

Veteran Updates

All About Patient-Centered Community Care

Patient-Centered Community Care (PC3) is a nationwide VA program that offers health care contracts to provide eligible Veterans access to specialty care, mental health, limited emergency care, and limited newborn care when VA cannot readily provide the services.

This means the VA will schedule non-VA appointments for enrolled Veterans, through a contractor, to decrease wait and travel time and to get the specialty medical care our Veterans need and deserve.

In our region, that contractor is TriWest. A representative from TriWest will call the Veteran patient to schedule an appointment with a qualified in-network provider.

How does this benefit our Veterans?

- Appointments for enrolled Veterans are scheduled by TriWest within 5 days (and within 48 hours for urgent care) after authorization receipt.
- Appointment will be held within 30 days.
- Appointment commute time to a contracted appointment will be under 60 minutes for Veterans

living in urban areas; under 120 minutes for rural areas; and under 240 minutes for highly rural areas.

- Patients may request that their appointment be made with a particular non-VA provider that



they are currently seeing (even outside the TriWest network). TriWest will do their best to accommodate the request.

- Veteran receives personal contact confirming appointment and reminding of appointment.
- Patient may specify a preference to a provider gender, if needed.

Additionally, contracted clinics and providers' performance are strictly monitored, ensuring the highest standards of quality. Contracted care providers must comply with federal and state regulations and meet or exceed Medicare conditions of participation and conditions for coverage.

The Veteran's medical records are returned to their VA Medical Center or VA Community Clinic within 14 days as an outpatient; 30 days as an inpatient; and all critical findings are reported within 24 hours.

Prescribed medications will continue to be issued through VA, although in an emergency situation when it is not possible to obtain medication through a VA pharmacy, PC3 providers may write a prescription for up to a 10-day supply.

PC3 services may include: inpatient specialty care; outpatient specialty care (including skilled home health and home infusion therapy); mental health care; limited emergency care; and limited newborn care for enrolled female Veterans after delivery.

PC3 services do NOT include: primary care; dental; nursing home; long term acute care hospitals; homemaker and home health aide services; chronic dialysis treatments; and compensation and pension examinations.

For any questions about PC3 or TriWest contracted care, please speak with your VA primary care provider for a referral or go to www.triwest.com.

Tracking Your Appointments

My HealtheVet's new online Appointment feature can help you keep track of your past and upcoming visits. It stores and organizes information about your appointments in one convenient location.

To get to the Appointments section, log in and look under the Get Care tab or access it through your Personal Health Calendar. There, you can view and print past and future appointments. You can set up to receive appointment reminders through email, and you can send a Secure Message to your VA health care team if you need to rearrange your schedule.

To access your VA appointments, you must be receiving VA health care services, have registered on My HealtheVet as a VA Patient, and have a Premium My HealtheVet account. To get an upgraded Premium account, you will need to go through authentication, a process by which VA verifies a Veteran's identity.

Learn more about upgrading your My HealtheVet account by calling SFFVAMC's My HealtheVet Coordinator Stephen Chapman at (415) 221-4810, ext. 3706.

VA Removes Annual Income Reporting Requirement

VA has eliminated the annual requirement for most Veterans enrolled in VA's health care system to report income information. Instead, VA will now automatically match income information obtained from the Internal Revenue Service and Social Security Administration.

"Eliminating the requirement for annual income reporting makes our health care benefits easier for Veterans to obtain," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "This change will reduce the burden on Veterans, improve customer service and make it much easier for Veterans to keep their health care eligibility up-to-date."

Some Veterans applying for enrollment for the first time are still required to submit income information. There is no change in VA's policy to provide no-cost care to indigent Veterans, Veterans with catastrophic medical conditions, Veterans with a disability rating of 50 percent or higher, or for conditions that are officially rated as service-connected.

VA encourages Veterans to continue to use the health benefits renewal form to report changes in their personal information, such as address, phone numbers, dependents, next of kin, income and health insurance. For more information, visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits/cost.

Adaptive Housing Grants for Veterans with ALS

Veterans with service-connected amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a.k.a. Lou Gehrig's disease, are now presumed medically eligible for grants up to almost \$68,000 to adapt their homes.

VA's Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grants are available for those eligible to construct or modify a home to meet their unique housing needs. Grants are also available to help purchase adapted homes or pay down mortgages on homes that are already adapted.

The goal of SAH grants is to provide a barrier-free living environment that affords a level of independent living that the recipient may not otherwise enjoy.

VA also revised its rules so Veterans with service-connected ALS no longer have to file multiple claims with VA for increased benefits as their condition progresses. For more information, visit www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/adaptedhousing.asp.

Thank you for your service!



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