

# Community Learning Model: VA's Journey to Transformation

September 30, 2011

VALU RESOURCES

Facilitator Guide

**ADVANCE** is an HR&A initiative to invest in people development, workforce engagement and talent management for the delivery of high-quality healthcare, benefits and other services to Veterans and their families.

VALU your Veterans

VALU your influence

VALU your power

VALU your inspirations



# Facilitator's Pre-Workshop Checklist

- Review Presentation
- Room Set-up
- Name tags/Name tents
- Flipchart/Markers
- Overhead Projector
- Handouts



# Getting Started

- **Welcome**
- Introductions
- Turn off pagers, cell phone, beepers
- Ask questions
- Participation



# Overview

- **Introduction**
- Learning objectives
- Discussion questions and supporting information
- Exercise: How to implement transformation on the job
- Conclusion



# Ground Rules for Effective Discussion

## What to Say

- Clarity and Specificity
- Use “I”
- Ask for feedback

## How to Say it

- Active Listening
- Facial expression
- Voice
- Posture
- Eye-contact
- Physical distance
- Timing



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# Learning Objectives

After this training, you will be able to:

- Explain challenges
- Generate solutions
- Select transformation activity



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# VA “I CARE”

The five “I CARE” Core Values are:

- Integrity
- Commitment
- Advocacy
- Respect
- Excellence

The six Core Characteristics are:

- Trustworthy
- Accessible
- Quality
- Agile
- Innovative
- Integrated



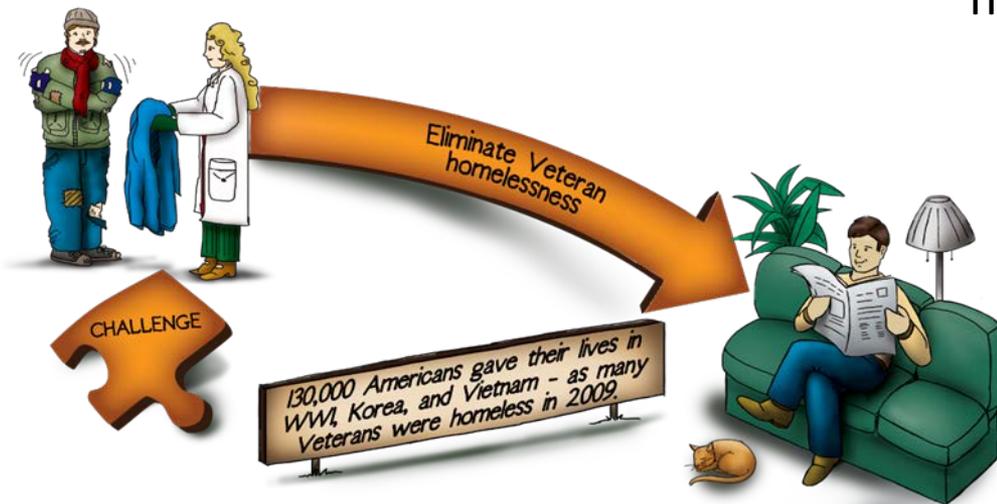
# Eliminate Veteran Homelessness

## Challenge Question

- Why are so many Veterans homeless?

## Fact Card

- 130,000 Americans gave their lives in WWI, Korea, and Vietnam – as many Veterans were homeless in 2009.





# Eliminate Veteran Homelessness

## Challenge Question

Many disabled Veterans do not take advantage of the training, employment counseling, and job search assistance available to them through VA's Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment program.

What can we do to address this challenge?

