VA Caregiver Support

Caregiver Resources

Chaplain Services

Caregiving extends beyond the home and family.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Chaplain Services offers support to both religious and non-religious people with holistic, spiritual care that aligns with their needs and desires. Available through all VA facilities, VA chaplains are clinical care specialists and members of your Veteran's Patient Care Team, ministering to caregivers, Veterans and families through outpatient treatment, inpatient admissions and extended care. As a vital part of the VA health care system, you, the caregiver, can look after the Veteran you care for and seek support through VA Chaplain Services.

Local VA Chaplains:

- Are the only VA subject matter experts authorized to provide spiritual care as desired by caregivers and Veterans.
- Provide spiritual care and support to caregivers, Veterans, their families and survivors.
- Participate in medical rounds, patient care conferences and interdisciplinary education.
- Document spiritual care interventions in medical charts.

Comprehensive Care

VA chaplains collaborate with other VA health care providers in the provision of holistic care through a full spectrum of interventions and services as appropriate to an individual's needs and desires, including:

- Conducting worship services, rituals, rites, religious sacraments and ordinances.
- Coordinating and providing spiritual care for caregivers, Veterans and loved ones in inpatient and outpatient treatment settings.
- Providing spiritual counseling for individuals and immediate family members during crises.
- Facilitating spirituality and therapeutic groups.
- Providing bereavement counseling.
- Providing expertise in health care ethics.
- Conducting risk screening to identify factors that may affect recovery.
- Processing spiritual needs and issues for caregivers, Veterans and their loved ones related to tissue/organ donation.

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- Facilitating communication between caregivers, Veterans, loved ones and staff.
- Facilitating conflict resolution among staff members, patients and family members.
- Facilitating referrals to internal and external resources.
- Helping with decision-making and VA Advance Directives (legal forms detailing patients' medical/mental wishes).

Spiritual and Religious Services

VA chaplains help Veteran patients and family members through outpatient treatment, inpatient admissions and extended care. All VA chaplains are endorsed by an ecclesiastical endorsing organization and are able to provide denominational-specific rites and rituals as needed. However, if necessary, VA chaplains can contact community clergy or other religious leaders to conduct specific religious rites, rituals and expressions that a chaplain themselves might not be authorized to perform.

Benefits of VA Chaplain Services:

- Access to VA chaplains in your local VA Health Care System.
- Collaborative VA spiritual and religious care.
- Strategies for medical decision-making.
- Spiritual assessments and personalized spiritual care plans.

More Information

Reach out to your local VA chaplain by reviewing the directory: https://www.patientcare.va.gov/chaplain/Chaplain_Directory.asp or by searching for the nearest VA chaplain resource at: https://www.maketheconnection.net/resources.

Contact the VA National Chaplain staff group email for National VA Chaplain Services points of contact and general questions at VANationalChaplainStaff@va.gov.

Find your local CSP team for more information using the locator tool: http://www.caregiver.va.gov/support/New_CSC_Page.asp.

Learn more about VA Chaplain Services by reviewing this webpage and the History of the Department of Veterans Affairs Chaplain Services .

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