Older Veteran Behavioral Health Resource Inventory

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Overview

The purpose of this inventory is to provide resources for health and social service professionals interested in enhancing their outreach and support for older Veterans and other older adults who have or are at risk for behavioral health conditions. This inventory is not exhaustive. Rather, it provides an overview of programs and publications on topics including posttraumatic stress disorder, suicide prevention, long-term services and supports, and much more.

In addition to using this inventory, health and social service professionals can connect with the nationwide network of state and local aging and disability agencies, known as the No Wrong Door (NWD) System (**nwd.acl.gov/**).

Through partnerships with community organizations, including behavioral health entities, the NWD System helps all populations, including Veterans and their caregivers, take advantage of an array of services that support community living. The NWD System has access points across the country staffed by people living in local communities

A collaboration among:

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- Veterans Health Administration (VHA)
- Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Administration for Community Living (ACL)
- Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
- Office of Minority Health
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

National Council on Aging (NCOA)

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VA Benefits

VA.gov was built with Veterans, for Veterans. The new VA site offers one place to access all VA benefits and health care services. You can sign in with your My HealtheVet, DS Logon, or ID.me account to track your claims, refill your prescriptions, and more.

Access and manage your VA benefits and health care at **VA.gov**.

Link: https://www.va.gov/

VA Mental Health – VA is committed to recovery-oriented, holistic, integrated, evidence-based mental health care that is sensitive to gender and cultural differences and that Veterans can access close to home. VA provides a wide range of outpatient, inpatient, residential rehabilitation, telehealth, mental health and suicide prevention services.

Link: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/

VA Benefits for Elderly Veterans – These VBA programs provide information on benefits and health services that address changing health risks and financial challenges among Veterans ages 65 and over. Unique benefits available include the following.

Link: https://www.benefits.va.gov/persona/veteran-elderly.asp

1. **Veterans Pension** is a needs-based benefit paid to wartime Veterans who meet certain age or non-service-connected disability requirements.

   - The **VA Pension Fact Sheet** offers information on the benefit and how to apply.

   Link 1: https://www.benefits.va.gov/pension/vetpen.asp
   Link 2: https://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/limitedincome/livepension.pdf

2. **Aid & Attendance and Housebound** benefits are paid in addition to a monthly pension. Veterans and survivors who are eligible for a VA pension and require the aid and attendance (A&A) of another person, or are housebound may be eligible for this additional monetary payment.

   - The **Enhanced or Special Monthly Pension Fact Sheet** offers information on increased monthly pensions paid to a Veteran, spouse, or claimant and how to apply for an A&A or housebound designation.

   Link 1: https://www.benefits.va.gov/pension/aid_attendance_housebound.asp
   Link 2: https://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/limitedincome/EnhancedorSpecialPension.pdf

3. **General Information on Disability Compensation** provides VBA information on disability compensation, the claims process, eligibility, how to file an online fully developed claim (FDC), and available benefits.

   - The **VA Disability Compensation Fact Sheet** offers information about tax-free VA benefits paid to Veterans because of injuries or diseases that occurred while they were on active duty or that were made worse by active military service, or to certain Veterans disabled from VA health care.

   Link 1: https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/index.asp
   Link 2: https://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/serviceconnected/Compensation.pdf

4. The **Fiduciary Program** provides oversight of VA's most vulnerable beneficiaries who are unable to manage their VA benefits because of injury, disease, or the infirmities of advanced age or who are under 18 years of age.

   - The **Fiduciary Program Fact Sheet** provides additional information on what a fiduciary is, when a fiduciary is needed, and the process to become a fiduciary.

   Link 1: https://www.benefits.va.gov/fiduciary/index.asp
   Link 2: https://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/fiduciary/FiduciaryFactSheet.pdf

5. The **Military Sexual Trauma (MST) Fact Sheet** provides information for Veterans who may have experienced sexual trauma while serving in the military. MST experiences can affect Veterans' mental and physical health, even many years later. Veterans can apply for disability compensation for any current difficulties that are related to their service, including difficulties related to MST. The VBA has MST coordinators at local regional benefit offices who can assist Veterans. The list of coordinators is at **http://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/mstcoordinators.asp.**

   Link 1: https://www.benefits.va.gov/fiduciary/index.asp
   Link 2: https://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/fiduciary/FiduciaryFactSheet.pdf

VA Community Care – VA provides care to Veterans through community providers when VA cannot provide the care needed. Community care is based on specific eligibility requirements, availability of VA care, and the needs and circumstances of individual Veterans.

Link: https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/

VA Cross-Diagnostic Clinical Resources

VA/DoD Clinical Practice Guidelines – VA, in collaboration with the Department of Defense (DoD) and leading professional organizations, has been developing clinical practice guidelines since the early 1990s. Many guidelines are relevant to behavioral health care for older Veterans. They include guidelines for the assessment and management of patients at risk for suicide and those who have major depressive disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, substance use disorder, opioid therapy for chronic pain, lower back pain, insomnia, and more. Clinical practice guidelines are used to improve patient care and to reduce inappropriate variations in care. Guidelines must always be used in the context of a health care provider's clinical judgment regarding the care of a particular patient. For this reason, the guidelines may be viewed as an educational tool to provide information in shared decision-making.