# Eliminate Veteran Homelessness

## Fact Cards

- More than 1.5 million of 5.5 million Veterans had a mental health diagnosis in 2009. This is a 31% increase since 2004.
- The potential negative results of mental health issues, such as homelessness and suicide, are evident in the numbers – more than 131,000 Veterans are homeless on any given night and an average of 18 Veterans die by suicide each day



# Eliminate Veteran Homelessness

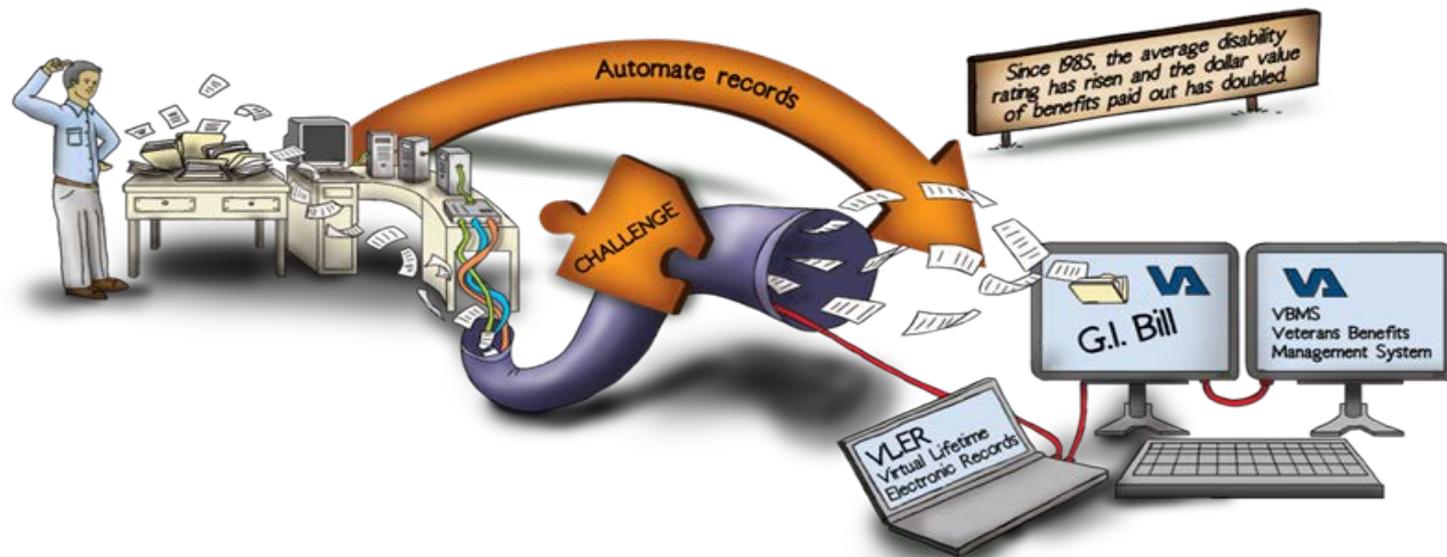
## Challenge Question

- The incidences of injuries that affect mental health, like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), are on the rise. Do you think PTSD is more prevalent today than in the past?

# Automate Records

## Fact Card

- Since 1985, the average disability rating has risen and the dollar value of benefits paid out has doubled. What has caused the increase in disability ratings?



# Automate Records

## Fact Card

- Not only is VA receiving substantially more claims, but claims have also increased in complexity. Original disability compensation claims with eight or more claimed issues have increased from 21,184 in 2000 to 67,175 in 2009 (over a 200 percent increase). This level of growth is expected to continue. What actions do you think VA could implement to keep up with increased growth?



# Automate Records

## Fact Cards

- Since 2000, claim applications have increased 75 percent and the inventory of disability claims pending has increased 83 percent. Identify two additional problems, other than high claim volume, that might slow down the processing of claims. What are some potential solutions?
- A service member is 10 times more likely to return alive, with multiple wounds, in 2010 than during WWII. How does this statistic affect your work at VA?

# Improve Health Care and Contain Costs

## Challenge Questions

- Should we include psychological and behavioral treatments for conditions like pain and insomnia in our definition of mental health? Would this change in terminology best serve our client - the Veteran?
- Some believe that the psychological wounds of war are not as high of a priority as visible ones. Does this type of thinking negatively affect the care offered to Veterans?





