Community Care: MISSION Act Update

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National Office of Community Care
Agenda

- History of Community Care
- VA MISSION Act
  - Overview of Key Elements
  - Community Care Changes
  - Expanded Eligibility
  - Urgent Care Benefit
  - Required Provider Training
- Community Care Network (CCN)
- Community Care Resources
- Questions
History of VA Community Care

1945: Hometown Program
VA sets precedent for collaboration with community providers through agreements

1947: Academic Teaching Affiliates

1983: Project ARCH
Project Access Received Closer to Home (ARCH) to increase access care for rural Veterans

2007: Department of Defense

2011: Project Hero
Project Health Effectiveness through Resource Optimization (HERO) as a pilot program to improve managed strategies

2012: Indian Health Service & Tribal Health Service
Established reimbursement agreements for care provided to eligible Veterans.

2013: PC3 & National Dialysis Contract

2014: Veterans Choice Program (VCP)

2015: Plan to Consolidate
VA submits Community Care consolidation plan to Congress

2018: MISSION Act Passage
Major changes implemented including expanded eligibility and urgent care benefit for Veterans

2019: MISSION Act Implementation

Community Care Network
CCN Contract Awards
VA MISSION Act: An Overview Of Key Elements

What is the MISSION Act?
The VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks (MISSION) Act of 2018 will fundamentally transform VA’s health care system. It will fulfill the president’s commitment to provide Veterans with more choice in their health care providers. The Act includes four main pillars:

1. Consolidating VA’s community care programs.
2. Expansion of Caregivers Program
3. Flexibility to align its asset and infrastructure
4. Strengthening VA’s ability to recruit and retain health care professionals.

What is it NOT?
The MISSION Act is not a step toward privatization. It’s about significantly improving Veterans’ experience and enhancing their access to care.

Key Elements

Community Care - Consolidates VA’s multiple community care programs into one that is easier to navigate for Veterans and their families, community providers and VA employees.

Caregivers Program - The Act expands eligibility for VA’s Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) by including eligible Veterans from all eras of service.

Asset and Infrastructure - The Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) process in the Act will provide VA the necessary flexibility to align its infrastructure footprint with the needs of the nation’s Veterans.

Recruit and Retain - The Act will allow for additional, improved recruitment efforts, including a new scholarship program, greater access to VA’s education debt-reduction program and improved flexibility for providing bonuses for recruitment, relocation and retention.
Community Care: Key Changes

**New for Veterans**

Veterans receive new benefits under the Veterans Community Care Program. These benefits include:

- Access to urgent care
- Expanded eligibility for community care
- Scheduling by the Veteran and VHA
- Technology that streamlines communication

**New for Community Care Providers**

Establishment of the Community Care Network and Veterans Care Agreements. Community providers must now:

- Undergo an industry standard credentialing process
- Complete mandatory training
- Be subject to an exclusionary process
- Submit claims within 180 days from date of service

**New for VA Staff**

Introduction of new and modernized IT systems and business processes that will result in:

- Fewer manual process / increased automation
- Increased availability of processes metrics
- Broader options for care coordination
- Faster, easier, auditable information sharing
MISSION Act: Expanded Eligibility Overview

- Best medical interest of the Veteran
- Care or services are non-compliant with VA’s standards for quality
- 6 Community Care eligibility criteria established by MISSION Act
- Care or services not provided within designated access standards
- Required care or services are not offered
- Lack of full-service medical facility
- Grandfathered eligibility from Veterans Choice Program

**ACCESS STANDARDS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Primary Care, Mental Health, Non-institutional Extended Care</th>
<th>Specialty Care</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive Time</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wait Time</td>
<td>20 days</td>
<td>28 days</td>
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**MISSION Act: New Urgent Care Benefit**

**Coverage**
Access to urgent, non-emergency care (e.g. non-life threatening conditions) through the VA contracted network. Services such as:
- Colds
- Ear infections
- Minor injuries
- Pink eye
- Skin infections
- Strep throat

**Eligibility**
To be eligible for urgent care, Veterans must:
- Be enrolled in the VA health care system AND
- Have received care through VA from either a VA or community provider within the past 24 months

**Copays**
Copayments based on number of visits in a calendar year

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<th>Priority Group(s)</th>
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<th>6</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First three visits: $0</td>
<td>First three visits: $0</td>
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<td>4th and greater visits: $30 per visit</td>
<td>4th and greater visits: $30 per visit</td>
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<td>If related to a condition covered by special authority or exposure:</td>
<td>If not related: $30 per visit</td>
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Veterans access providers in the network when it is convenient for them without needing pre-authorization.
BILLING PROVIDERS SUBMIT MEDICAL RECORDS TO VA FOR APPROPRIATE FOLLOW UP

URGENT CARE

 Providers submit medical records to VA for appropriate follow up

Urgent Care Prescriptions: VA will pay for or fill prescriptions

• Provider may write prescriptions for up to a 14-day supply

• Prescriptions can be filled at a contracted pharmacy within the VA network, in VA, or at a non-contracted pharmacy
  
  o If a noncontracted pharmacy is used, Veterans must pay for the prescription and then file a claim for reimbursement with the local VA medical facility

• To find an in-network pharmacy, providers and Veterans can use the VA Facility Locator.

Billing: Urgent care provider bills VA's Third Party Administrator (TPA) and VA may bill the Veteran the applicable copayment.
MISSION Act: Required Provider Training

**VA MISSION Act (Section 131 and 133):** Establishes new requirements for non-department providers treating Veterans.

- Ensures safe opioid prescribing practices
- Establishes new competency standards and requirements
- VA developed training courses that all licensed independent providers must complete.

**Independent Licensed Providers**

*All providers with an NPI who treat Veterans must complete VA required training courses*

- MISSION Act VHA TRAIN training website ([https://train.missionact.org/](https://train.missionact.org/)) an external learning management system, created to host all MISSION related training courses.
- Providers must create an account in VHA TRAIN and include an NPI number in their VHA TRAIN profile before registering and completing training.
- Applies to providers who work through:
  - PC3 (and TriWest)
  - CCN (and CCN TPAs (Optum and TriWest))
  - Veterans Care Agreements (and VA)
Community Care Network: Overview

The **Community Care Network (CCN)** is a new set of **region-based** contracts to provide health care services in the community through a contractor who **builds** and **credentials** the associated network and **processes** claims.

**Benefits of the CCN:**

- Gives VA control of Veteran care and experience
  - VA is taking back **scheduling, care coordination**, and **customer service** functions

- Gives VA convenient access to a network of qualified, **credentialed providers**

- Gives VA a streamlined community care processes
  - by including **more services** under CCN
  - by **no longer** adjudicating claims

Community providers wanting to deliver care to our nation’s Veterans can contact Optum at [Join Optum VACCN Network](#) or [VACCNProviderContracting@optum.com](mailto:VACCNProviderContracting@optum.com). (Regions 1, 2, and 3)
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<th>General Information</th>
<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Appointments and Getting Care</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<td>Fact Sheet: General Information</td>
<td>Article: New eligibility criteria a major improvement over existing rules</td>
<td>Article: Finding a community provider, making appointments, and getting care</td>
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<td>Video: Veteran Community Care - Overview</td>
<td>Fact Sheet: Eligibility</td>
<td>Fact Sheet: Appointments and Getting Care</td>
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<td>Video: Veteran Community Care - Eligibility</td>
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<td>Article: Top Questions Answered</td>
<td>Article: What is the latest on community care?</td>
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<td>Video: Emergency Medical Care</td>
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