Link: https://www.healthquality.va.gov/

VA Academic Detailing Service – The VA Pharmacy Benefits Management Academic Detailing Service is designed to provide a centralized matrix model for developing and supporting core elements of academic detailing (AD) programming. AD is a scholarly approach to balanced, evidence-based information that uses direct, one-on-one social marketing techniques to provide service-oriented outreach for health care professionals. AD educational materials cover a wide range of clinical topics, including dementia, depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, chronic insomnia, alcohol use disorder, opioid use disorder, pain/opioid safety, and more.

Link: https://www.pbm.va.gov/PBM/academicdetailingservicehome.asp

VA South Central Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC) – This VA Center of Excellence has a range of **clinical resources to address the mental health needs of older Veterans**. These resources include the "Collaborative Safety Planning for Older Adults" manual, older adult anxiety treatment resources ("Self-Help STOP WORRY: A Tool for Older Veterans" and "Multi-Setting Peaceful Mind: A Manual to Aid in the Management of Anxiety in Veterans with Memory Impairment"), and the "Pocket Guide for Clinicians for Management of Chronic Pain." The center also has many educational products on evidence-based interventions and care for mental health issues that are relevant to older adults, such as anxiety and worry, cognitive impairment, and stress.

Link 1: https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16/index.asp
Link 2: https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16/resources-older-veterans.asp
Link 3: https://www.mirecc.va.gov/VISN16/clinicalEducationProducts_topic.asp

E4 Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Disparities in Aging - The mission of the SAMHSA-funded E4 Center is to engage, empower, and educate health care providers and community-based organizations for equity in behavioral health for older adults and their families. The E4 Center provides education, implementation resources, and technical assistance regarding mental health, substance use, and their intersection with physical health. (SAMHSA)

Link: www.e4center.org

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

National Center for PTSD – The center's mission is to advance the clinical care and social welfare of America's Veterans and others who have experienced trauma, or who suffer from PTSD, through research, education, and training in the science, diagnosis, and treatment of PTSD and stress-related disorders. This website has educational resources for providers on **PTSD symptoms in older adults** and **assessing and treating older adults**, as well as courses on **PTSD and aging**, **PTSD and dementia**, and **prescribing for older Veterans with PTSD**. There are also web articles that review **co-occurring PTSD and neurocognitive disorder (NCD)** and information on the **assessment and treatment of PTSD with NCD**. Relevant materials for the public include the **"Understanding PTSD and Aging"** booklet in **English** (PDF) and **Spanish** (PDF), an article on **aging Veterans and posttraumatic stress symptoms**, an **infographic on the risks of benzodiazepine use in older adults**, and an **article on suicide and PTSD**.

Link 1: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/
Link 2: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/specific/symptoms_older_adults.asp
Link 3: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/specific/assess_tx_older_adults.asp
Link 4: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/continuing_ed/ptsd_aging.asp
Link 5: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/continuing_ed/dementia_ptsd.asp
Link 6: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/continuing_ed/prescribe_oldervets_ptsd.asp
Link 7: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/continuing_ed/suicide_ptsd_assessment.asp
Link 8: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/cooccurring/ncd_cooccurring.asp
Link 9: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/cooccurring/ncd_assess_cooccur.asp
Link 10: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/publications/print/understandingptsd_aging_booklet.pdf
Link 11: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/spanish/docs/understandingptsd_aging_booklet_SP.pdf
Link 12: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/what/aging_veterans.asp
Link 13: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/publications/print/ptsd_things_change.pdf
Link 14: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/related/suicide_ptsd.asp

PTSD Consultation Program – This free resource is available to both VA and non-VA providers who are working with Veterans who have PTSD. Speak directly with experts from the National Center for PTSD about topics including evidence-based treatment, clinical management, resources, assessment, education and training opportunities, referrals, and transitioning Veterans to VA care. The PTSD Consultation Program has a monthly **lecture series** with archived recordings.

Link 1: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/consult/index.asp
Link 2: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/consult/lecture_series.asp

COVID-19: Resources for Managing Stress – The NCPTSD developed many resources to support the public, health care workers and responders, and employers and community leaders to understand and manage stress, grief, and anxiety that many people are experiencing during the pandemic.

Link: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/index.asp

AboutFace – This website aims to help Veterans and others recognize PTSD, reduce barriers to care, and motivate them to seek treatment. AboutFace includes videos of Veterans of service eras dating back to World War II and the Korean War speaking about their experiences with PTSD and treatment. A recently added video recounts the experiences of a Vietnam Veteran who underwent a **successful course of prolonged exposure therapy** for his PTSD.

It's totally freeing

Link 1: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/AboutFace/
Link 2: https://youtu.be/SZp8z-5DXNM

Make the Connection: PTSD – Make the Connection is a VA online resource designed to connect Veterans, their family members and friends, and other supporters with information, resources, and solutions to issues affecting their lives.

