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2024

Statewide Symposium in Support of Service Members, Veterans & Their Families

April 17-18 | Phoenix, Arizona

arizona coalition
for military families





Family & Social Supports

Session 1

Caregiver Support



Facilitators



Anna Johnson

OUTREACH NAVIGATOR

Arizona Coalition for Military Families



Yvonne Acosta

PREVENTION COORDINATOR & TRAINER

Arizona Coalition for Military Families





Agenda

- ① **Caregiver Support Program**
- ② **Elizabeth Dole Foundation**
- ③ **Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors**



VA

U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



Caregiver Support Program

Amanda Mason

Social Work Coordinator, Program of
General Caregiver Support Services

Phoenix VA Healthcare System



VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION



WWW.CAREGIVER.VA.GOV

CAREGIVER SUPPORT LINE: 1-855-260-3274

PROMOTING THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF VETERANS' CAREGIVERS



Caregiver Support Program Overview

Amanda Mason, LCSW, NBC-HWC, CDP
Coordinator, Program of General Caregiver Support Services

April 18, 2024

WHERE WE STARTED, WHERE WE ARE HEADED.....

2008 – Caregiver Support Program established

2010 – Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) and Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS) established under P.L. 111-163

2011 – Program officially accepts applications for PCAFC

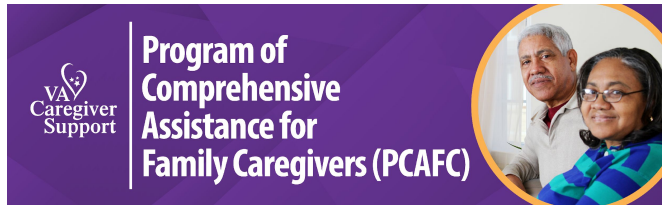
2018 – MISSION Act of 2018 expands Veteran eligibility for PCAFC

2020 – Implement expansion of PCAFC eligibility (On or before May 7, 1975, on or after September 11, 2001)

2022 – Second Expansion – PCAFC – All Eras

Mission: *To promote the health and well-being of family caregivers who care for our nation's Veterans, through education, resources, supportive services and service excellence*

- **Services and support for caregivers are offered within two programs**
 - Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS)
 - Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC)



CSP CORE ELEMENTS



Education
and Support



Collaboration
and
Partnerships



Outreach

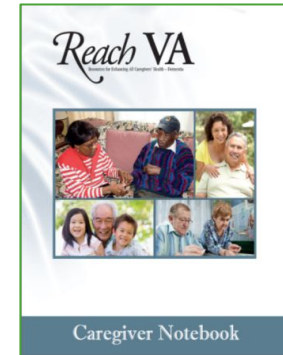


Resources
and Referrals



- **VA S.A.V.E**
- **Skills Training**
 - Veterans Affairs (VA) S.A.V.E. Training
 - Building Better Caregivers (BBC)
- **Mobile Support**
 - Annie Caregiver Text Program
- **One on One Coaching**
 - Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers Health
 - (REACH) VA
 - Caregiver Health and Well-Being Coaching

**S.A.V.E. Suicide
Prevention Skills Training**
Signs
Ask
Validate
Encourage & Expedite



[Suicide Prevention
Toolkit for Caregivers](#)

Group Support and Coaching Services Offered

- Caregiver Self-Resilience Courses
- Caregivers FIRST
- Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers Health (REACH VA)
- Peer Support Mentoring Program
- CPR Training



REACH VA - Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers Health in the VA

Caregiving can be challenging. The **REACH VA** program provides support for caregivers with:

- Stress and mood management techniques.
- Understanding the care recipient's condition (teaches caregivers the skills needed to take care of their veteran.)
- Care planning.



- Respite can help to reduce caregiver burden, relieve stress, prevent burnout.
- Respite is available to both Family Caregivers enrolled in PGCSS or PCAFC
 - Family Caregivers enrolled in PCAFC have access to enhanced respite benefits.
- Respite can be provided in the following venues:
 - Adult Day Health Care
 - Traditional Home Care (both skilled and non-skilled)
 - Nursing Home Care
 - Community Living Centers (CLC)
 - Community Nursing Homes (with VA contracts)



- VA's CSP has implemented a Virtual Psychotherapy Program for Caregivers, to meet the counseling needs of caregivers approved for PCAFC.
- The focus is on the unique mental health needs of caregivers, like the way VA specializes in the unique mental health needs of Veterans.
- The first stage of program implementation began in September 2022, with a goal to have a hub within all 18 VISNs by the end of FY 2024.
- Hubs are currently active in 14 VISNs.



