



Nevada Veterans in Care Program "VIC"





Problem

- Less than 20% of Nevada's aging veterans file for earned benefits
- Many Nevada veterans in care facilities are spending down their savings (not accessing VA benefits) leaving Federal benefits unclaimed
- When moving to a non-veteran community care setting, a veteran's personal history, including military service, is often forgotten
- In non-veteran home care facilities, staff don't always understand military culture and its impact on behaviors
- Our older veterans are passing away and we have only a short time to give a final thank you





Veterans In Care Program Purpose

- Improve quality of care for veterans in care facilities throughout the state—not just in the ones the state manages
- Help veterans in care and homebound vets tap into earned benefits
- Brings together communities to celebrate the service of veterans and spouses in care facilities
- Provides military culture education to enhance understanding of how the military experience affects the aging veteran





Improve Quality of Care

- Continuing Education Unit (CEU) workshops for providers and community through training called “Bravo Zulu- Achieving Excellence in Relationship Centered Care”
- These workshops were provided state-wide at no cost to attendees
- Included a strong overlay of the military experience’s effect on the aging process as well as those with dementia and difficult behaviors

Participant quotes:

BG: “The information is useful as to how I approach and speak with the veteran about his/her service and how their behavior or reactions may be influenced due to their time in service.”

JL: “That we need to ask all residents if they served in the US Armed Forces, not just the men. Women who have served need the same respect and understanding if behaviors are present.”





Connecting to Benefits

- NDVS staff engages with facility administrator about services we offer; leaves brochures for staff, visitors and the veterans in residence
- VSO's address staff, veterans and family members and meet with veterans and families after the formal presentation, rescheduling follow-up visits
- Data regarding the number of veterans served is being collected

Veteran quotes:



I didn't realize that you could help me replace my lost ribbons and awards. I thought they were lost forever when I moved here.

I can't believe you came to me! The last time I tried to get an appointment with the VA I was told I have to wait. At my age that is risky!

I hung my certificate up so now I can prove I was in the Army (lady vet).



Acknowledgement for Service

- Started as a way to get a “foot in the door” and morphed to be as important as the other two goals
- Currently have held 84 ceremonies honoring 1483 veterans, 45 veteran employees and all veterans spouse and family members in attendance. We schedule an average of 4-8 per month
- Has resulted in over 1500 hours of community participation from veterans service organizations, color guards, student ROTC programs, women's veterans programs and our Nevada Veteran Advocate members





Facility Feedback



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It was wonderful. Thank you all so very much for doing this Governor Sandavol Rocks!

My favorite part was when Kat welcomed every Vietnam Vet home. The next day the Vet that was hesitant to attend told me he felt like a burden had been lifted. He shared that he had lost friends and his childhood innocence to do what he was trained to do to protect us, when he came home people wouldn't talk to him. He said he slept better.

I loved this for the obvious, our Vets become educated about Veteran Services, that will offer possible assistance financially and medically... But the Ceremony healed souls and lifted spirits. When a person finds themselves living in our wonderful community it means they have had to give up many things that we often take for granted, driving, owning a vehicle, owning a home. Many find themselves alone with no family. This event and recognition reminded our Vets of a time when they were the Best of the Best, when they were strong and our Country was depending on them!



Challenges

- Provider reluctance/perception of “need”
 - *“How should I know who is a veteran?”*
 - *“I didn’t think it was a big deal”*
- Facility “poaching” fears
- Facility concerns about confidentiality
- VSO availability for post-event workload
- Competition among community partners wishing to participate





Building Partnerships



Schools & JROTC
Groups



Veterans
Organizations

Elected and appointed officials (Governor, Mayors, County Commissioners, etc), non-profit organizations, Rotary clubs, schools & JROTC groups, senior service centers, etc, etc, etc!



Contacts for Questions

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Governor Brian Sandoval and Margaret, a 107 year old WWII veteran