On the website, visitors can watch hundreds of Veterans share their stories of strength and recovery, find relevant information, and locate nearby resources. Searching by era of military service, learn more about PTSD, treatment options, self-help tools, and recovery resources.

Link: https://maketheconnection.net/conditions/ptsd

The path to recovering from PTSD

Substance Use Disorders

Becoming sober turned his life around

Make the Connection: Problems With Alcohol and **Make the Connection: Problems With Drugs** – Make the Connection is a VA online resource designed to connect Veterans, their family members and friends, and other supporters with information, resources, and solutions to issues affecting their lives.

On the website, visitors can watch hundreds of Veterans share their stories of strength and recovery, find relevant information, and locate nearby resources. Searching by era of military service, you can learn more about problems with alcohol and/or drugs, treatment options, self-help tools, and recovery resources.

Link 1: https://maketheconnection.net/conditions/problems-with-alcohol
Link 2: https://maketheconnection.net/conditions/problems-with-drugs

Limit Alcohol – This VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention resource has information and recommendations about using alcohol in moderation if one chooses to use alcohol. The page includes a VA handout for Veterans, a video, and links to relevant resources.

Link: https://www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Limit_Alcohol.asp

Alcohol and medication among older adults

Get Connected: Linking Older Adults With Medication, Alcohol, and Mental Health Resources – This toolkit and **video** help service providers for the aging learn more about mental illness and substance use disorders in older adults, focusing on alcohol and medication use. It provides tools such as a program coordinator's guide, suggested curricula, and handouts. (SAMHSA)

Link 1: https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Linking-Older-Adults-With-Medication-Alcohol-and-Mental-Health-Resources/sma03-3824
Link 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQan4-6amJk

Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) 26: Treating Substance Use Disorder in Older Adults - This updated TIP is designed to help providers and others better understand how to identify, manage, and prevent substance misuse in older adults. The TIP describes the unique ways in which the signs and symptoms of substance use disorder (SUD) manifest in older adults; drug and alcohol use disorder screening tools, assessments, and treatments specifically tailored for older clients' needs; the interaction between SUDs and cognitive impairment; and strategies to help providers improve their older clients' social functioning and overall wellness. (SAMHSA)

Link: https://store.samhsa.gov/product/treatment-improvement-protocol-tip-26-treating-substance-use-disorder-in-older-adults/PEP20-02-01-011

Substance Use in Older Adults DrugFacts – This National Institute on Drug Abuse fact sheet briefly reviews the scope and impact of substance use in older adults including prescription medications, nicotine, alcohol and illicit substances. (NIH)

Link: https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/substance-use-in-older-adults-drugfacts

The Impact of the Opioid Epidemic on the Aging Services Network and the Older Adults They Serve – Read findings from a survey by NCOA that reveals an untold story about the nation's opioid epidemic — how the crisis is eroding the quality of life of older adults and the ability of local organizations to serve them. (NCOA)

Link: https://www.ncoa.org/article/the-impact-of-the-opioid-epidemic-on-the-aging-services-network-and-the-older-adults-they-serve

Pain Management

VA Pain Management – VA is leading the way in promoting individualized whole person treatment of chronic pain. This website provides resources for Veterans, their families, and providers regarding pain management and treatment and opioid safety.

Link: https://www.va.gov/painmanagement/

VA Pain Education Materials – This VA National Academic Detailing Service guide provides a number of providers and patient education resources regarding the VA Pain/Opioid Safety Initiative, headaches, opioid use disorder, opioid overdose education and naloxone distribution, and suicide.

Link: https://www.pbm.va.gov/PBM/AcademicDetailingService/Documents/Academic_Detailing_Educational_Material_Catalog/AcademicDetailingSTOPPAINMaterials.pdf

Implementing Evidence-Based Programs to Address Chronic Pain – The purpose of this issue brief is to educate community-based providers about the common and growing problem of chronic pain in older adults, provide background on how evidence-based programs can be an important tool for pain management, and offer insights into successful strategies for implementation of the Chronic Pain Self-Management Program. (NCOA)

Link: https://www.ncoa.org/article/implementing-evidence-based-programs-to-address-chronic-pain

Suicide Prevention

Data

Veteran Suicide Data – This page includes links to the 2020 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report and to data sheets for the 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

Link: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/Suicide-Prevention-Data.asp

Resources for Veterans, Their Families, and Clinicians

Veterans Crisis Line – The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring VA responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, text messaging service, or online chat. Veterans and their loved ones can call **1-800-273-8255** and **Press 1**, send a text message to **838255**, or chat online to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. In addition, the Veterans Crisis Line website hosts a tool for locating nearby resources and assistance.

Link: https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/

VA S.A.V.E Training – PsychArmor Suicide Prevention training. How to understand the problem of suicide in the United States and how to identify a Veteran who may be at risk for suicide.

Link: https://psycharmor.org/courses/s-a-v-e/

Start the Conversation: Aging Veterans Suicide Prevention Resources – This website offers videos on a wide range of topics to help family members and friends of aging Veterans start conversations about mental health and suicide risk.

