“VA State of the Art in Rural Health Conference”

Veterans Community Engagement in the Pacific Through VCP

September 12, 2016

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Today’s Presentation

• Provision of VA Health Care in the Pacific

• Introduction of Patient Centered Community Care (PC3) Followed by Veterans Choice Program (VCP) in the Pacific

• The Guam VCP Story

• Residual VCP Issues and Other Veteran Concerns in the Pacific
Mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

“...to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphan...”

- Abraham Lincoln, 1865

Photo by Jeff Kubina
Department of Veteran Affairs (VA)
Mission, Core Values & Characteristics

VA Mission:
“...to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphan...”

VA Core Values:
“I CARE” - Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect & Excellence

VA Characteristics:
Trustworthy, Accessible, Quality, Innovative, Agile and Integrated
Provision of VA Health Care in the Pacific
21 Veterans Integrated Service Networks – Moving to 18

In January 2002, VISNs 13 and 14 were integrated and renamed VISN 23.
VA Sierra Pacific Network (VISN 21)

VA Sites of Care by Health Care System

Health Care System (HCS) Sites and Level of Care
- VA Medical Centers
- VA Division (Inpatient/Outpatient)
- VA Outpatient Sites of Care
- Other Outpatient Services Site
- VA/DoD Joint Venture Site
- Vet Centers

Facility Service Areas
- VA Southern Nevada HCS
- VA Sierra Nevada HCS
- VA Central California HCS
- VA Northern California HCS
- VA Palo Alto HCS
- VA San Francisco HCS
- VA Pacific Islands HCS
- Manila Regional Office and VA Clinic
VA Facilities on TAMC Campus

Community Living Center

Administrative Offices

Ambulatory Care Center

Parking Structure
VAPIHCS Services

- Outpatient primary medical care
- Outpatient mental health care
- Inpatient mental health care
- Specialized outpatient treatment
- Dental care
- Geriatrics, rehabilitation & extended care, palliative care
- Audiology
- Optometry
- Dialysis
- Home Based Primary Care (Oahu, Kona, Hilo, Kauai, Maui, Guam, Molokai, Lanai)
- PTSD Residential treatment / Outpatient PTSD
- Ancillary Services (lab, radiology, pharmacy, occupational health)
- Care for special populations: SCI, Blind Veterans, Women Veterans and Homeless Veterans
- Hospice
Overlay North America on the Pacific
Compact of Free Association (COFA) Three Sovereign States

- What about Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) & Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)?
- UN Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (Palau, RMI, FSM and CNMI)
- Administered by DON 47-51 and DOI 51-86
- COFA first signed in 1986, renewed in 2003
- Administered by US Office of Insular Affairs
- Economic and Military Provisions (Kwajalein Atoll separate)
Introduction of Patient Centered Community Care (PC3) Followed by Veterans Choice Program (VCP) in the Pacific
VAPIHCS “Prior” to Introduction of Patient Centered Care (PC3)

- $250M annual operation
- $78M annual community care
- $55M annual fee to community
- $20M annual Tripler Army Medical Center Joint Venture
- $3M annual USN Hospital Guam Master Sharing Agreement
Patient Centered Community Care (PC3)

• National VA contract with TW and HN

• Region 5B is in VAPIHCS Area of Operations

• Region 5B contractor- TriWest

• Region 5B implementation on 2 January 2014

• Focus on inpatient/outpatient Specialty, Mental Health and Primary Community Care
Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act (VACAA)

- Effective 7 Aug 2014 / Implemented 5 Nov 2014
- VA, Office of General Counsel (OGC) Opinion
  - Different Rules for States with no VA hospital
  - Different Rules for Guam and Am Samoa
- Veterans Choice Cards Mailed Out
- Section 103–VAPIHCS/Papa Ola Lokahi Collaboration
- VA, OGC Opinion Reversal
The Guam VCP Story
The Guam VCP Story:

- OGC Opinion Dec 2014
- Tommy D Brief Guam / AS Veterans Jan 2015
- Congressionals Start to Roll In
- Tommy D Start Work as 0.5 FTE for Dir, ORH, VHA, Feb 2015
- Support by Gina Capra and Regan Crump in Discussion w OGC on Guam / AS, Feb – Apr 2015 – “US Territory is same as a State”
- OGC Opinion Reversed Apr 2015
The Guam VCP Story Cont:

- TriWest Opens Pacific Office on Oahu Apr 15
- VA Health Eligibility Center (HEC) Fails to load Guam / AS Veterans into Veterans Choice List Apr – Jun 2015, More Congressionals
- HEC Eligibility for Guam / AS Corrected Jul 15
- Third Chief Business Office (CBO) Member Services Mass Mail Out to Pacific Veterans Jul 2015, corrected first two Mass Mail Outs
- Subsequent Town Hall Meetings, Social Media, Advisory Committee, Local Trifold, Congressional Support ongoing in and effort to diffuse confusion
## TriWest Healthcare Alliance
### PC3/Choice Providers

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<tr>
<th>State/Territory</th>
<th>PC3 Providers</th>
<th>Choice Providers</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>2,902</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>3,487</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guam</td>
<td>405</td>
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<td>510</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNMI</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Samoa</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,331</strong></td>
<td><strong>696</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,027</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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TriWest Health Care Alliance
Pacific Office

• Apr 2015 - Office opened on Oahu
• Jun 2015 - Office fully operational, 46 staff
• Sep 2016 - Office is currently operating with 63 staff
• Basic Hours of Operation 7am-8pm M-F
• Guam Hours of Operation 11am-Midnight Sun-Thur HST to Match GST
• Approximately 5000 calls per month
Residual VCP Issues and Other Veteran Concerns in the Pacific
VCP Residual Issues in the Pacific

• Limited # and Type of Providers in some areas
• Bene-Travel associated with Choice, who’s eligible, who approves, how to handle Non-Medical Attendant travel approval???
• In spite of TriWest Guam Time Office and Local Coverage, After hours and weekend calls are still pushed to TriWest mainland Call Centers
• Choice 1st, Choice 40, Other Health Ins (OHI)
• Introduction of VA VCP Provider Agreement for same providers already in TriWest network
Other Veteran Concerns

• VA Implementation Time Constraints Precluded Proper Veteran Education (VA Staff and Providers too) BEFORE the Choice Card Mail Out resulted in mass confusion upon receipt of card
• This confusion was further exacerbated by Jan 2015 and May 2015 incorrect information mail outs in the Pacific
• Veterans are afraid if they use their Choice Card that they will be banned from the VA and / or receive a huge bill for community care
• Continued and further Veteran, VA staff and provider education is essential
Contact Information

Are there any questions?

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