none">Direct hire authorityVocational Rehabilitation & EmploymentAdditional compensation for eligible dependents (may include ad and allowance for eligible spouses)Consistent receipt of military related payBurial and plot allowanceCommissary and Exchange PrivilegesUse of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) club facilities, in person and online
Service connected disability rating at 60 - 70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No cost health care and prescription medicationsTravel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facilityWaiver of VA funding fee for home loan10 point veteran preference in federal hiring<ul style="list-style-type: none">Direct hire authorityVocational Rehabilitation & EmploymentAdditional compensation for eligible dependents (may include ad and allowance for eligible spouses)Consistent receipt of military related payIndividual Unemployability (must be unemployable due to service connected disability)<ul style="list-style-type: none">Dependents Educational Assistance (unemployment condition must be considered permanent)Special retraining trainingCRASH/CR: Civilian Health and Medical Program (unemployable condition must be considered permanent)Dislike pay (if rated unemployable)Burial and plot allowanceCommissary and Exchange PrivilegesUse of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) club facilities, in person and online
Service connected disability rating at 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No cost health care and prescription medicationsTravel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facilityNo cost dental careWaiver of VA funding fee for home loan10 point veteran preference in federal hiring<ul style="list-style-type: none">Direct hire authorityVocational Rehabilitation & EmploymentAdditional compensation for eligible dependents (may include ad and allowance for eligible spouses)Consistent receipt of military related payDependents Education Assistance (must be considered permanent)<ul style="list-style-type: none">Special retraining trainingCRASH/CR: Civilian Health and Medical Program (must be considered permanent)Burial and plot allowanceUniformed Services ID card
Service connected disability rating at 100% with an additional separately 10 percent service connected disability rating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Statutory Headstart ¹⁵Commissary and Exchange PrivilegesUse of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) club facilities, in person and online

Zoom into see detail

VETERAN FACING SERVICES – DIGITAL HEALTH MODERNIZATION

Argument for ease of use & clarity

We must create IA that is timeless

VA proposes updates to disability rating schedules for respiratory, auditory and mental disorders systems

News Sections: Benefits, Top Stories

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Vantage Point Staff Report

OPINION > HEALTHCARE

VA benefits reform trapped in a hamster wheel

BY RORY E. RILEY-TOPPING, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR - 06/01/21 3:00 PM EST
THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS ARE THEIR OWN AND NOT THE VA'S

The 2016 House proposal reduces VA medical care by \$690 million. What does this mean? As a result of the overall cut to medical services, an estimated 70,000 fewer Veterans will receive the VA care they need.

What **\$1.4 billion** in VA funding cuts to President's request means for **Veterans**



CUT MEDICAL CARE BY \$690 MILLION

- 70,000 fewer Veterans to receive VA care
- Less staff critical to improving access to care
- Delays in medical research

We must design IA that is equitable

Our Veteran's & caregivers use:

- Alternate input devices
- Screen readers
- Head pointers
- Sip and puff switches
- Eye tracking software

There are unseen barriers

- Traumatic Brain Injury
- English language deficient
- Organic / inorganic brain disease
- Cognitive disabilities