Link: https://starttheconversation.veteranscrisisline.net/audience/aging-veterans

Preventing Suicide Among Older Veterans – This brochure helps family members and friends of older Veterans recognize the signs of suicide risk and learn how to talk to and support Veterans experiencing suicidal ideation. In addition, the brochure offers tips on decreasing suicide risk by making the home safer.

Link: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/Older_Veterans_Brochure_508_FINAL.pdf

Coaching Into Care – Family members and friends who are seeking care or services for a Veteran can call VA's Coaching Into Care national telephone service at **888-823-7458**. Licensed psychologists and social workers help each caller find appropriate services at a local VA facility or elsewhere in the community.

Link: https://www.mirecc.va.gov/coaching/

#BeThere for Veterans – This website has resources for Veterans, Service members, and those who want to support them. We can all play a role in preventing suicide, but many people don't know what they can do to support the Veteran or Service member in their life who is going through a difficult time. This website reinforces the fact that a simple act of kindness can help someone to feel less alone. Your actions could help save a life.

Link: https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/BeThere.aspx

Be there: help save a life

Make the Connection: Suicide – Make the Connection is a VA online resource designed to connect Veterans, their family members and friends, and other supporters with information, resources, and solutions to issues affecting their lives. On the website, visitors can watch hundreds of Veterans share their stories of strength and recovery, find relevant information, and locate nearby resources. Searching by era of military service, you can learn more about suicide prevention, treatment options, self-help tools, and recovery resources.

Link: https://maketheconnection.net/conditions/suicide

Safety Plan Quick Guide for Clinicians – This guide outlines six steps for developing a safety plan with a Veteran who may be at risk for suicide. A safety plan is a prioritized written list of coping strategies and sources of support that Veterans who are considered to be at high risk for suicide can use before or during a crisis. The plan is brief, easy to read, and in the Veteran's own words.

Link: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/VASafetyPlanColor.pdf

Finding hope again and reconnecting

South Central Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC) – This VA Center of Excellence has a range of **clinical resources to address the mental health needs of older Veterans**, including the "Collaborative Safety Planning for Older Adults" **manual**. The manual is a collection of best practices and practical tips for safety planning, with a focus on issues that are common in older adult patients. The purpose of the collaborative approach is to increase the quality of safety plans and the likelihood that Veterans will understand and follow them. This manual can be used on its own by staff members who are familiar with safety planning.

Link 1: https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16/index.asp
Link 2: https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16/resources-older-veterans.asp
Link 3: https://www.mirecc.va.gov/VISN16/docs/Safety_Planning_for_Older_Adults_Manual.pdf

Means Safety Messaging for Clinical Staff – This pocket card provides a framework on ways for clinicians to talk with Veteran patients about the safe storage of firearms and medications, as well as options for safe storage.

Link: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/Pocket-Card-for-Clinicians-Means-Safety-Messaging_508_CLEARED_9-3-19.pdf#

Reducing Firearm and Other Household Safety Risks for Veterans and Their Families – This brochure provides Veterans and their loved ones with clear guidance on how to safely store firearms and medications when they are not in use. (VHA)

Link: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/Brochure-for-Veterans-Means-Safety-Messaging_508_CLEARED_11-15-19.pdf#

Rocky Mountain MIRECC for Suicide Prevention – Rocky Mountain MIRECC provides free virtual and real-world resources for Veterans, their family members and providers, and communities. **Educational products** include brochures, podcasts, videos, and clinical tools that support suicide prevention and postvention. **Rocky Mountain MIRECC's Suicide Risk Management Consultation Program** is available free of charge to any provider who serves Veterans — whether within or outside the VA health care system.

Link 1: https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19
Link 2: https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/orderform/orderform.asp
Link 3: https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/consult

Community Provider Toolkit: Suicide Prevention – This toolkit supports the behavioral health and wellness of Veterans receiving services outside the VA health care system. The suicide prevention part of the toolkit includes resources on assessment, safety planning, education, and training, as well as a range of clinical resources.

Link: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/clinic_suicideprevention.asp

Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) – SPRC provides technical assistance, training, and materials to increase the knowledge and expertise of suicide prevention practitioners and other professionals serving people at risk for suicide. SPRC promotes collaboration among a variety of organizations in the field of suicide prevention. (SAMHSA)

Link: http://www.sprc.org/about-sprc

Community/Organizational Toolkits

Veteran Outreach Toolkit – Preventing Veteran Suicide Is Everyone's Business – This suicide prevention toolkit provides resources to help community groups raise awareness about mental health and suicide prevention among Veterans of all ages.

Link: https://www.va.gov/ve/docs/outreachToolkitPreventingVeteranSuicideIsEveryonesBusiness.pdf

Support Veterans in Your Life – This one-page flyer outlines Veteran support resources as well as strategies for spreading the word about preventing Veteran suicide at the community level.

