Breaking the Cycle of Veteran Incarceration and Homelessness

July 8, 2015
Today’s Webinar

• This webinar will last 75 minutes.

• Due to the relatively high number of participants, you are in “listen only mode.”

• Webinar slides and recording will be available on usich.gov and e-mailed to all registrants.

• Resources and contact information will be provided at the end.
Questions?

Please submit your questions via the *Questions* function found in your GoToWebinar toolbar.
Presenters

- Peter Nicewicz, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Jessica Blue-Howells, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Sean Clark, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Baylee Crone, National Coalition for Homeless Veterans
Agenda

• Overview
• Sequential Intercept Model
• Veterans Justice Programs
• National Coalition for Homeless Veterans
• Q&A
Opening Doors, as amended in 2015

- Prevent and end homelessness among Veterans by 2015
- Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness by 2017
- Prevent and end homelessness for families, youth, and children by 2020
- Set a path to ending all types of homelessness by 2020

Read the Amendment:
http://usich.gov/opening_doors/
What It Means to End Homelessness

An end to homelessness does not mean that no one will ever experience a housing crisis again. Changing economic realities, the unpredictability of life and unsafe or unwelcoming family environments may create situations where individuals, families, or youth could experience or be at-risk of homelessness.

An end to homelessness means that every community will have a systematic response in place that ensures homelessness is prevented whenever possible or is otherwise a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience.
Sequential Intercept Model


Adopt policies and implement practices that avoid criminalizing behaviors associated with homelessness.
Partner with law enforcement and emergency services to create a systematic response to ensure that Veterans and all people experiencing homelessness are assisted by being connected with housing assistance and supportive services, rather than being unnecessarily arrested.
Intercept Point 2: Initial Detention / Initial Hearing

- Identify Veterans entering the criminal justice system,
- Screen all individuals for housing status and homelessness,
- Maximize opportunities for pre-trial release, and
- Formulate an action plan which addresses the individual’s housing and service delivery needs.
Intercept Point 3: Jails and Courts

- Divert Veterans to problem-solving courts, such as Veterans Treatment Courts.
• Build strong and collaborative reentry support systems to assist Veterans to leave prison or jail, reenter society, and follow their reentry plan.
Collaborate with corrections departments and VA’s Veterans Justice Programs to connect Veterans to permanent housing and supportive services, including employment and training supports.
Justice-Involved Veterans

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Objectives

1) Understand the core components of Veterans Justice Programs

2) Understand the key outreach points along the justice system continuum

3) Expand awareness of the needs of justice involved Veterans
Agenda

Mission
Strategic Goals
Services

Sequential Intercept Model
National Estimates

Incarcerated Veterans: Offense Types
Homelessness Risk
Notable Developments
Veterans Reentry Search Service

VA and Treatment Courts
VA Authorization Limits

CHALENG: consumers’ needs
Discussion
To partner with the criminal justice system to identify Veterans who would benefit from treatment as an alternative to incarceration. VJP will ensure access to exceptional care, tailored to individual needs, for justice-involved Veterans by linking each Veteran to VA and community services that will prevent homelessness, improve social and clinical outcomes, facilitate recovery and end Veterans’ cyclical contact with the criminal justice system.
VHA Justice Programs: Strategic Goals

1. Improve Veteran identification
2. Build staff capacity/skill
3. Match Veterans to appropriate treatment
4. Reduce stigma
5. Develop systems for evaluation, research and knowledge
VHA Justice Outreach Services

**Justice Outreach**
- Gain access to the jail
- Identify Veterans and Determine Eligibility
- Conduct outreach, assessment, and case management for Veterans in local courts and jails
- Provide/coordinate training for law enforcement personnel
- Linkage to VA and Community Services/Resources

- Number of VJO Specialists funded: 261
- Number of 3,365 local jail facilities serviced: Not yet known
- Number of Veterans receiving VJO services (Oct. 2009 – May 2015): 104,522

**Prison Re-Entry**
- Gain access to the prison
- Educate Veterans’ groups about VA and VA services
- Identify Veterans and Determine Eligibility
- Reentry Planning
- Linkage to VA and Community Services