# Improve Health Care and Contain Costs

## Challenge Question

- Should the VA embrace advances in technology like the use of home telehealth technologies, videoconferencing, the Internet, store-and-forward imaging, streaming media, and terrestrial and wireless communication? Why or why not?



# Improve Health Care and Contain Costs

## Fact Cards

- One-third of all Americans or 6,700,000 Veterans are obese. The average adjusted annual cost of care for the obese is \$5,500 per capita, compared to \$3,950 per capita for the non-obese. Can you think of specific preventative health strategies that may be useful in targeting the problem of obesity in our Veteran population?

# Improve Health Care and Contain Costs

## Fact Card

- Even though nearly 10% of Veterans are female, 40% of VHA hospitals do not yet employ a gynecologist. Do you think it is critical for all VHA hospitals to have a gynecologist on staff? Why or why not?

# Improve Health Care and Contain Costs

## Challenge Question

- If technology could enable patients with chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart failure, and chronic pulmonary disease to be monitored at home, the number of hospital admissions, clinic visits, and emergency room visits would be greatly reduced. Elderly or disabled patients would be able to stay in their homes longer and it would become possible to provide cutting-edge specialty care even in sparsely populated areas. Such a change would be especially beneficial for the two to three percent of patients who, in part because they frequently visit hospitals and outpatient clinics, account for approximately 30 percent of health care costs. Do you agree with this cost-savings approach? Why or why not?

# Improve Health Care and Contain Costs

## Fact Card

- In FY 2006, 36% of Veterans enrolled in VA health care resided in rural areas compared to 20% of the overall US population. Given that practitioner shortages are more acute in rural areas, how might the VA address this challenge? How might rural clients be served, for example, traveling to another facilities?