Link: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/Suicide-Prevention-Community-Support-Handout.pdf

Promoting Emotional Health and Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for Senior Centers – This toolkit helps senior centers integrate suicide prevention into activities that support wellness. It describes activities that increase protective factors and explains how to recognize the warning signs for suicide. (SAMHSA)

Link: https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Promoting-Emotional-Health-and-Preventing-Suicide/SMA15-4416

Promoting Emotional Health and Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for Senior Living Communities – This toolkit equips senior living staffs with resources to promote mental health, prevent suicide, and encourage active participation among residents. It includes guidelines for integrating suicide prevention into ongoing programs, hands-on tools, and training manuals. (SAMHSA)

Link: https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Promoting-Emotional-Health-and-Preventing-Suicide/SMA10-4515

Treatment of Depression in Older Adults Evidence-Based Practices Kit – This kit offers information about an array of evidence-based practices for treatment and services to improve outcomes for older adults experiencing depression, including dysthymia. It considers planning, implementation, and maintenance. (SAMHSA)

Link: https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Treatment-of-Depression-in-Older-Adults-Evidence-Based-Practices-EBP-KIT/SMA11-4631CD-DVD

Preventing Suicide in Older Adults – This issue brief is intended to help health care and social service organizations develop strategies to prevent suicide in older adults. (ACL)

Link: https://www.acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2016-11/Issue%20Brief%204%20Preventing%20Suicide.pdf

A Toolkit for Safe Firearm Storage in Your Community – Compiled by VA, the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), this toolkit includes tips for safely storing firearms as well as best practices for sharing these guidelines in your community.

Link: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/Toolkit_Safe_Firearm_Storage_CLEARED_508_2-24-20.pdf

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

VA Patient Centered Care and Whole Health – It all starts with a simple question: *What matters most to you?* That's the first step in VA's Whole Health approach to care that empowers and equips Veterans to take charge of their health and well-being, and to live their life to the fullest. VA's Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation is working with VA leaders and providers to implement this approach in facilities across the country.

Link: https://www.va.gov/patientcenteredcare/

VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention – Find resources to help Veterans stay healthy, including recommended preventive health services for men and women, the **Veterans Health Library**, **tips for sleeping well**, **the MOVE! Weight Management Program**, **recommended screening tests and immunizations**, the **Telephone Lifestyle Coaching Program**, handouts and videos on a wide range of health and wellness topics, and much more.

Link 1: https://www.prevention.va.gov/
Link 2: https://www.prevention.va.gov/Veterans_Health_Library.asp
Link 3: https://www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Sleep_Well.asp
Link 4: https://www.prevention.va.gov/MOVE.asp
Link 5: https://www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Get_Recommended_Screening_Tests_and_Immunizations.asp
Link 6: https://www.prevention.va.gov/TLC/index.asp

Fact Sheet: Engaging Veterans in Evidence-Based Programs – The purpose of this resource is to share strategies for developing and enhancing partnerships between aging services and Veterans' health organizations to deliver evidence-based care. (NCOA)

Link: https://www.ncoa.org/article/tip-sheet-engaging-veterans-evidence-based-programs

ACL Health, Wellness, and Nutrition Programs – ACL health and wellness programs help older adults and people with disabilities to remain as healthy and independent as possible in their homes and communities. Programs address prevention, chronic disease self-management, behavioral health, and more. (ACL)

Link: https://www.acl.gov/programs/health-wellness

- **Behavioral Health** – ACL provides resources for supporting behavioral health to aging and disability network community-based organizations. Resources include trainings, toolkits, state behavioral health profiles, webinars, and issue briefs. Also see the **NCOA Older Americans Behavioral Health Series.**
- **Brain Health** – Information and tips about understanding and maintaining a healthy brain.
- **Care Transitions –** This effort supports states to strengthen the Aging and Disability Resource Centers in implementing evidence-based care transition models to engage older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers for improving care transitions.
- **Centers for Independent Living** – These community-based nonprofits are consumer controlled and promote and practice the independent living philosophy. They offer a wide range of services, including many that can improve the health and wellness of people with disabilities. Many offer support in navigating health and service systems.

- **Chronic Disease Self-Management** – These programs provide people with disabilities and older adults with education and tools to help them manage chronic conditions.
- **Nutrition** – Grants to states support nutrition services for older adults (age 60 and older) across the country through home-delivered meal and congregate meal providers.

Link 1: https://acl.gov/programs/health-wellness/behavioral-health
Link 2: https://acl.gov/brain-health
Link 3: https://acl.gov/programs/care-transitions/evidence-based-care-transitions-program
Link 4: https://acl.gov/programs/aging-and-disability-networks/centers-independent-living
Link 5: https://acl.gov/programs/health-wellness/chronic-disease-self-management-education-programs
Link 6: https://acl.gov/programs/health-wellness/nutrition-services

Treatment of Depression in Older Adults Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) Kit – This kit offers information about an array of evidence-based practices for treatment and services to improve outcomes for older adults experiencing depression, including dysthymia. It considers planning, implementation, and maintenance. (SAMHSA)

Link: https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Treatment-of-Depression-in-Older-Adults-Evidence-Based-Practices-EBP-KIT/SMA11-4631CD-DVD

Also:
Many prominent evidence-based self-management and health promotion programs can be accessed through the **Program Locator Tool** hosted by the **Evidence-Based Leadership Council**. Through this locator, you can find **PEARLS**, a treatment program for depression; **Healthy IDEAS**, a depression self-management program designed to detect and reduce the severity of depressive symptoms in older adults with chronic conditions and functional limitations; **HomeMeds**, a nationally recognized home medication management system that screens for common medication-related problems, such as inappropriate use of over-the-counter drugs and adverse effects like falls; and the **Chronic Disease Self-Management Program**, which teaches people living with a chronic condition how to better manage their health and their well-being.

