



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Fargo VA Health Care System News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct. 4, 2016

Fargo VA begins new Veterans Choice Program initiative to help Choice-eligible Veterans better coordinate their medical care in their communities

FARGO, N.D. – Beginning Oct. 4, Veterans enrolled in the Fargo VA Health Care System who are eligible for the Choice program will now be able to work directly with VA staff located in Fargo to help schedule and coordinate community medical care appointments.

Entitled the Choice Program Care Coordination initiative, Veterans can contact the Fargo VA Health Care System Clinical Resource Management Department at 866-517-9363 to facilitate their healthcare needs in their respective communities.

The initiative is a direct response from Veterans reporting concerns that calling an out-of-state Veterans Choice Program third-party administrator for scheduling of community medical care resulted in coordination challenges attributed to the administrator's lack of understanding of North Dakota and Minnesota geography and other issues unique to the area. Under the initiative, the VA is re-establishing direct connections with Veterans.

Because of an understanding of the local geography and relationships with community providers, Fargo VA staff will help Veterans schedule and coordinate community care appointments. Veterans Choice Program third-party administrator staff will continue to provide administrative and provider support.

“The VA is working every day to improve the community care experience,” said Dr. Baligh Yehia, Assistant Deputy Undersecretary for Health for Community Care. “Innovative solutions like this one, developed in direct response to Veterans’ and community providers’ concerns, are key to the development of our consolidated community care program. We cannot lose sight that healthcare is local and we will need flexibility to meet the needs of each community across North Dakota, Minnesota, and the nation.”

The Fargo VA’s Choice Program Care Coordination initiative is one of only a few of its kind in the nation. The current process and laws make community care cumbersome. The Care Coordination initiative is just one way VA is working to improve the community care experience for Veterans. VA is also actively working with all its partners, especially Congress, to simplify community care eligibility criteria, streamline clinical and business processes, and standardize provider payment. The VA is committed to providing a Community Care program that is easier to understand, simple to administer, and improves the community care experience for Veterans, providers and VA Staff.

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“I am very pleased to see the focus placed on local Veteran and provider needs,” said Lavonne Liversage, Fargo VA Health Care System Director. “Having Fargo VA staff work directly with Veterans and our community healthcare providers will allow for better communication of care needs and improved Veteran experience; this initiative will benefit those who have given so much.”

For more information or questions relating to the Care Coordination initiative, please contact the Fargo VA Health Care System Clinical Resource Management Department at 866-517-9363.

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