# Improve Health Care and Contain Costs

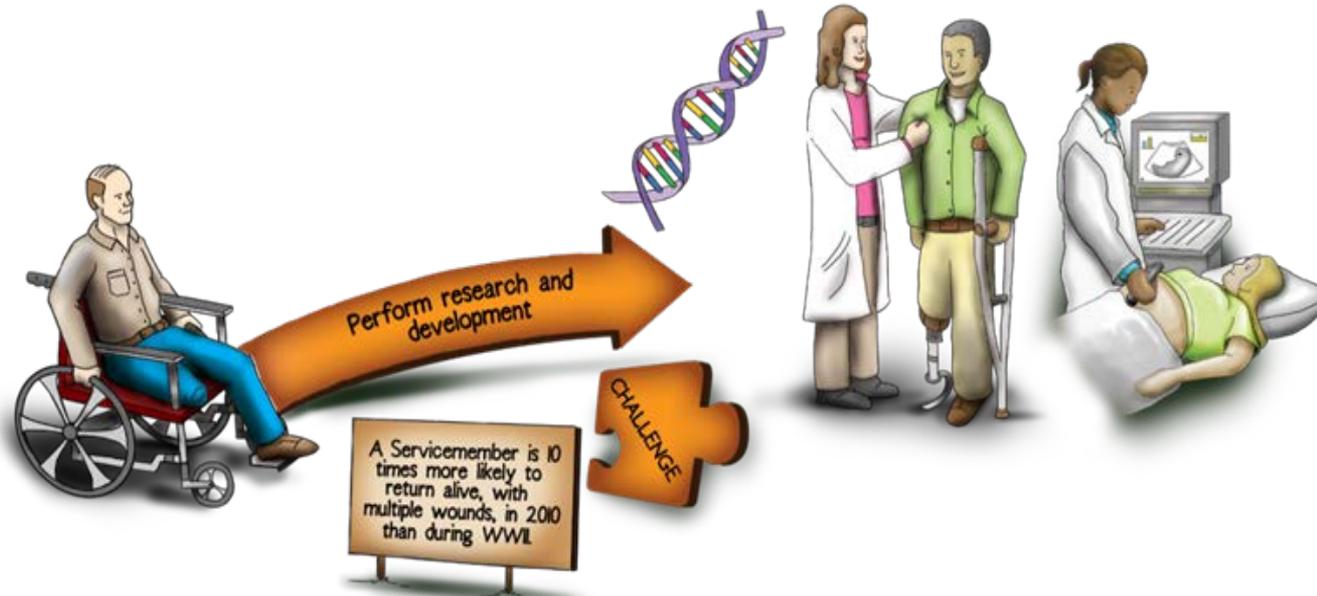
## Challenge Question

- Blast injuries are increasing, adding a new dimension to battlefield casualties and their care when the battle is over. These wounds often result in multiple severe injuries and disabilities requiring extended and highly specialized care, both mental and physical. How do these injuries pose challenges in anticipating and responding to the demand for health care services?

# Perform Research and Development

## Challenge Question

- Why are chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension increasingly prevalent in the Veteran population?



# Perform Research and Development

## Challenge Questions

- Why it is important to develop comprehensive health promotion and preventive care programs that encompass healthy behavior coaching and promotion of psychological wellness and resilience?
- Disability compensation has changed in recent years as the nature of combat related wounds and service-connected injuries has changed. The average Veteran disability rating rose from approximately 30 percent in 1995 to 41 percent in 2009, with the percentages of Veterans in the two highest disability levels (PSTD/prostate cancer) growing at the fastest rates. Are there preventative health care strategies for PSTD and prostate cancer that Veterans at risk could embrace?



# Perform Research and Development

## Challenge Question

- VA manages over 1,600 facilities that provide benefits and service to Veterans; many were built when the cost of fossil fuels was comparatively low and they consume large amounts of energy. To obtain the best value for our resources, VA must reduce its consumption of non-renewable resources. Can you identify alternative energy sources? What are some of the ways VA employees can retrofit buildings for energy conservation?



# Perform Research and Development

## Challenge Question

- What are some creative ways we can balance our research and development resources across a variety of needs and opportunities?

# Perform Research and Development

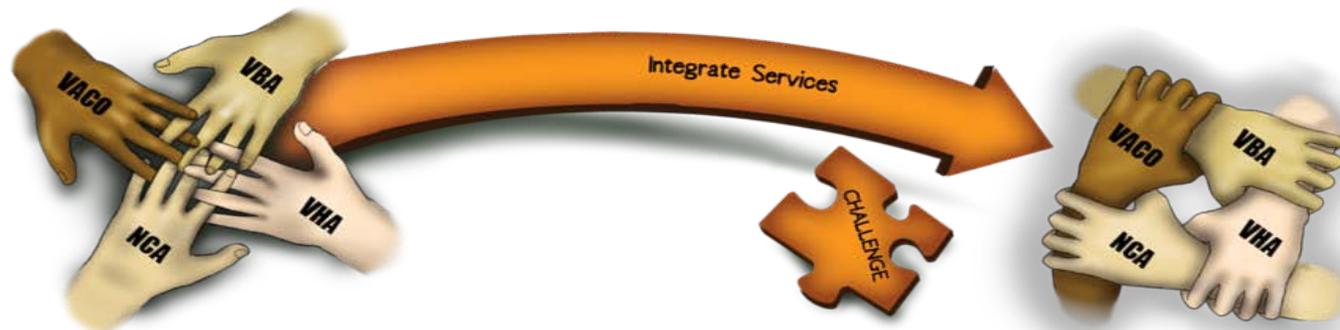
## Challenge Question

- Nationwide, chronic diseases are being diagnosed at earlier ages. This trend is changing our healthcare model from acute-care centered to patient-centered. In the short term, however, it may lead to shortages of nurses and primary care physicians, both in the U.S. generally and in VA's system because a patient-centered approach requires constant health-care monitoring. What types of programs allow us to reduce the cost of health-care monitoring and still, maintain high health-care quality?

