

# BUILDING PEERS' KNOWLEDGE OF VETERAN RESOURCES

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# Training Objectives

Participants will:

- Understand the differences between VA facilities and Vet Centers
- Increase knowledge of VA programs/resources
- Learn helpful topics to engage Veterans in conversation
- Access additional training resources to build further knowledge of the Veteran population

# VA Hospitals in West Virginia (“hubs”)

- Beckley
- Clarksburg
- Huntington
- Martinsburg

## Community Based OP Clinics (“spokes”)

- Beckley VA (Greenbrier, Princeton counties)
- Clarksburg VA (Braxton, Monongalia, Wood & Tucker Counties)
- Huntington VA (Charleston, Lenore; Gallipolis [OH], Prestonsburg [KY])
- Martinsburg VA (Franklin & Petersburg; Cumberland, Ft. Detrick, & Hagerstown [MD], Harrisonburg & Winchester [VA] )

# Vet Centers in West Virginia

- Beckley
- Charleston
- Henlawson (outstation)
- Huntington
- Martinsburg
- Morgantown
- Parkersburg (outstation)
- Princeton
- Wheeling

# What's the difference between VA Hospitals/Clinics and Vet Centers?

- Services
- Presenting problems
- Costs
- Record keeping
- Transportation

# Traditional Treatment Options (services vary by location)

- Acute (inpatient psychiatry)
- Residential treatment
- Intensive Outpatient
- Outpatient treatment (e.g., Medication Assisted Treatment, supportive psychotherapy, evidence based psychotherapy)
- Self-Help groups

# Sober Living Resources

- Housing for the Homeless
- Transitional Work/Supported Employment
- Justice Outreach
- Whole Health



# Peer Support in VA

- Peer Support Specialists within VA are Veterans who have “lived experience” with MH and/or SUD issues
- Have a minimum of one year in “recovery”
- Work in a variety of VA programs/locations (e.g., inpatient, residential, outpatient)

# Helpful Conversation Topics

- Time in Service and Deployment History
- Training: Military Occupational Specialty (MOS)
- Treatment while on Active Duty
- Discharge Type
- Family history of military service
- Adjustment post-military: Family, Work, School

## Other helpful hints:

- Military and Veterans use lots of acronyms in their speech
- They may not be comfortable around civilians
- If you're not early, you're late
- Don't touch Veterans from behind/when sleeping
- Can have trauma exposure (combat, non-combat, military sexual trauma)
- Please don't ask if they killed people

# Additional training resources:

<https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/#>

<https://www.train.org/vha/welcome>

<https://deploymentpsych.org/online-courses/military-culture>

<https://psycharmor.org/>