Support from CSP Team members for referrals to programs and services:

- Other VA (i. e. Whole Health, Mental Health, and many others)
- Community organizations and partnerships



Legal and Financial Planning services are now available to Primary Family Caregivers.

If a Primary Family Caregiver is seeking these services, they can contact their [local CSP team](#) for assistance.

*Web based service, such as live webinars and trainings, are now available.

<https://www.CaregiverFinancialLegal.va.gov>



The VA CSL responds to calls from caregivers, Veterans and community agencies seeking information about VA caregiver services.

- Monday - Friday 8:00AM - 10:00PM (ET)
and Saturday 8:00AM - 5:00PM (ET)
- Staffed by VA professionals
- Links callers to their local Caregiver Support Team
- Provides information about assistance through the VA
- Offers supportive counseling when needed




PCAFC VS. PGCSS – WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?


Both PGCSS & PCAFC PCAFC Only

Type of Support

- Caregiver Support Team
- Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers Health (REACH) VA
- Caregiver Support Line (CSL)
- Caregiver Health & Wellbeing Coaching
- Building Better Caregivers
- Supportive Services
- Caregivers FIRST Skills Training
- Peer Support Mentoring
- Respite Care
- Annie Caregiver Text
- Self-care/Resilience courses
- Connection to VA/Community Resources
- Caregiver & Family Resource Fairs
- VA S.A.V.E. Training



Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC)




Type of Support

- CHAMPVA (if uninsured)
- Monthly Stipend
- Beneficiary Travel (as applicable)
- Legal & Financial Planning Services
- Mental Health Counseling (as applicable)




Program of General Caregiver Support Services




Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC)




GENERAL CAREGIVER DEFINITION

Caregivers who participate in PGCSS are called General Caregivers.

- A General Caregiver is a person who provides personal care services to a Veteran enrolled in VA health care who:
 - Needs assistance with one or more activities of daily living; Or
 - Needs supervision or protection based on symptoms or residuals of neurological care or other impairment or injury.
- General Caregivers do not need to be a relative or to live with the Veteran.



No formal application is required to enroll in PGCSS

To participate, Veterans/caregivers:

1. Contact local facility [Caregiver Support Team](#)
2. Complete intake with facility **Caregiver Support Team**
 - Veteran needs to agree to receive care from their caregiver
 - As the caregiver will be listed in their health care record
 - Enroll and begin to utilize supports and services offered



Eligibility Criteria

- Caregiver
 - 18 years of age
 - Son, Spouse, Daughter, etc.
 - Able to complete training
 - Able to carry out all requirements

- Veteran: Must meet [eligibility requirements](#) for PCAFC, which include:
 - Veteran has a serious injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty. We define serious injury as a 70% service-connected rating. single or combined rating. It can include a presumptive
 - rating.

 - The Veteran must need in-person personal care services for a minimum of six (6) continuous months based on any one of the following:
 - **An inability to perform an activity of daily living;**
 - **A need for supervision or protection based on symptoms or residuals of neurological or other impairment or injury; or**
 - **A need for regular or extensive instruction or supervision without which the ability of the Veteran to function in daily life would be seriously impaired.**

- Virtual Psychotherapy Program for Caregivers
- Enhanced Respite Offerings and Services
- Beneficiary Travel (when travelling with Veteran for appointments)
- Monthly Stipend (62.5% or 100% based on the level) – based on OPM General Schedule Grade 4, Step 1
- Access to health care through Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA), if eligible
- Financial and legal planning services for Primary Family Caregivers.

