

# VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

## VA Caregiver Support Program

October 28, 2021

Connected Care Discussion Series

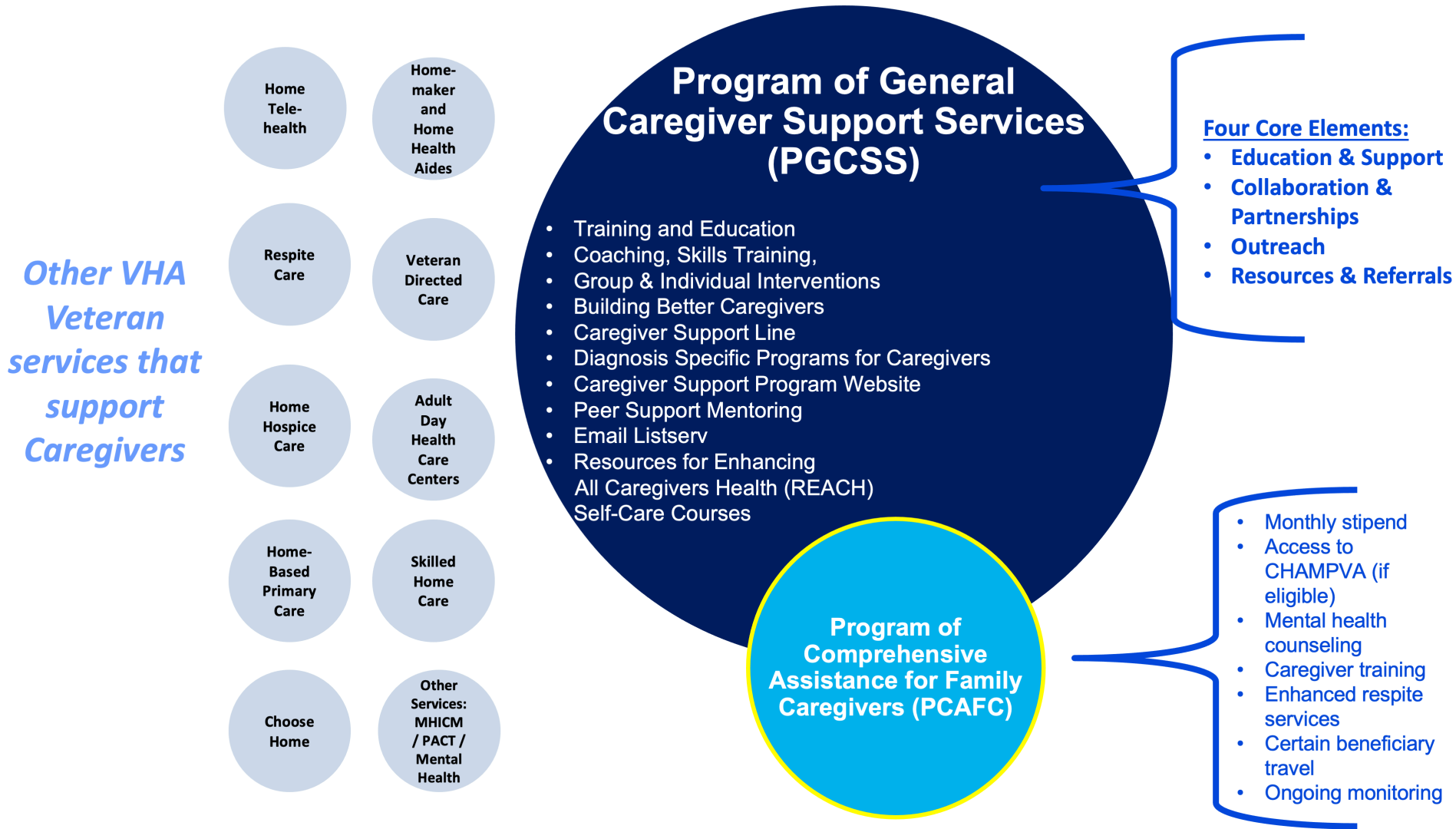
- **Introduction to VA Caregiver Support Program**
- **Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC)**
- **Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS)**



## **Caregiver Support Program Mission Statement:**

*To promote the health and well-being of family caregivers who care for our nation's Veterans, through education, resources, support, and services*

# Caregiver Support Program: PCAFC & PGCSS



# MISSION Act and Caregivers

**The VA MISSION Act of 2018 was designed to improve Veteran access to healthcare.**

- The MISSION Act gives Veterans greater access to healthcare in VA facilities and the community, expands benefit for caregivers, and improves VA's ability to recruit and retain the best medical providers.
- The MISSION Act enhances VA support for Family Caregivers through the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC).

