

Partners in Care: Integrating Caregivers into Veterans' Health Care

Caregiver Sheet



Caregivers are essential members of the Veteran's health care team. Below are some tips and tools to help caregivers effectively engage as partners in care. Successful collaboration among Veterans, caregivers, and health care providers empowers caregivers and improves health outcomes and quality of life for Veterans and caregivers.

Pro tips to foster a successful health care appointment:



Prepare in Advance:

Review the appointment details, make a list of any concerns or changes in the Veteran's health you want to address during the appointment, and compile a list of current medications, including dosages and supplements.



Encourage Self-Advocacy:

Support the Veteran to be as responsive and engaged as able, maximizing the Veteran's ability to voice their concerns and preferences.



Share Observations When Needed:

Provide detailed examples of how the Veteran is functioning at home. Mention any physical, emotional, or behavioral changes you've noticed.

Pro tips to foster a successful health care appointment:



Be Clear and Concise:

Offer clear and concise insights, briefly highlighting key information that the Veteran may not have shared, to help the provider get a fuller picture of the Veteran's needs. Avoid overwhelming the provider with unnecessary details.



Take Notes:

Write down important details and follow-up steps that you and the Veteran can refer to later. Confirm understanding with the provider and ask them to share written instructions when needed.



Discuss Follow-Up Care:

Clarify when the next appointment should be scheduled. Ask about warning signs to watch for and when to seek help.



Utilize Resources:

Inquire about any VA support services, such as referrals to specialists, therapists or social workers, that could help the Veteran and you as the partner in care.



Essential tools to enhance communication with VA health care providers:



Want to quickly connect with a VA health care team member?

MyHealthVet (<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/>) enables Veterans (and caregivers who are eligible to receive VA healthcare) to communicate securely online with their VA health care team and other VA staff about non-emergency information or questions.



Want help preparing for an appointment?

AHRQ QuestionBuilder App (<https://mobile.va.gov/app/ahrq-questionbuilder>) helps you prepare the questions you may want to ask based on the type of appointment scheduled.



Want to meet with your provider virtually?

VA Video Connect App (<https://mobile.va.gov/app/va-video-connect>) enables you to meet with providers through live video on any device with an Internet connection.

For additional information, education, tools, resources, and tips to support your role as a caregiver please visit the Caregiver Support Program Website: www.caregiver.va.gov