HOW TO APPLY

Veterans and Caregivers may apply for PCAFC in the following ways:

- Complete the application online through: <http://www.caregiver.va.gov>
 - For most, this is the fastest and easiest route!
- Access and download the application ([VA Form 10-10CG](#)). Mail to or walk the application into the local CSP Team.
- Mail the form and any supporting documents to:
 - Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers
Health Eligibility Center
2957 Clairmont Road NE, Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30329-1647
- You may also contact your local CSP for assistance
 - [Caregiver Support Team](#) link via CSP Website.



REVIEW AND APPEAL OPTIONS FOR PCAFC

Veterans and caregivers who disagree, in whole or in part, with a VA decision under the PCAFC, now have additional options available to appeal or request VHA review of the decision.



Frequently Asked Questions (CSP Website):

[Changes to Review and Appeal Options for Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers \(PCAFC\) Decisions \(va.gov\)](#)

Review and Appeal Options: [VA Form 10-305](#)



CSP Website: www.caregiver.va.gov

- Program information
- [Zip code based interactive CSP Team/Coordinator locator](#)
- [Contact info for Caregiver Support Line \(CSL\)](#)
- [Resources for Caregiver](#)
 - Tips and Tools, Resources by Topics, Self-Care
- [PCAFC online application link](#)



CSP Listserv: GovDelivery

- Program information/updates
- New initiatives, resources, services
- 400,000 (+) subscribers and counting



Subscribe to receive email updates and information about VA Caregiver Support Program services.

THANK YOU!



WWW.CAREGIVER.VA.GOV

CAREGIVER SUPPORT LINE: 1-855-260-3274

PROMOTING THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF VETERANS' CAREGIVERS



National Caregiver Support Line: **1-855-260-3274**

To find your local Caregiver Support Program Team,
or for more information, please visit: www.caregiver.va.gov



Elizabeth Dole Foundation

CARING FOR MILITARY FAMILIES



The Elizabeth Dole Foundation

Sharon Grassi

Arizona Elizabeth Dole Fellow

Alumni & Veteran Caregiver

Elizabeth Dole Foundation





Elizabeth Dole Foundation
CARING FOR MILITARY FAMILIES



The Elizabeth Dole Foundation

Arizona Coalition for Military Families
14th Annual Statewide Symposium

April 17 & 18, 2024





Sharon Grassi

Arizona Elizabeth Dole Fellow Alumni & Veteran Caregiver

- Derek - Combat medic & Infantryman - Iraq & Afghanistan
- Sharon
 - 4 Children – Derek is one of them
 - Career in Manufacturing and technical communication
 - Veteran Caregiver
 - Elizabeth Dole Fellow Alumni
 - Head of a local non-profit





The Elizabeth Dole Foundation begins

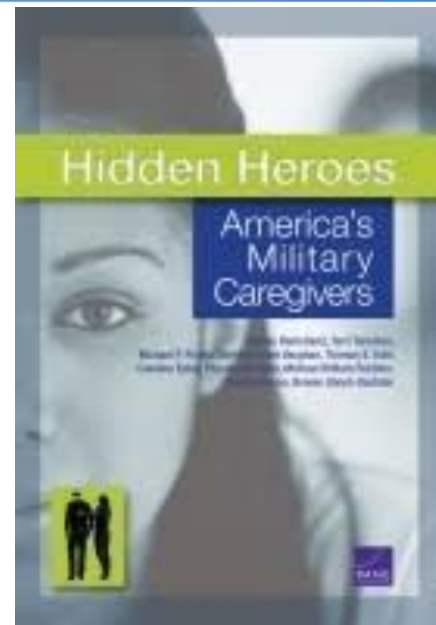
In 2011, Senator Elizabeth Dole spent 11 months at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center while her husband, Senator Bob Dole, recovered from surgery.





Hidden Heroes - America's Military Caregivers

- The RAND study found that there are 5.5 million military and veteran caregivers serving across the nation.
- Many caregivers are frequently the sole breadwinner for their families, and most are balancing the responsibilities of managing a household, childcare, legal and financial challenges, and complex medical conditions of their care recipients.
- Caregivers are our first line of defense in protecting veterans from taking their own lives, and experience higher rates of anxiety and depression, and deteriorating health themselves
- Military caregivers essentially perform health care tasks and so they need to interact with health care providers apart of an inclusive care team.





