



Breaking it down: A Fundamental Overview of the VA Healthcare System for Caregivers & Veterans

The Patient Aligned Care Team or PACT

This is your Veteran's health care team. The PACT is your first point of access to all that VA has to offer in support of the Veteran's health care needs. Below is a listing of some of the staff that may comprise the PACT.

- **Primary Care Provider (PCP):** The PCP provides medical assessments and interventions, provides evaluations and referrals for the Veteran's specific care needs such as referrals to medical specialists and for in-home supports, equipment, and programs offered through VAMC.
- **Registered Nurse (RN):** The RN is the first line support to the PCP and provides medical assessment, administers treatment interventions, supports, and collaborates with the PCP in provision of the Veteran's medical care. The RN is a helpful resource to facilitate Veteran and Caregiver requests and needs to the PCP.
- **Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN):** The LPN typically prepares the Veteran for medical appointments by gathering medical data, such as vital signs, current medication information, and reason for visit. They are another valuable resource or contact that you may approach to relay information to the PCP or Social Worker regarding Veteran or family requests.
- **Licensed Social Worker (SW):** The SW is your first point of access to discuss the Veteran and Caregiver's needs related to VA and community supports and services. The SW may assist Veterans and Caregivers to learn more about VA services, programs, grants, and financial benefits. PACT SW can assist in referrals and directions regarding how to request and access desired services and benefits through VA and the community.

The VA Caregiver Support Program

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Caregiver Support Program provides support, programs, and services to family caregivers of Veterans of all eras. There are two programs of assistance and support for the caregivers of Veterans.



➤ **Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers**

The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers offers enhanced services and benefits to designated family caregivers who care for eligible Veterans who were seriously injured in the line of duty.

➤ **Program of General Caregiver Support Services**

The Program of General Caregiver Support Services offers an array of services and supports for caregivers of enrolled Veterans from any era. The General Caregiver Program provides social and emotional supports to caregivers to assist them in caring for Veterans and for themselves. General caregivers are individuals who provide unpaid in-home personal care services to Veterans of any era.

➤ **Local Caregiver Support Teams: CSP**

Each VA Medical Center has a dedicated Caregiver Support team which includes a Caregiver Support Coordinator. The local Caregiver Support teams assist caregivers in locating and using programs and services designed to help them. CSP teams can provide connection and contact information for local community-based resources as well as assistance navigating VA. CSP teams also host programs and services that provide caregivers with emotional support, educational opportunities, and other resources that promotes and enhances the well-being and self-care for the caregiver.

➤ **The Caregiver Support Line: CSL**

The VA Caregiver Support Line (CSL) is a call center staffed by Licensed Social Workers, and customer service representatives who receive calls from caregivers, Veterans, and community agencies seeking support and information related to Veteran and caregiver needs. Social Work responders at the CSL are available to provide supportive counseling, connection to VA and community resources, referral to caregiver supports and programs, as well as general information and education related to caregiving. The Support Line can be reached at 1-855-260-3274.