Link 1: http://www.eblcprograms.org/evidence-based/map-of-programs/
Link 2: http://www.eblcprograms.org/about-us
Link 3: https://depts.washington.edu/hprc/evidence-based-programs/pearls-program/
Link 4: http://healthyideasprograms.org
Link 5: http://www.eblcprograms.org/evidence-based/recommended-programs/homemeds/
Link 6: https://www.selfmanagementresource.com/programs/small-group/chronic-disease-self-management/

Long-Term Services and Supports

VA Geriatrics and Extended Care Services (GEC) – VA GEC is committed to optimizing the health and well-being of Veterans who have multiple chronic conditions, life-limiting illness, or frailty or disability associated with chronic disease, aging, or injury. GEC programs maximize each Veteran's functional independence and lessen the burden of disability on Veterans and their families and caregivers.

Link: https://www.va.gov/geriatrics/

Home and Community Based Services – These services help chronically ill or disabled Veterans of any age remain in their homes. Services include Adult Day Health Care, Home-Based Primary Care, Homemaker and Home Health Aide Care, Hospice Care, Palliative Care, Respite Care, Skilled Home Health Care, Telehealth Care, and Veteran-Directed Care.

Link: https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/Guide/LongTermCare/Home_and_Community_Based_Services.asp

Residential Settings and Nursing Homes – These care settings include Community Residential Care, Medical Foster Homes, Adult Family Homes, Assisted Living, VA Community Living Centers, Community Nursing Homes, and State Veterans Homes.

Link: https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/Guide/LongTermCare/Nursing_Home_and_Residential_Services.asp

VA Caregiver Support Program – Caregivers play an important role in the health and well-being of Veterans. The Caregiver Support Program offers training, educational resources, and multiple tools to help caregivers succeed.

Link: https://www.caregiver.va.gov/

VA Social Work – This site offers information about VA social work services for helping Veterans and their family members and caregivers in resolving housing, finance, mood, relationship, and physical limitation issues in individual, group, or family treatment. VA social workers link Veterans to both VA and community resources and services in support of their treatment goals.

Link: https://www.socialwork.va.gov/

VA Homeless Programs - VA and its partners are committed to identifying Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and putting them on the pathway to permanent housing. Veterans who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness are strongly encouraged to contact the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at (877) 4AID-VET (877-424-3838) for assistance.

Link: https://www.va.gov/homeless/index.asp

VA Compassionate Contact Corps -The Compassionate Contact Corps provides phone and video visits between trained volunteers and Veterans referred to the program through one of their VA clinicians (e.g. physician, social worker). This program primarily benefits lonely and/or socially isolated Veterans, as well as caregiver support.

Link: www.volunteer.va.gov

Veteran Community Partnerships (VCP) – This national initiative aims to ensure that all Veterans and their caregivers have access to, and the widest range of choices among, the services that allow Veterans to stay in the places they call home. VCPs are coalitions of Veterans and their caregivers, VA facilities, and community health providers, organizations, and agencies. They work together to foster and provide seamless access to, and transitions among, the full continuum of care and support services in VA and the community.

Link: https://www.va.gov/healthpartnerships/vcp.asp

VCP Toolkit – Serving Those Who Served Us – This VA toolkit is designed to provide direction, strategy, resources, and practical tools to build and strengthen partnerships among Veterans and their caregivers, VA, and community partners. The toolkit provides helpful information and resources to build a successful VCP and

specifically outlines 15 steps to form a VCP that can be adapted to focus on mental/behavioral health needs of Veterans in your community.

Link: https://www.va.gov/HEALTHPARTNERSHIPS/docs/VCPToolkit.pdf

COVER to COVER – The Connecting Older Veterans (Especially Rural) to Community or Veteran Eligible Resources model uses the expertise of benefits counselors at community agencies such as Aging and Disability Resource Centers, Area Agencies on Aging, and Centers for Independent Living to help older Veterans access resources available from VA and community agencies.

Link: https://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/docs/promise/ORH_RuralPromisingPractice_COVERtoCOVER__Overview_FINAL-508.pdf

Veteran-Directed Care – This program provides Veterans with opportunities to self-direct their long-term services and supports and to continue living independently at home. Veterans manage their own flexible budgets and decide what mix of goods and services best meet their needs. Through an options counselor, the local aging and disability network provides facilitated assessment and care/service planning, arranges fiscal management services, and offers ongoing counseling and support. (ACL/VHA)

Link: https://nwd.acl.gov/vdc.html

No Wrong Door (NWD) System – Through partnerships with community organizations, including behavioral health entities, the NWD System helps all populations, including Veterans and their caregivers, connect to an array of services that support community living. The NWD System has access points across the country that are staffed by people living in local communities. (ACL)

Link: https://nwd.acl.gov/

No Wrong Door: Supporting Community Living for Veterans – This paper describes promising practices on how aging and disability network agencies, VA medical centers (VAMCs), and Veterans benefits offices in seven states (Connecticut, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, Nevada, Utah, and Washington) have forged partnerships to better support Veterans in community living.