Dole Caregiver Fellows Program



Dole Caregiver Fellows are the heart and soul of the Foundation. These military and veteran caregivers are carefully chosen from across the country to serve a two-year term. Their fellowship includes:

- Advocating for increased support nationally and locally
- Advising the Foundation on programs and initiatives
- Serving as Hidden Heroes representatives at meetings, events and interviews
- Supporting other caregivers



Hidden Heroes Caregiver Community (HHCC)

Contact

hhcc@elizabethdolefoundation.org

The mission of the Hidden Heroes Caregiver Community is to create a positive and healthy virtual space for caregivers of all eras to connect with one another and find the support they need. Join HHCC at **HiddenHeroes.org**.

"Thank you for welcoming me to the group! Words cannot describe how thankful I am to have the resources here and an outlet to share."





Hidden Heroes Cities & Counties

Launched in 2016, the Hidden Heroes Cities & Counties program is a growing network of communities dedicated to identifying local military caregivers and increasing awareness and support for them.

IDENTIFY

EDUCATE

CONNECT

To date, more than **160** communities have passed a resolution or proclamation pledging to support our military and veteran caregivers.





Hidden Helpers



In November 2021, the Elizabeth Dole Foundation released its groundbreaking Mathematica study on Hidden Helpers.

A seminal moment for EDF and the Hidden Helpers Coalition, the report brought the voices of our caregiving kids to the forefront and is driving the enhancement of support services available to them.

Hidden Helpers are the children, teens, and young adults who are currently impacted by the care needs of, or who are actively involved in the hands-on care of a wounded, ill, or injured veteran or service member.



Campaign for Inclusive Care

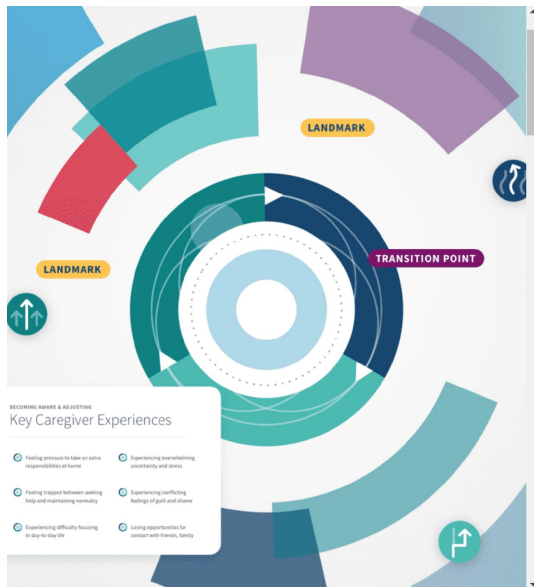
Contact:

inclusivecare@elizabethdolefoundation.org

- **A system-wide approach to veteran care that embraces, engages, and empowers caregivers, clinicians and veterans throughout the entire care journey.**
- Increases the capacity and competency of the entire care team to deliver appropriate, efficient, effective, and high-value services
- Improves health outcomes, relationships, quality of life, and supports system-wide performance.
- Team-based, with care being a partnership among the clinical veteran care team and family caregivers.
- Centered on sound communication and secure feedback from all care partners.



Caregiver Journey/Experience Map



The Caregiver Journey represents an ever-changing, dynamic human experience.

The Map was created to outline the journey of a “typical” Veteran caregiver as he or she adapts to new challenges, emotions, and priorities. Grounded by the RAND Corporation’s Hidden Heroes: America’s Military Caregivers study and supported by input from over 500 military and Veteran caregivers, researchers, and members of the Veteran caregiver support community, this map provides an overview of common moments that most, if not all, caregivers experience.

