

VA Veteran Directed Care
Applied Self-Direction Conference
March 16, 2023



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VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

VDC Overview



Veteran Directed Care (VDC) Program

- The VDC program serves Veterans of any age who are at risk of admission to an institution
 - Veterans hire workers, including family, friends, and neighbors, to provide personal care services in accordance with a Veteran-developed and VA-approved spending plan
 - Veterans receive assistance to manage their employer responsibilities from person-centered counselors and financial management services (FMS) providers.
 - VAMCs purchase VDC services from VA-approved Aging and Disability Network Agencies (ADNAs) using Veterans Care Agreements



VDC Program Components

- Veteran receives a Personal Care Services Case Mix Tool score.
- Case mix level links to a budget amount, adjusted by county-specific cost of home health care labor.
- VDC provider works with Veteran to develop spending plan following person-centered planning model that is then approved by VAMC.
- VHA purchases care and goods, as identified in the Veteran's Spending Plan.
- 97% of expenditures are for direct care
- VHA also purchases administrative services from VDC providers.
- Spending is monitored on a monthly basis.
- Veteran opts out of Homemaker/Home Health Aide, Community Adult Day Health Care, and Home Respite programs when using VDC.



VDC Providers

- VA Medical Centers (VAMCs) purchase VDC from VA-approved Aging and Disability Network Agencies (ADNAs), using Veterans Care Agreements, including:
 - Area Agencies on Aging
 - Aging and Disability Resource Center/No Wrong Door Systems
 - Centers for Independent Living
 - State Units on Aging
- Before offering VDC, ADNAs complete a VA Readiness Review, conducted by VA Central Office
- Ensures ADNAs have demonstrated the skills and competencies to deliver VDC to Veterans

VDC Key Statistics

Fiscal Year	Unique Veterans	Average Annual Program Census
2019	3,601	44
2020	4,383	54
2021	5,054	62
2022	6,320	90
Top VAMCs by Enrollment in FY 2022*		
(V17) (671) San Antonio, TX HCS		647
(V06) (652) Richmond, VA HCS		460
(V15) (657) St. Louis, MO HCS		411
(V19) (554) Aurora, CO HCS		393
(V19) (436) Montana HCS		252
(V19) (660) Salt Lake City, UT HCS		250

*21 VAMCs served over 100 unique Veterans in FY2022.



VDC: Characteristics

- Veterans in VDC generally are younger, are more service-connected, and live in more rural areas compared to other VA personal care service programs
 - 50% are younger than 75
 - 1 out of 3 Veterans in VDC are in Priority Group 1
 - Over 50% of Veterans live in rural areas
 - Average Case-Mix I (7-8 ADL Dependencies and require eating assistance)
- Veterans in VDC on average receive 50 hours of care per week
- 66% of Veterans designate an authorized representative (which can be a Primary/Secondary Caregiver) to manage VDC responsibilities
- VDC workers are paid an average of \$18.31/hr

VDC Program Standardization



VDC Standardization

VDC Field Guidebook

Standardizes VDC for VAMCs

Targeted to VAMCs and VDC Coordinators

ACL VDC Operations Manual

Assists in defining VDC Procedures for VDC Providers

Outlines VA expectations and Best Practices

VDC Training and Resources

Webinars and Trainings for VDC Programs

Used to assist in implementing policies and procedures



VDC Field Guidebook

- Expected publication: March 2023
- Overview
- Eligibility: Administrative and Clinical
- Target Population
- Concurrent Services and Duplication of Services
- Maximum Annual Expenditures (65% Rule)
- Provider Standards
- Process Flows
- CPRS Consults and Cerner Referrals
- Consult Toolbox
- Unable to Schedule
- Case Mix Tool
- Case Mix “V” and Inpatient Hospital Support
- VDC Budgets and Spending
- HSRM
- Delegation of Authority
- Covered Services and SEOCs
- Purchasing Authority
- Billing and Reimbursement
- VDC Refund Policy
- Care Coordination and Oversight
- Disruptions to the Provision of Care
- Safety
- Consult Completion
- Roles and Responsibilities



VDC Operations Manual

- Informed by the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs VDC requirements and VDC program best practices
- Purpose:
 - To inform the development of VDC Provider's operations
 - To support program consistency, access, and efficiency
- Organized into operational areas:
 - Program Background
 - Referral and Intake
 - Assessment and Spending Plan
 - Initiating Services and Hiring Workers
 - Ongoing Monitoring
 - Billing and Invoicing
 - Quality



VDC Operations Manual

Overview:

This Operations Manual Template outlines information about Veteran Directed Care (VDC) program operations to inform the development of a VDC provider's VDC operations manual. It shares references to the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) VDC requirements noted in the footnotes, as well as additional information about program best practices to support program consistency, access, and efficiency. VDC providers may use this template to guide the development of their local program operational policies in accordance with VA requirements and individual Veterans Affairs Medical Centers' (VAMC) standard operating procedures.

This template is organized by key operational areas and includes details on both VA requirements as well as additional guidance on best practices for operating the VDC program, defined below.

VA Requirements	Additional Guidance
Mandatory policies and procedures for all operational VDC programs, as specified in VA policy documents (referenced throughout the template in the footnotes).	Best practices for standard operating procedures (SOPs) that guide the development of VDC providers' local program policies.