Link: http://www.longtermscorecard.org/~/media/Microsite/Files/2017/2017%20Scorecard/Veterans/AARP1195_PP_NWDandVeterans_WEB.PDF

Promoting Behavioral Health and Preventing Suicide in Older Adults: Enhanced Training for ADRC/No Wrong Door Systems (2016) (**Slides, Resource Guide 1, and Resource Guide 2**) – These guides provide the staffs of Aging and Disability Resource Centers and the NWD System basic information related to the behavioral health needs of older adults.

Link 1: https://www.acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2017-06/Behavioral_Health_and_Suicide_Prevention_ Among_Older_Adults_FINAL.pptx
Link 2: https://www.acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2017-06/Resource_Guide_Behavioral_Health_and_ Suicide_Prevention_FINAL.docx
Link 3: https://www.acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2017-06/Resource_Guide_Behavioral_Health_and_Suicide_Prevention_FINAL.xlsx

National Center on Elder Abuse - The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) provides the latest information regarding research, training, best practices, news and resources on elder abuse, neglect and exploitation to professionals and the public. One tip sheets provides **Tips for Avoiding Veterans Scams**. (ACL)

Link 1: https://ncea.acl.gov/
Link 2: https://ncea.acl.gov/NCEA/media/Publication/NCEA_VeteranFlyer2021_Tips.pdf

Get the Facts About Elder Abuse – Empowering Older Veterans – This brochure describes some of the warning signs of elder abuse among older Veterans. (Department of Justice)

Link: https://www.justice.gov/elderjustice/file/949096/download

Clinician Education: Serving Veterans

Make the Connection – This VA online resource is designed to connect Veterans, their family members and friends, and other supporters with information, resources, and solutions to issues affecting their lives. On the website, visitors can watch hundreds of Veterans share their stories of strength and recovery, find relevant information, and locate nearby resources.

Link: https://maketheconnection.net/

> **Make the Connection – Retirement and Aging** – Retirement and aging can be challenging. For those Veterans who have difficulty adjusting, connecting with counseling and therapy can ease this transition. Listen to Veterans talk about how they found solutions to live well as they get older, leave jobs, and start their next phase of life.
>
> *Link: https://maketheconnection.net/events/retirement-aging*

Military Cultural Competence – Online Course – This interactive online training course (about 75 minutes long) provides an overview of military culture, including organizational structure, ranks, branches of service, core values, and demographics, as well as similarities and differences between the Active Duty and Reserve components. It is intended to assist civilian mental health providers in understanding and effectively communicating and interacting with Service members and their families. (Center for Deployment Psychology, Uniformed Services University)

Link: https://deploymentpsych.org/online-courses/military-culture

Military Culture: Core Competencies for Healthcare Professionals – This course includes four modules (each about two hours long) on these topics: (1) Self-Assessment and Introduction to Military Ethos; (2) Military Organization and Roles; (3) Stressors and Resources; (4) Treatment, Resources, and Tools. (Center for Deployment Psychology, Uniformed Services University)

Link: https://deploymentpsych.org/military-culture-course-modules

VA TRAIN Learning Network – TRAIN is a free service for learners from the Public Health Foundation and supported by the VA Employee Education System (EES), a VA internal education and training program office. VA's EES-developed learning programs support the professional development needs of public health and health care providers, with a focus on Veteran patient care. TRAIN includes training on topics including geriatrics and extended care, military culture, opioid issues, and PTSD.

Link: https://www.train.org/vha/welcome

National Council on Aging webinars – Search this site for past or upcoming webinars and other virtual events sponsored by NCOA, on a variety of topics related to health and well-being for older adults. (NCOA)

Link: https://www.ncoa.org/event-custom-search

E4 Center webinars – **The E4 Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Disparities in Aging** sponsors webinars on a range of topics related to behavioral and mental health of older adults, available on-demand at this site. (SAMHSA)

Link 1: http://e4center.org/webinars/
Link 2: http://e4center.org/

Other Benefits and Support

Medicare and Medicaid

Medicare and Your Mental Health Benefits – For consumers, this official government booklet provides information about mental health benefits for people with Original Medicare (Part A and Part B), including who is eligible, outpatient and inpatient benefits, prescription drug coverage, help for people with limited income and resources, and where to get the help you need. A **Getting Started** brochure provides a broad overview of mental health benefits for people with Original Medicare. (CMS)

Link 1: https://www.medicare.gov/Pubs/pdf/10184-Medicare-and-Your-Mental-Health-Benefits.pdf
Link 2: https://www.medicare.gov/Pubs/pdf/11358-Medicare-Mental-Health-Getting-Started.pdf