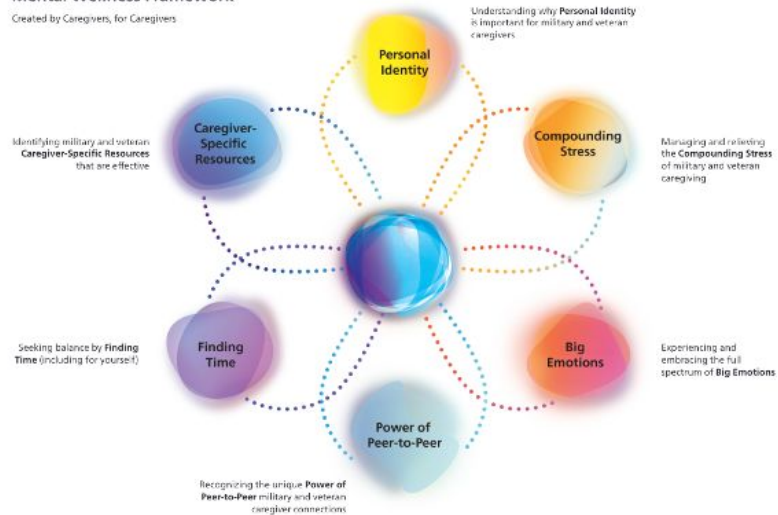
The Caregiver Journey Map is a collaboration of the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, the Department of Veterans Affairs and Philips, and was digitized with support from Wounded Warrior Project. The map is an ongoing effort to document the military caregiver journey and its impact on caregiver’s physical, psychological, financial, and social wellbeing.



Mental Wellness

Military & Veteran Caregiver Mental Wellness Framework

Created by Caregivers, for Caregivers



- Caregiver Mental Wellness Framework
- Caregiver Mental Wellness Workshops



Hope Fund for Critical Financial Assistance



Now, hope is never lost.

Too many caregivers are on the brink of homelessness and hunger or struggle to pay bills, due to joblessness, underemployment, unexpected care costs, and unpredictable benefits.

We've teamed with the Bob & Dolores Hope Foundation to provide military caregivers emergency relief grants to get them back on track.

APPLY TODAY



hiddenheroes.org/hopefund



Questions?

General Inquiries:

info@elizabethdolefoundation.org

Sharon Grassi

s.grassi@co-opsurvival.com



[*www.hiddenheroes.org*](http://www.hiddenheroes.org)



[*@dolefoundation*](https://twitter.com/dolefoundation)



[*@elizabethdolefoundation*](https://www.facebook.com/elizabethdolefoundation)



[*@elizabethdolefoundation*](https://www.instagram.com/elizabethdolefoundation)



Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors

Kinsey McManus

Programs Director

Alzheimer's Association Desert

Southwest Chapter



Caregiver Resources: Self-Care for the Caregiver

Kinsey McManus

Alzheimer's Association's Desert Southwest Chapter

Objectives

Assess Caregiver Stress

Symptoms of Caregiver Stress

Temporary Stress Relieving Activities

- Box Breathing

- Visualization Techniques

- Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Long-term Stress Relieving Activities

- Check List of Caregiving Responsibilities

- Sphere of Support



Caregiver Self-Assessment Questionnaire



Box Breathing

Step 1: Breathe in, counting to four slowly. Feel the air enter your lungs.

Step 2: Hold your breath for 4 seconds. Try to avoid inhaling or exhaling for 4 seconds.

Step 3: Slowly exhale through your mouth for 4 seconds.

Step 4: Repeat steps 1 to 3 until you feel re-centered.

10 Symptoms of Caregiver Stress

“Denial”

Anger

Social Withdrawal

Anxiety

Depression

Exhaustion

Sleeplessness

Irritability

Lack of

Concentration

Health Problems

Tips to Being a Healthy Caregiver

See a doctor

Get Moving

Eat Well

Tips to Help You Cope

Manage your level of stress

Be realistic

Know you're doing your best

Take a break

Accept changes as they occur

Know what community resources are available

Get help and find support

Use relaxation techniques

Become an educated caregiver

Visualization with the Senses

For this exercise, think of a relaxing, peaceful, familiar place. It might be a beach or a particular nature park you frequent. Sit comfortably and create a visualization of that place. Feel the breeze in your hair or the sun on your face. Hear the birds chirping in the distance. Smell the grass or the ocean. See the way the waves lap at the beach. Taste the ocean spray.

The idea of this practice is to create a visualization strong enough to find at least one area that satisfies each of your five senses. Exploring all five senses may bring you to a relaxed and grounded state, feeling more prepared to face stress.



Checklist of Caregiving Responsibilities





Progressive Muscle Relaxation



Questions?





Session Evaluation

We want to hear from you!

