

Caregiver Support Partnered Evaluation Center (VA CARES)

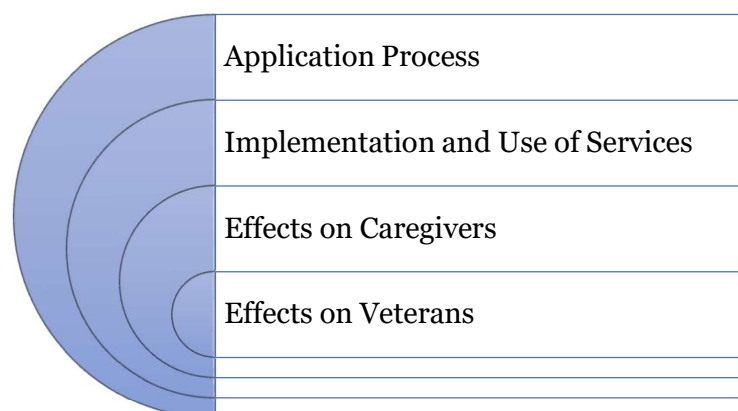
VA CARES evaluates the impacts of caregiver programs in the VHA

VA CARES seeks to evaluate the impacts of the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers and the Program of General Caregiver Support Services by partnering with the VHA Caregiver Support Program and the Office of Care Management and Social Work to assess the value and use of both programs by Veterans and their caregivers.

Optimizing caregiver programs and services

The Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law: 111-163) enacted legislation to ensure services and supports for family caregivers of Veterans through two landmark programs: The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC), and the Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS). These two programs serve to enhance support and services for family caregivers of qualifying Veterans, including education and training and respite care. Since PCAFC's inception, uptake has far surpassed initial projections with more than 100,000 applications received and nearly 36,000 caregivers served by the end of FY2017. VA CARES evaluation efforts focus on standardization of the application process; implementation of core program services by VHA staff; and assessment of impacts on Veterans and caregivers.

VA CARES Evaluation Efforts



Measuring the impact on caregivers and Veterans

VA CARES evaluated the short-term impacts of PCAFC and the PGCSS by addressing the following aims:

Application Process

- Conduct formative evaluation of the PCAFC application process to identify areas and approaches for improving consistency across VA.
- Examine caregiver, Veteran, and facility characteristics associated with discharged from PCAFC.

Implementation of Use of Services

- Assess the use and helpfulness of services from the CSP staff perspective.
- Assess the use and helpfulness of PCAFC and PGCSS services from the caregiver perspective.
- Provide a synthesis of most helpful components of CSP.
- Pilot evaluation of the newly transformed PGCSS.

Effects on Caregivers

- Describe health and well-being of caregivers in PCAFC and those in PGCSS.
- Assess the impact of PCAFC on caregiver well-being.
- Examine the impact of PCAFC among caregivers who are themselves Veterans caregiver physical health, mental health and economic status.

Effects on Veterans

- Effect of PCAFC on Veteran health care utilization, costs and well-being (e.g. depression, pain, suicidal ideation).

Informing future services and programs

Results from this evaluation will help inform the VA CSP about the impact of services provided and will provide information on best practices for improving and targeting its interventions. The results of the evaluation will support the implementation of evidence-based treatments and programs designed to improve quality of care for Veterans and supports for caregivers.

For more information, check out:

https://www.durham.hsrdr.research.va.gov/VA_CARES.asp

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