Medicare Mental Health – This booklet for health care professionals provides information on Medicare mental health services, including covered and noncovered mental health services, eligible professionals, commonly used Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes, information about specific settings of care, medical records requirements, and more. (CMS)

Link: https://www.cms.gov/files/document/medicare-mental-health.pdf

A Roadmap to Behavioral Health: A Guide to Using Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services – This Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services resource focuses on behavioral health as a companion guide to the **Roadmap to Better Care and a Healthier You**. It offers important information about services for mental health and substance use disorders, finding a behavioral health provider, defining behavioral health terms, receiving services, and following up on care. At the second link, see roadmaps available in multiple languages. (CMS)

Link 1: https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/OMH/Downloads/Coverage-to-Care-Behavioral- Roadmap.pdf
Link 2: https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/OMH/equity-initiatives/c2c/consumerresources/ roadmap-to-better-care.html

Your Medicare Benefits – This booklet explains many services and supplies covered by Medicare Part A and Part B. (CMS)

Link: https://www.medicare.gov/Pubs/pdf/10116-your-medicare-benefits.pdf

Your Medicare Coverage – This website provides information about Medicare coverage for many tests, items, and services. Coverage details include those for **depression screenings**, **pain management**, and **inpatient, outpatient**, and **partial hospitalization mental health care**. (CMS)

Link 1: https://www.medicare.gov/coverage
Link 2: https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/mental-health-care-outpatient
Link 3: https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/depression-screenings
Link 4: https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/mental-health-care-inpatient
Link 5: https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/mental-health-care-partial-hospitalization
Link 6: https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/pain-management

Low-Income Subsidy (LIS) Program or Extra Help –Medicare beneficiaries can qualify for Extra Help with their Medicare prescription drug plan costs. Extra Help is estimated to be worth about $4,000 per year. To qualify for Extra Help, a person must be receiving Medicare, have limited resources and income, and reside in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia.

Link: https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/prescriptionhelp/

Medicare Savings Programs (MSPs) – MSPs help pay for Medicare premiums. They may also pay for Part A (Hospital Insurance) and Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments for those who meet certain conditions. (CMS)

Link: https://www.medicare.gov/your-medicare-costs/help-paying-costs/medicare-savings-program/medicare- savings-programs.html

Medicaid – Medicaid provides health coverage to millions of Americans, including eligible low-income adults, children, pregnant women, elderly adults, and people with disabilities. Medicaid is administered by states, according to federal requirements, and is funded jointly by states and the federal government. The Medicaid program covers certain **behavioral health services**, which vary by state of residence. (CMS)

Link 1: https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/index.html
Link 2: https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/benefits/bhs/index.html

Other Federal Benefits

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (**LIHEAP**) – LIHEAP is a federally funded, state-run program that helps members of low-income households afford their home heating and cooling bills. LIHEAP includes assistance to avert certain energy-related emergencies, such as utility shutoffs and fuel-supply shortages. LIHEAP may also help clients with other energy-related needs, such as repairing or replacing utility equipment (such as a furnace and air conditioning), also known as weatherization assistance.

Link: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/programs/liheap/about

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (**SNAP**) – SNAP offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families and provides economic benefits to communities. SNAP is the largest program in the domestic hunger safety net. The Food and Nutrition Service works with state agencies, nutrition educators, and neighborhood and faith-based organizations to ensure that those eligible for nutrition assistance can make informed decisions about applying for the program and can access benefits.

Link: https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap

Health Insurance Marketplace – Some individuals may purchase coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace, which includes coverage for treating mental health conditions and substance use disorders.

Link: https://www.healthcare.gov/coverage/mental-health-substance-abuse-coverage/

Other Services

Service Members, Veterans, and their Families Technical Assistance (SMVF TA) Center – The SMVF TA Center works with states and territories to strengthen their behavioral health systems for Service members, Veterans, and their families. (SAMHSA)

Link: https://www.samhsa.gov/smvf-ta-center

Eldercare Locator – This nationwide service connects older Americans and their caregivers with trustworthy local support resources. The Eldercare Locator is a public service of the Administration on Aging, an agency of the Administration for Community Living. Since 1991, the Eldercare Locator has been linking those who need assistance with state and local agencies on aging, as well as community-based organizations that serve older adults and their caregivers. Search for resources related to behavioral health, Alzheimer's disease, elder abuse, healthy aging, food and nutrition, long-term care, and much more. (ACL)

Link: https://eldercare.acl.gov/Public/Index.aspx

SAMHSA Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator – A confidential and anonymous source of information for persons seeking treatment facilities for substance use and/or mental health problems. This video shows how the tool can be used to find Veteran-specific resources. (SAMHSA)

Link 1: https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/
Link 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SeywTEKKo5k

BenefitsCheckUp® – This is the nation's most comprehensive free online service to screen seniors with limited income for benefits. BenefitsCheckUp has helped more than 6.6 million people find more than $24 billion in benefits. Older adults, caregivers, and service providers can use BenefitsCheckUp to quickly screen and apply for over 2,500 local, state, and federal benefits. (NCOA)

Link: https://www.benefitscheckup.org/