# Integrate Services

## Challenge Question

- VA plans to offer a *unified desktop approach* with access to integrated information management between all VA organizations to ensure continuity of service and to better resolve issues. In theory, this new system will allow for a call received at one VA center to be seamlessly resolved at another without losing the context of the issue. In practice, what problems might arise? How should we work to resolve them?





# Integrate Services

## Challenge Question

- Describe ways VA staff can work with DoD to coordinate policies and decision-making.



# Integrate Services

## Fact Card

- Even though the number of Veterans has declined, 30,000 more memorial services were required in 2010. How will this impact VA? What can be done to help?

# Integrate Services

## Challenge Question

- Currently, VA maintains separate and sometimes, overlapping customer access points. For example, for disability compensation, there are three possible access points – VBA's central office, VBA's regional office, and potentially DoD. What other strategies can be put in place to streamline this process?



# Build Relationship Management Capability

## Challenge Question

- What are some methods to obtain service feedback from family members whose Veteran received a VA headstone or marker in a private cemetery or who requested a Presidential Memorial Certificate to commemorate a Veteran's honorable service?

# Build Relationship Management Capability

## Challenge Question

- How can we avoid delays in offering burial services to Veteran families?



### National Cemeteries Host Wreaths Across America

On Saturday, December 11, volunteers will place holiday wreaths to honor and remember our nation's Veterans at VA national cemeteries. [Go to our NCA feature page](#) for more information about Wreaths Across America and how to participate. [See photos from last year's event.](#)



# Build Relationship Management Capability

## Challenge Question

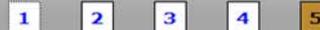
- Name three ways in which My HealtheVet, an award-winning e-health website, can improve communications between patients, providers, and care coordinators.



**Blue Button  
Download  
My Data**

### **VA's Blue Button Featured on Open Government Page**

Earlier this year, VA introduced Blue Button, a simple way for Veterans to manage and download their personal health record, including emergency contacts, military health history and more. Read more about Blue Button at the [White House Open Government Initiative](#) page.



# Ensure Emergency Preparedness

## Challenge Question

- Each year, VA facilities experience a certain number of crimes and security incidents, including firearms and other dangerous weapons brought into the care or service environment, assaults on VA clients and staff, thefts, and vandalism. What are some ways we can foster a culture of protection for the safety and security of Veterans, their family members, and our VA staff?





# Ensure Emergency Preparedness

## Fact Card

- WWI lasted almost 2200 days; the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq had lasted 3000 days by mid-2010. How might the changing duration of conflicts affect our emergency preparedness planning?

# Recruit, Hire, Train, and Retain Quality Employees

## Challenge Question

- Research shows that work-based health and wellness programs have the potential to decrease work-related injuries and sick days, increase productivity and job satisfaction, and reduce healthcare costs. Do you think these programs are fully used? Why or why not?





# Recruit, Hire, Train, and Retain Quality Employees

## Fact Card

- Demand for cemetery and memorial services are projected to increase more than 7%, from 106,000 annual interments in 2009 to 113,000 interments by 2011. What are some strategies for VA to meet this demand?

## Challenge Question

- VA, like the rest of the Federal Government, will soon face a wave of retirements. Roughly 53% of Federal employees will be eligible to retire in the next five years. How can we prepare for this in our organization?



# Recruit, Hire, Train, and Retain Quality Employees

## Challenge Question

- Why did you decide to join the VA? Cite the single-most important factor in making VA your employer of choice. How can that factor or reason contribute to this transformation initiative?



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# Exercise: How to Implement Transformation on the Job

- Transformation topics/VA's major initiatives
- Brainstorming objective
- Nurturing creativity & out-of-the-box thinking!
- Capturing ideas in VA's ideas portal



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