



VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System

VA 101 *What Community Hospice Agencies Need to Know*

The purpose of this document is to provide Hospice Agencies with reference information and contact numbers for VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (VA NWIHCS).

1. Non-medical benefits (such as, pensions, compensations, burial benefits, etc) are managed through the VA Regional Benefits Office. (1-800-827-1000)
2. Medical benefits are managed through the VA NWIHCS's located in Grand Island, Lincoln and Omaha. To RECEIVE MEDICAL BENEFITS, A VETERAN MUST BE "ENROLLED."
 - a. The veteran will need to provide a copy of his/her military discharge papers (DD214) as well as basic demographic and financial information. If the veteran does not have his/her military discharge papers, they should contact their County Veteran Service Officer. (<http://www.vets.state.ne.us/content>)
 - b. Veterans should contact the Eligibility Clerk at one of the VA business offices for enrollment information:
 - Grand Island** – 1-(866) 580-2167
 - Lincoln** – 1-(866) 851-6052 ext. 9-6255 or 9-7815, Local 402-489-3802, ext. 9-6255 or 9-7815
 - Omaha** – Eligibility 1-(800) 451-5796 option #3
Billing 1-(866) 347-2352 or (402) 346-8800, ext. 9-3244

Useful web sites include:

Booklet – *VA Health Care Overview*

<http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility/coveredservices/>

Pamphlet - *A Summary of VA Benefits*

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/summaryVAbenefits.pdf>

Health Benefits

http://www1.va.gov/health_benefits/

Eligibility

<http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility/>

County Service Officer:

<http://www.vets.state.ne.us/content/>



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1. How does the VA identify hospice appropriate veterans?

The primary care provider or consultant identifies a veteran as hospice appropriate and makes a referral. The referral MUST go through the VA Community Health Nurse Coordinator. The coordinator sets up ALL outside services.

If a physician contacts a community hospice agency directly about a veteran, the VA Community Health Nurse Coordinator still needs to be advised/ alerted. *(See contact information on last page)*

2. How does the VA choose which hospice to contact?

Primarily it is the veteran or family's choice.

Geographic limitations/availability or special needs may be factors.

3. Will the VA Primary Care Provider follow the veteran while on hospice?

Yes. The VA primary care provider will continue to be involved as needed. It is best to contact the Community Health Nurse Coordinator during business hours (8:00 am – 4:30 pm). The provider can be contacted after business hours by the following phone numbers:

Grand Island

1-(800) 451-5796 or (308) 382-3660. Ask the operator to be connected with the Administrative Officer. Ask the Administrative Officer to page the physician on call (Medical Officer of the Day---MOD for Grand Island).

Lincoln

1-402-547-0454

Omaha

(402) 995-3249 or 3250 or 1-(800) 451-5796 ext. 3249/3250. You will get the Medical Officer of the Day at either of these extensions.

4. Will the veteran still be eligible for VA care in the Specialty clinics for consultant care?

Many veterans are eligible. This should be coordinated with the Community Health Nurse Coordinator, the veteran and the community hospice agency.

5. Who should be notified at the time of death of a veteran?

Please notify the VA of any enrolled veteran's death; even when hospice services are covered through Medicare. Leave a message with the local VA Community Health Nurse Coordinator. *(See contact information)*

6. How are prescriptions, durable medical equipment and supplies handled?

Those items that are related to the hospice diagnosis are the responsibility of the community hospice agency. The Hospice agency will need to communicate to the VA the medications that they will be providing. Because there are multiple programs/benefits within the VA that may provide coverage, please contact the VA Community Health Nurse Coordinator to determine eligibility and coverage if you have questions.

7. Advance Directives

If the veteran has completed an advance directive and submitted it to the VA, a copy may be obtained through the release of information process. (Contact the local VA Release of Information Office.)



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Contact Information:

VA Community Health Nurse's and Social Workers:

Grand Island – (308) 382-3660 or 1-(866) 580-1810

- Cindy Hansen, RN: Extension 9-2044
- Janelle Brock, LCSW : Extension 9-2059

Lincoln – 1-(866) 851-6052 or (402) 489-3802

- Colleen Nielsen, RN: 402-486-7867 or 402-489-3802 Extension 9-7867 or pager #381
- Joe Heatherly MSW: 402-489-3802 Extension 9-6623

Omaha – 1-(800) 451-5796 or (402) 346-8800

- Cynthia Longstreet RN: 402-995-3373 or pager #470
- Amy Rosauer, LCSW: 402-995-4868 or (402) 679-3509

VA Inpatients – The discharge planner or social worker contacts the community hospice agency.

Grand Island, Community Living Center 1-(866) 580-1810 or (308)-382-3660

- Theresa Yant-Warnke, MSW: Extension 9-2289, or pager 149
- Heidi Swenson LCSW: Extension 9-2387 or pager 148

Omaha Inpatient Discharge Planners: 1-(800) 451-5796 or (402) 346-8800

- Marty Holstein, RN Discharge Planner: 402-995-3724, pager 431, cell 616-6815
- Jean Hamilton, RN Discharge Planner: 402-995-3344, pager 490, cell 616-6790
- Teresa Rainey RN Oncology Case Manager: 402- 995-4088