- Number of HCRV Specialists funded: 43
- Number of state and federal prisons serviced: 1,008 (78%) of 1,295 US prisons
- Number of incarcerated Veterans receiving reentry services (Aug. 2007-May 2015): 68,090
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criminal justice involvement</th>
<th>Number of U.S. residents, 2007</th>
<th>Percent reporting prior military service</th>
<th>Estimated number of military veterans, 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probation supervision&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4,293,200</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>399,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parole or supervised release&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>824,400</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local jail custody&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>780,600</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>72,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State prison custody&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1,315,300</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>136,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal prison custody&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>197,300</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>19,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, correctional supervision&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7,328,200</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>703,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults Arrested&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>12,078,000</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>1,159,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All counts are estimates, rounded to the nearest thousand.

<sup>a</sup> Probation and parole population counts based on BJS Annual Probation and Parole Surveys, 2007; percentage of veterans based on SAM HSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2007.

<sup>b</sup> Local jail population counts based on BJS' Annual Survey of Jails, 2007; percentage of veterans based on BJS' Survey of Inmates in Local Jails, 2002.


<sup>d</sup> Because some offenders may have multiple statuses, this total is less than the combined populations.

<sup>e</sup> Arrest count is taken from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program, 2007; percentage of veterans based on SAM HSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2007.

Source: Mumola and Noonan, BJS
## Incarcerated Veteran Offense Type

(sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000 [Jails], 2004 [Prisons])

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Offense</th>
<th>State Prison</th>
<th>Federal Prison</th>
<th>Jail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violent Offenses</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Offenses</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Offenses</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-order Offenses</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/unspecified</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Important Context with BJS data

- Among adult males, the incarceration rate of Veterans (630 prisoners per 100,000) was less than half that of nonveterans (1,390 prisoners per 100,000)

- The calculated male violent offender rate for Veterans was 338 prisoners per 100,000 and for non-veterans was 595 per 100,000

- The non-veteran violent offender rate per 100,000 population is one and three quarters times higher than the Veteran rate

- This data DOES NOT support a view of Veterans as more violent population than non-veterans; in fact, the data supports the opposite view.
VA Partnership with Veterans Treatment Courts

Veterans Treatment Courts:
- Hybrid Drug and Mental Health Treatment Courts, serving Veteran defendants
- Volunteer Veteran Mentors
- 351 courts operating (up from 50 courts in January 2011)

VA Contributions:
- VJO Specialist on treatment team; in courtroom when in session
- Linkage to health care services at VA medical centers
- Benefits assistance: VBA participation (both in and out of court)
- Partner with National Association of Drug Court Professionals to spread the model and established best practices
- Clark, McGuire, Blue-Howells in Drug Court Review (2010) - Early Development of Veterans Treatment Courts: Local and Legislative Initiatives
Limits on VA Authorization

• Can provide:
  – Outreach, assessment, referral and linkage to services
  – Treatment for justice-involved Veterans who are not incarcerated

• Title 38 CFR 17.38 (c)(5) does not allow VHA to provide:
  – Hospital and outpatient care for a Veteran who is
    • Either a patient or inmate in an institution of another government agency
    • If that agency has a duty to give that care or services
Homelessness Risk

Incarceration as an adult male is the single highest risk factor of ever being homeless (NSHAPC/Burt, 1996)

“Lengthy periods of incarceration in remote locations often attenuate the social and family ties that are crucial for successful reentry into the community.” (p. 9-5).

“(E)ven short term incarcerations may disrupt lives and interfere with the ability to maintain employment and housing.” (p. 9-6).

(Metraux, Roman, and Cho on prison reentry/jail stays, National Symposium on Homelessness Research, 2007)
Developments: Access to Legal Services

- VHA Directive 2011-034: VA medical centers making office space available for legal service providers to work with Veterans

- Legal services for homeless and at-risk Veterans through VHA Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program

- Promoting legal service providers’ participation in SSVF as subcontractors (example: DoJ Access to Justice Initiative webinar)
Developments: Video Outreach

1) “A Second Chance for Veterans” – for VA leadership/staff and community partners (includes an introduction by Secretary Shinseki)

2) “Suits: Support for Incarcerated Veterans” – direct outreach to incarcerated Veterans (includes a companion training video for correctional staff)

