

FACT SHEET FOR CHIROPRACTIC SERVICES

VA's Chiropractic Program exemplifies its forward-looking approach to healthcare. The program is a novel introduction of evidence-based, patient-centered care options that have been in high demand by Veterans and VA physicians. Use of VA chiropractic services continues to grow at a rapid rate and is of particular impact for Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn Veterans, pain management, and older Veteran populations. VA's delivery of chiropractic care is the most comprehensive integration of these services into any major United States healthcare system.

BACKGROUND

In response to Veteran demand, Congress authorized VA to begin providing chiropractic services in 1999. Since late 2004, chiropractic services have been included as part of the standard Medical Benefits Package available to all enrolled Veterans. VA provides these services on-station or through community care at all medical centers.

IMPLEMENTATION

Within VA, doctors of chiropractic (DCs) are physician-level licensed independent providers similar to optometrists and podiatrists. They provide diagnosis and management of neuromuscular and musculoskeletal conditions. VA DCs are integrated with primary care, rehabilitation, and other specialty teams.

VETERANS SERVED

VA chiropractic services are used by Veteran across the continuum

of care, yet there is particular value in populations with a high prevalence of musculoskeletal conditions such as:

- OEF/OIF/OND
- Pain management
- Women Veterans
- Older adults
- Spinal cord injury/illness



SERVICES

VA DCs provide diagnosis and management consistent with both VA and external evidence-based guidelines. Treatment options include patient education, active rehabilitation, spinal manipulation and other manual therapies. VA DCs may also provide acupuncture or other novel therapies as non-pharmacologic options for Veteran care.

TRENDS

One study* demonstrated that from fiscal year 2005 through 2015 the number of on-station VA chiropractic clinics increased from 27 to 65, and the number of Veterans receiving care in these clinics increased from just over 4,000 to over 37,000. VA continues to assess and modify its delivery of chiropractic services to meet Veteran demand.



RESEARCH AND ACADEMICS

The VA chiropractic program is committed to research leading to improved function, health and quality of life for Veterans, and fostering educational opportunities for chiropractic and other medical trainees. VA implemented the first federally funded chiropractic residency programs (https://www.prosthetics.va.gov/chiro/Residency_Programs.asp), which were the first postgraduate chiropractic programs in the nation to receive accreditation.

VA Chiropractic Clinics

VA provides chiropractic services on-site at one or more VA facilities in each VISN. VA facilities that do not have on-site chiropractic clinics provide these services via Community Care mechanisms.

A list of VA facilities that have established on-site chiropractic clinics is available at:
<http://www.rehab.va.gov/chiro/locations.asp>

Additional Resources

General VA Medical Benefits <http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility/coveredservices/StandardBenefits.asp>
VA Chiropractic Care Directive http://www.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=2117
Community Care <https://www.va.gov/communitycare/>

* Publication:

Trends In The Use And Characteristics Of Chiropractic Services In The Department Of Veterans Affairs
[http://www.jmptonline.org/article/S0161-4754\(16\)30035-5/pdf](http://www.jmptonline.org/article/S0161-4754(16)30035-5/pdf)