- Available at:
 - <https://nwd.acl.gov/vdc.html>
 - The VDC Operations Manual and ACL Training are available at the site above



VDC Operations Manual

Appendix A. Veteran Directed Care Operations Manual Template Reference Guide

The Veteran Directed Care (VDC) Operations Manual Template, referred to as the “Manual,” is the framework that outlines seven key operational areas that VDC providers incorporate into their policies and procedures for the VDC program. The following guide serves as a reference for the components included in the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) requirements and national program policies and procedures delineated in the Manual.

Section I: VDC Program Background, Guidelines for Participation, Contracts, Preparing to Deliver VDC, and Roles and Responsibilities

- [Veteran Directed Care Program Background](#)
- [Veteran Eligibility](#)
- [Preparing to Deliver Veteran Directed Care: Steps to Consider](#)
- [VAMC, VDC Providers, and Participant Roles and Responsibilities](#)

Section II: Referral and Intake

- [Referral Process: Use of HSRM](#)
- [Intake Process](#)

Section III: Assessment and Spending Plan Development

- [Assessment Process](#)
- [Goods and Services](#)
- [Monthly Service Report](#)
- [VAMC Approval](#)

Section IV: Initiating Services and Hiring Workers

- [Initiating Services](#)
- [Hiring Workers](#)
- [Homecare Agency Services](#)
- [Non-employee Goods and Services](#)

Section V: Ongoing Monitoring

- [Ongoing Monitoring](#)
- [Managing Spending](#)
- [Disenrollment](#)

Section VI: Billing and Invoicing

- [Monthly Responsibilities](#)
- [Monthly Service Report](#)
- [VDC Invoices](#)
- [Emergency Back-up Care and Planned Purchases](#)

Section VII: Quality

- [File Review](#)
- [Satisfaction Survey](#)
- [Complaints](#)
- [Monitoring Quality of Service Delivery and Subcontractors](#)



Section III: Overview

Assessment and Spending Plan Development

- **Assessment Process**

- VDC providers are expected to conduct an initial assessment, reassessment, and work with the Veteran to develop service plans annually (semi-annual in the first year), or when there is a new service authorization
- This section shares information on:
 - The person-centered nature of the assessment process
 - Tools used during the assessment process
 - Timeframes for completing the assessment and submitting documentation to the VAMC

Section III: Overview

- **Spending Plans and Monthly Service Reports**
 - The PCC uses a person-centered approach to develop a spending plan with the Veteran according to their needs and preferences
 - This section shares information on:
 - Allowable expenditures under the spending plan
 - Available tools and forms, like the [VDC Monthly Spending Plan template](#)
 - Timeframes for submission to the VAMC
 - The VAMC approval process
 - Expense reports to the VAMC with the [Monthly Service Report](#)

Section IV: Overview

Initiating Services and Hiring Workers

- In addition to coordinating the services, supports, and goods needed, the Veteran is responsible for training and managing the people who will provide services and supports
- This section includes information on:
 - Requirements for the employees the Veteran or their authorized representative may hire
 - Regulations on VDC employee pay rates
 - Background checks on VDC employees
 - Employee payroll policies
 - Use of home care agency services

VDC Resources

- The ACL NWD VDC Website will contain useful information, resources and training for VDC Programs
 - [ACL NWD VDC](#)
- Recent trainings/webinars
 - [VDC Operations Manual](#)
- VDC Mailbox
 - For questions, please email: veterandirected@acl.hhs.gov



Recent Legislation and Other VDC Updates



Recent Legislation

- The Sergeant First Class Health Robinson Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022
 - Expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam era, Gulf War era, and Post-9/11 era.
 - Expands eligibility for benefits for Veterans exposed to toxic substances.
 - [All Things PACT Act 101](#)
 - [The PACT Act and Your VA Benefits](#)
 - [PACT Act Educational Webinar](#) (4/5 3pm EST)



Recent Legislation (cont)

- Veterans Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment Act of 2020 (COMPACT)
 - Beginning on 1/17/2023, Veterans in suicidal crisis can go to any health care facility, at VA or in the community, for free emergency health care.
 - This includes inpatient or residential care for up to 30 days, and outpatient care for up to 90 days.
 - Eligibility does not depend on VA enrollment status
 - [VA Press Release \(1/13/23\)](#)
 - [H.R. 8247 – Veterans COMPACT Act of 2020](#)
 - [VA Suicide Prevention](#)



Recent Legislation (cont.)

- Joseph Maxwell Cleland and Robert Joseph Dole Memorial Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2022 (Cleland-Dole Act)
 - Impacts wait-time calculations, improving community care access, transparency over wait-time reporting, improved telehealth options
 - For VA LTSS:
 - Aging Veterans at risk of homelessness
 - LTC Strategy Report
 - Authority for payment of care in Medical Foster Homes
 - [H.R. 2617](#)



Recent Legislation (cont.)

- S. 141 Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act
 - The introduced legislation aims to improve home and community based services for Veterans.
 - Includes provisions to expand VDC, PACE, coordination of care, and H/HHA.
 - [Sen. Moran News Release](#)
 - [S. 141 Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act](#)



VDC: Accelerated Expansion

- VA has approved an accelerated expansion of VDC
- All VAMCs will have an operational VDC Program within a two-year period
 - VA previously announced a five-year expansion of VDC
- VAMCs will be assigned to a “12-week sprint” to develop and implement VDC
- VA will identify and conduct VA VDC Readiness Reviews based on priority geographic areas identified by VAMCs.

Questions