## The MISSION Act of 2018 authorized VA to:

- Expand PCAFC to eligible Veterans of all eras of service, which will occur in two phases:
  - **Phase I:** Eligible Veterans injured on or before May 7, 1975
    - Went live 10/01/2020
  - **Phase II:** Eligible Veterans injured between May 7, 1975-Sept. 11, 2001
    - Anticipated to launch in 2022

# PCAFC Eligibility Criteria

## Eligibility Criteria

- The Veteran must have a service-connected disability rating of 70% or more.
- Additionally, the Veteran must need in-person personal care services for a minimum of six (6) continuous months based on either:
  - An inability to perform an activity of daily living, or
  - Need for supervision, protection, or instruction.
- **Previously:** VA required a connection between the need for personal care services and the qualifying serious injury.
- **Expansion Changes:** Eliminates the need for a connection between personal care services and the qualifying serious injury. Also redefines serious injury to now include any service-connected disability – regardless of whether it resulted from an injury, illness or disease.
- **Why This is Important:** In most cases, the eligible Veteran has multiple conditions that may warrant a need for personal care services. Veterans' needs may be so complex that it can be difficult to determine what specific condition causes the need for personal care services.

## Services

- Education and Training
- Enhanced Respite Care
- Counseling
- Beneficiary Travel
- Monthly Stipend – based on OPM General Schedule Grade 4, Step 1.
- Access to healthcare through Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA), if eligible
- Financial planning and legal resources for Primary Family Caregivers (timeline to be determined pending contract solution)



# High-level Steps of the Application Process

- Once the Veteran's application is received by the Caregiver Support Program (CSP), a preliminary review will be performed.
- A Veteran assessment, a functional assessment, and a caregiver assessment will be scheduled and completed by the CSP team.
- The CSP team will collaborate with the Veteran's Primary Care Provider to obtain input regarding the Veteran's needs.
- The completed assessments are then reviewed by a VISN CEAT to determine initial eligibility.
- Once initial eligibility is established, the caregiver is referred to training, and when complete, a home-care assessment will take place.
- The CEAT receives verification of caregiver training and results of home-care assessment and makes the final eligibility determination and stipend level (Level 1 or Level 2).

# How To Apply

## Veterans and Caregivers may apply for PCAFC in three ways:

- Complete the application online at:  
<http://www.caregiver.va.gov/>
  - For most, this is the fastest and easiest route!
- Access and download the application (VA Form 10-10CG) and mail to your local Caregiver Support Program.
  - You may also contact your local Caregiver Support Program for assistance.
- Connect with your local Veteran Service Office/Officer for assistance in completing and submission of the application.

# Program of General Caregiver Support Services

- The Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS) provides resources, education and support to caregivers of all era Veterans.
- The Veteran must be enrolled in VA healthcare but does not need to have a service-connected condition.
- *No formal application is required.*



# PGCSSS Four Core Elements



Education  
and Support



Collaboration  
and  
Partnerships



Outreach



Resources  
and Referrals



Choose **VA**

Informational Purposes Only

**VA**

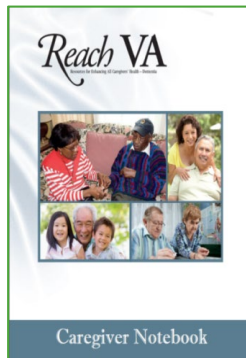


U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Coaching & Skills Training

## Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers Health (REACH VA) Caregiver Program

Individual Coaching  
Telephone Support Groups



## S.A.V.E. Suicide Prevention Skills Training

Signs  
Ask  
Validate  
Encourage & Expedite



## [Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Caregivers](#)

# National CSP Resources

- Building Better Caregivers
- Self-Care Courses for Caregivers
- Caregiver Support Line (CSL) Education Calls
- Peer Support Mentoring
- REACH VA Caregiver Program
- Annie Caregiver Text Program



# Summit & Resource Fair

## Caregiver Summit

The CSP hosts an annual summit to include caregiver-specific topics.

- Includes VA and external organizations/agencies that regularly support caregivers and families.
- Goal: to increase awareness of the needs of caregivers in the local community and the available resources.

## Caregiver & Family Resource Fair

Offered at every VA facility annually with a focus on resources for caregivers and families to include:

- VHA resources
- VBA resources
- Local non-profits
- County agencies





# Caregiver Support Line (CSL)

The VA Caregiver Support Line responds to calls from caregivers, Veterans and community agencies seeking information about VA caregiver services.

- Monday - Friday 8:00AM - 8:00PM (EST)
- Staffed by VA clinical social workers
- Links callers to their local Caregiver Support Program Team
- Provides information about assistance through the VA
- Offers supportive counseling when needed



Call 1-855-260-3274 toll-free to reach VA's Caregiver Support Line. Ask questions, get support and referrals, and learn how VA can assist you as a family caregiver.



# Caregiving During the Pandemic

- A tip sheet was created to provide additional information and guidance to Veterans and caregivers regarding COVID-19.
- This document provides information on:
  - How to protect against COVID-19
  - Ways to connect and receive support
  - CSP, VA, and other Resources

Caregiving During COVID-19: Tip sheet located on the  
<https://www.caregiver.va.gov/>

# How Do You Contact the Caregiver Support Program?

## **VA Caregiver Support Line 1-855-260-3274**

To find your local Caregiver Support Program, or for more information: <http://www.caregiver.va.gov>

