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bulletin

National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission
1608 K Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006
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**06-11** **April 18, 2011**

# The VA Health Resource Center (HRC)

## I. OVERVIEW

**Background:** The VA Health Resource Center (HRC) was established in September 2002 as a national contact center to respond to health benefits eligibility and billing inquiries from veterans. The HRC is organizationally aligned under the Chief Business Office (CBO), Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington, D.C.

The Health Resource Center has two primary lines of business: contact center support for veterans, family members and members of the general public and Payroll services for selected organizations within the VA.

The Health Resource Center currently operates with an annual budget of approximately $32 million and has a staff of 615 FTE.

**Mission Statement:** Providing America's Veterans world class Contact Management Services and exceptional customer support.

**Vision Statement:** The right place, with the right people, with the right answer.

**Guiding Principles:**

- Accuracy, Authoritativeness and Confidence
- Efficiency and Accountability
- Respect, Courteousness, and Professionalism
- Employer of Choice
- Creativity and Flexibility
- Ethics and Integrity

- Empowered Employees

**Labor Relations:** The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 906 represents nonprofessional Health Revenue Center employees.

## II. Business Lines

### A. Contact Management:

***The Health Benefits Contact Center (HBCC)*** provides veteran health benefits eligibility information through HRC and VBA's NARS toll free numbers and email inquiry through the Inquiry Routing Information System (IRIS) a web-based application.

***The First Party Contact Center (FPCC)*** responds to inquires from veterans and family members regarding medical center patient's bills throughout the United States. Provides call metrics and feedback to the medical centers through the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) on calls.

***The Pharmacy Customer Care (PCC)*** provides veterans with timely accurate information regarding routine RX questions (how to order refills, when refills were mailed, etc,) that disrupt more pressing clinical demands of the local pharmacy.

***The National Combat Veteran Call Center*** Outreach Campaign contacts OEF/OIF Veterans who are not utilizing the Department of Veterans Affairs healthcare services to inform them of the benefits available and how to access VA healthcare.

***Inquiry Routing Information System (IRIS)*** is an alternative method for the public to receive answers to questions regarding veteran health benefits eligibility, through the VA website, via email.

***Employee Express (EEX)*** allows VA employees to manage their HR/Payroll benefits. The contact representatives answer technical questions when the employee has trouble processing an action and are unable to complete the transaction.

***VA Disaster Support contact center*** in FY 2006 was designated as the contact center in the event of regional disasters. The HRC is the virtual disaster site for both employees and veterans.

### B. Payroll Services:

***Payroll Services*** provides centralized payroll services through a Memorandum of Understanding with the nationwide Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy (CMOP). There are seven individual CMOP facilities with a total of over 550 employees. In April 2008 payroll services were expanded to Consolidated Patient Account Center (CPAC) with an initial 250 employees.

## III.GENERAL INFORMATION

### New and On-going Initiatives:

**Partner Relationship Management (PRM)** is used to ease the burden of email communications. The Health Resource Center pursued development of a remote access portal to facilitate more robust collaboration with facility MCCF operations using the Siebel PRM component. The portal is a secure web based application that provides access to referred service requests, the HRC's knowledge base system, and view of CCPC billing statements associated with the customer's service request. This application enables the facility MCCF and Pharmacy staff to review and respond to referrals from the Health Resource Center staff in an online case management system.

**Telephony System** is a state of the art telephony system, which includes an NEC NEAX 2400 IPX PBX switch, an NEC Call Center Worx Automated Call Distribution (ACD) system, an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system from Technology for Business (TFB), a Recording and Monitoring System called CXM from Conexus, and a Workforce Management System from Pipkins. This new telephony platform allows more robust capabilities for forecasting and projecting needs supporting contact center activities. The HRC's telephony infrastructure, coupled with a knowledgeable and talented staff base, provides a solid foundation which enables us to quickly respond when called upon to provide contact center support for issues requiring immediate support, such as support needed during disasters. The HRC's telephony infrastructure currently includes over 40 different toll-free numbers, which includes numbers and routing programs set aside for use during disasters for veterans as well as employees. Additional routing programs can be created and implemented with very short notice.

**Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** implemented at the HRC in February 2006 is Siebel's Customer Relationship Management. The HRC named the application OSCR – One Stop Contact Record. OSCR is a robust application that enables the HRC to track and manage contacts with veterans, employees, and their families, facilitating a closed-loop communication process. The application provides a 360-degree view of all interactions, supports automated mailroom fulfillment processes, and facilitates the use of many different applications from one desktop application that makes a contact representative's job easier and more efficient.

## IV. Active Issues:

### Accomplishments:

- In FY 2009 the HRC answered the following calls: 1,601,612 First Party, 924,543 Health Benefit, 58,988 Pharmacy Customer Care, 21,252 OEF/OIF and 2,258 Disaster for a total of 2,608,653 calls.

- The HRC in a collaborative effort between VA and DoD, provides appropriate level of service to Veterans with the Wounded Warriors Program.
- The Disaster contact center was activated for the data breach, health care information distribution, California wild fires and Fargo flood.
- In FY 2009 the HRC completed a successful Pharmacy Support Pilot program with VISN 17 and has announced the opening of Pharmacy Customer Care at a national level with a redundant site based in Waco, Texas.
- In FY 2009 the Health Resource Center Opened the Combat Veterans Call Center to inform returning OEF/OIF Veterans of their eligibility for VA healthcare.
- Pharmacy Customer Care received the 2009 Under Secretary for Health's Award for Customer Service.

For questions or to receive additional information from the Health Resource Center, please visit their website at http://www.va.gov/healthresourcecenter/ or contact them by phone at (877)222-VETS (8387).

For other veteran health care related questions, please contact Jacob Gadd, Deputy Director for Healthcare at (202)861-2700 or via email at jgadd@legion.org.

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