Each is available online (http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/VJO.asp)

National dissemination:
- Veterans Justice Outreach and Health Care for Reentry Veterans Specialists use copies of “Second Chance” in presentations to VA and community audiences
- Justice Programs staff are working with the Association of State Correctional Administrators and other partners to get “Suits” aired in correctional facilities nationwide
Developments: Police Training Initiative

• VA Police Training Initiative
  – Partnership between Veterans Justice Programs, VA Law Enforcement Training Center, VA mental health providers
  – Topics: verbal crisis de-escalation skills, mental health and other clinical issues, VA resources for justice-involved Veterans
  – Goal: train all VA Police officers by end of FY 2015
Veterans Reentry Search Service (VRSS)

Goal: Build a system to identify all Veterans currently incarcerated/in courts

Data source:
- VA/DoD Identity Repository (VADIR)
- Universal data source on Veterans (25 million + entries)

Status:
- 58 active users and counting, including 32 state prison systems
- VRSS identifying approximately 8% of inmates with history of military service; improvement over self-report response rates of 2-5%

Next Steps:
- Add users from jails and courts
- National implementation
Veterans Dorms

- Units in prisons or jails designed to house Veterans together to deliver services effectively, prepare for reentry, and reconnect with pride from military service
  - Services delivered by multiple partners, including direct prison services, state and county Veterans Affairs, non-profit behavioral health providers, state and local employment services, Vet Centers, outreach provided by VHA

- At most recent inventory (year end 2013), Veterans dorms were active in:
  - Federal prison: West Virginia
    • In development Maryland, Ohio, Texas
  - Local jail: Arizona, California, Georgia
Unmet CHALENG needs, Veteran rated, 2014

Legal issues remain rated among the highest UNMET needs among Veterans who are homeless or formerly homeless (rank is among top 10 unmet needs)

**Male Veterans**
3. Legal Assistance to Prevent Eviction and Foreclosure
4. Legal Assistance for Child Support Issues
5. Legal Assistance to Help Restore a Driver's License
7. Legal Assistance for Outstanding Warrants and Fines
8. Financial Guardianship
9. Military discharge upgrade

**Female Veterans**
5. Legal Assistance for Child Support Issues
6. Legal Assistance to Prevent Eviction and Foreclosure
7. Legal Assistance to Help Restore a Driver's License
8. Legal Assistance for Outstanding Warrants and Fines
10. Financial Guardianship
Baylee Crone, Executive Director
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Who We Serve

Philanthropy;
Other community partners

Social Service Agencies  VSOs

Homeless Veteran Service Providers
NCHV’s Technical Assistance Center
Where the rubber hits the road

- Employment placement agencies
- Schools/universities
- Health Care providers
- Rapid re-housing agencies
- VSOs
- Counseling providers
- Homeless service agencies
- VSOs
- Training providers
- Drug treatment agencies
- Faith-based orgs
- Employers
- Community businesses/Chambers
- Legal providers
- Government agencies
- Law firms
Supporting Stability: Employment through HVRP

Housing  ->  Veteran  ->  Employment  ->  Legal Services  ->  Training  ->  Veteran

Veteran

Legal Services

Supportive Services

Training

Employment
What You Can Do

**Connect**
- Conference
- Housing Summit
- Newsletter
- NCHV Facebook and Twitter
- NCHV Membership

**Implement**
- Use Best Practices
- Use training services
- Use research for grant applications

**Advocate**
- Direct advocacy
- Subject matter expertise, and local programmatic knowledge

**Issue awareness**
- NCHV e-newsletter and policy updates
Questions?

Please submit your questions via the *Questions* function found in your GoToWebinar toolbar.
Resources


Resources (cont’d…)

• NCHV website: www.nchv.org


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• U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
  Sign up for our newsletter at usich.gov/signup
  https://www.facebook.com/USICH
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  http://vimeo.com/usichgov

• National Coalition for Homeless Veterans
  http://nchv.org/
  hvrp@nchv.org

• VA’s Homeless Programs
  http://www.va.gov/homeless/

• VA’s Veterans Justice Programs
  Veterans Justice Outreach: http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/VJO.asp
  Healthcare for Re-entry Veterans: http://www.va.gov/homeless/reentry.asp