

Choice First Program Stakeholder Fact Sheet

- VA implemented the **Choice First** initiative that revises the current non-VA Care Coordination (NVCC) processes to use the Veterans' Choice Program (VCP) option sooner when local VA facilities are not able to provide health care services to the Veteran. It will be implemented 6/10/15.

Major Improvements under the *Choice First initiative*:

1. **The use of a medical consult in lieu of the Veteran Choice Progress Note**
2. **Non VA Care staff make the initial Veteran contact instead of the third party contractor**
3. **When services are not available within VA, the Veteran is now considered Choice eligible (the Veteran must still meet other basic eligibility factors, such as enrollment by Aug. 1, 2014).**

How will Choice benefit the Veteran?

Most important, it provides the Veterans another resource for care when unavailable within the VA.

What are the key components of the Choice First initiative?

- If the VA facility does not offer the required service, the VA provider will create a traditional Non-VA Care Consult. The 30 day and 40 mile Choice eligibility also remain in effect.
- NVCC staff will receive the consult and review the Veteran's Choice eligibility. Once eligibility has been established the NVCC staff will contact the Veteran and inquire if the Veteran wants to exercise their Choice Benefit and be referred to the community;
 - If the Veteran decides to use Choice, NVCC staff will provide the Third Party Administrator the necessary documentation to facilitate an appointment in the community with a Choice provider
 - if the Veteran declines to use their Choice benefit, they will be placed on an EWL at a VA Facility that offers the care
- VA Copayments will be handled as with traditional NVCC and any payment from the Veteran's Other Health Insurance (OHI) will be applied to offset VA copayments etc. Other out of pocket expenses may exist depending on the Veteran's OHI obligations.