



Eligibility and Enrollment Overview

Veterans Health Administration

Chief Business Office

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Enrollment in VA Health Care – History

- **Before 1996** – Services provided mostly to service connected or low income Veterans based on a statutory requirement that care be related to hospital admissions (preparation for admission, to obviate the need for admission or to complete treatment incident to admission) and based on facility resources
- **After 1996** - The Veterans' Health Care Eligibility Reform Act of 1996 significantly changed the way care was provided to Veterans
 - Mandated inpatient, outpatient and nursing home care for all eligible Veterans
 - Established an enrollment system designating Veterans by Priority Groups
 - Higher priority groups - Only service connected Veterans
 - Lower priority groups – Denote other eligibilities (catastrophic disability) or income-based enrollment
 - Established the medical benefits package



Enrollment in VA Health Care – Key Facts

- **These Veterans Do Not Have to Enroll**
 - Veterans rated 50% or more or requiring care for a service connected condition
 - Veterans within 12 months of discharge or release from service when care is related to a disability incurred in service
- **Veterans do not have to be service connected to be eligible to enroll**
 - Veterans without service connection are eligible for enrollment based on income or other special eligibilities such as catastrophic disability
 - Enrollment is not dependent on adjudication of VBA claims
- **Veterans remain enrolled unless they choose to “dis-enroll”**
 - May “dis-enroll” from VA health care via written notification to VA



Medical Benefits Package in VA Health Care

- **Scheduling**
 - Service connected Veterans only may be given priority when scheduling care over non-service connected
- **Access to VA Medical Benefits Package**
 - All Veterans have access to the complete VA Medical Benefits Package
 - Preventive Care Services - Inpatient and Outpatient Diagnostic and Treatment Services
 - Prescription Services - Prescribed by VA Physician
 - Prosthetic and Rehabilitative Devices including Hearing Aids and Durable Medical Equipment (e.g. Wheelchairs)
- **Use of Care in the Community**
 - Is not dependent on priority group assignment; but may depend on service connection





Background

Enrollment Priority Groups (PGs)

- **PG 1:** Service connected (SC) 50% or more, or unemployable due to SC
- **PG 2:** SC 30% or 40%
- **PG 3:** SC 10 - 20%, Medal of Honor, Purple Heart, Former POWs, discharged due to service disability, awarded special eligibility under 38 U.S.C. 1151
- **PG 4:** Receiving aid & attendance or housebound VA pension benefits, or determined to be catastrophically disabled
- **PG 5:** NSC & 0% SC noncompensable Veterans with income below threshold, or receiving VA pension and/or eligible for Medicaid benefits



Enrollment Priority Group (PG) 6

- 0% SC conditions and receiving VA compensation
- Served in:
 - Combat in a war after the Gulf War or during a period of hostility after November 11, 1998 for 5 years following discharge or release from the military
 - Republic of Vietnam
 - SW Asia theater of operations between 8/2/90 – 11/11/98
 - On active duty at Camp Lejeune from August 1, 1953 through December 31, 1987
- Seek care for:
 - Disorders relating to Ionizing Radiation
 - Conditions related to participation in Project 112/SHAD



Enrollment Priority Groups (PGs) 7 & 8

- **PG 7:**
 - Income **BELOW** the geographic means test (GMT) income thresholds and who agree to pay copays; and
 - Income **ABOVE** the VA national income thresholds
- **PG 8:**
 - Effective June 15, 2009, Veterans with income 10% or less **ABOVE** the VA national means test threshold or GMT threshold
 - Note: Enrollment restrictions still apply to Veterans with income **ABOVE** 10% of the VA national means test threshold or GMT threshold



Medical Benefits Package in VA Health Care

- Benefits **NOT** included in the Medical Benefits Package:
 - Abortion or abortion counseling
 - In vitro fertilization
 - Drugs, biologicals, and medical devices not approved by the Food and Drug Administration unless used under approved clinical research trials
 - Gender alterations
 - Hospital and outpatient care for a Veteran who is either a patient or inmate in an institution of another government agency if that agency has a duty to give the care or services
 - Membership in spas or health clubs

