



Paralyzed Veterans of America

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www.pva.org

Chartered by the Congress of the United States

November 2014

Dear Fellow Member,

We need to alert you of a new Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) initiative that concerns us. On November 5, 2014, the "Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act (VACAA)," took effect. The law was passed in response to the number of veterans who were denied timely access to health care through the VA either due to unreasonable distance or wait times. If you've registered to receive care at the VA prior to August 1, 2014, you are eligible to exercise "choice" under the new law.

Paralyzed Veterans of America's legacy is built around making sure you receive timely access to quality health care at VA Spinal Cord Injury/Disorder (SCI/D) Centers and SCI/D Primary Care teams. We believe the only real choice for you is care delivered through the capable hands of SCI/D-trained experts at VA Hospitals. Should you choose to seek care outside of VA, please take a moment to carefully consider the following questions:

- *Does my treating physician understand Autonomic Dysreflexia (if applicable), what triggers it, and how to treat it?*
- *Does my treating physician understand the complex nature of my spinal cord condition and its residuals (bowel, bladder, spasticity, decubitus ulcers, neuropathic pain, respiratory weakness, chronic urinary tract infections)?*
- *Without access to my medical records, is my treating physician fully aware of my past hospitalizations, medications, potential drug interactions, and/or preexisting conditions (bacteria resistance, side effects, allergies)?*
- *Will my PVA service officer be authorized to advocate for me in the event of an adverse outcome, clinical appeal, or need to access my medical records?*
- *Does treatment by non-VA health care providers involve other VA benefits and ancillary health care matters, such as supporting a disability claim, ordering prosthetics, requiring housing/vehicle modifications?*

These questions are just a few that should not be an afterthought when deciding to seek care at a non-VA facility. Your search for a "quick fix" may have unintended consequences. While some care, such as dental and vision, will not warrant the same consideration as more serious SCI/D conditions, such as wound treatment, urinary tract infection, and respiratory concerns, we encourage you to direct your care to the most qualified providers available.

Under the new law, eligible veterans may opt to receive non-VA care if one of two primary conditions is met:

- 1) If a veteran lives more than 40 miles from any VA health care facility (either a major medical center or a community-based outpatient clinic), then he/she is eligible for "choice" care; or**
- 2) If a veteran is already enrolled in the VA health care system, has sought an appointment for care, and the veteran cannot be seen within 30 days of the desired date, he or she is also eligible for "choice."**

Note, there is no blanket authorization for veterans to receive care outside of the VA. *You must meet the aforementioned distance, or wait-time requirement!* In order to verify your eligibility for "choice," you must have enrolled in the VA health care system. The cards will be distributed in three phases:

PHASE 1: Beginning on November 5, 2014, VA will mail cards to all veterans who live more than 40 miles from the nearest VA facility.

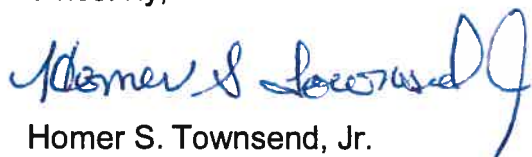
PHASE 2: By early December, VA will mail cards to all veterans who have sought care from the VA and have currently been waiting more than 30 days.

PHASE 3: Finally, by January 2015, VA will mail cards to all remaining enrolled veterans.

Simply receiving a "choice" card does not automatically make you eligible to seek care outside of the VA. If you experience any difficulty with your access to SCI/D care at the VA, or in reporting your concerns related to "choice" care, you should contact your local PVA National Service Office (see the attached contact list). You can also call the PVA Medical Services Helpline at (800) 232-1782 or the VA SCI/D System of Care Helpline at (206) 582-4624. If you experience problems with "choice" care, you can also e-mail the PVA National Office at ***ChoiceCare@pva.org*** to report those concerns.

Your feedback is welcomed and much appreciated.

Sincerely,



Homer S. Townsend, Jr.
Executive Director



Al Kovach, Jr.
National President

2 Attachments: *Sample Veterans Choice Card (Temporary Program)*
National Service Office Listing

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

**Veterans
Choice Card
Temporary Program**

Name: <Veteran First Name Veteran Last Name>

Member ID: <Veteran EDIPI>

Date of Issuance: <Date Card Generated>

Call 1-xxx-xxx-xxxx for information or to make an
appointment

*This card does not provide pre-approval. Veterans may
be liable for the cost of care that is not pre-approved.*

**Veterans Choice Program Information
(for Veterans and Providers):**
<http://www.va.gov/xxxxxxxxxx>

This card is for qualifying medical care outside the
Department of Veterans Affairs. Please call 1-xxx-xxx-
xxxx to ensure that treatment has been authorized.

Providers submit claims to:

XXXXXXXXXX

PO Box XXX

XXXXXX XX, XXXXX

S A M P L E

(Note: National Service Office Locations is listed on reserve side of page).

NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICE LOCATIONS

PVA Regional Office
Montgomery, AL
Phone 334-213-3433
Ext 34/35

PVA Regional Office
North Little Rock, AR
Phone 501-370-3757

PVA Regional Office
Phoenix, AZ
Phone 602-627-3311

PVA SCI Center
Long Beach, CA
Phone 562-826-8000
Ext 3774

PVA Regional Office
Los Angeles, CA
Phone 310-235- 7796

PVA Regional Office
Sacramento, CA
Phone 916-364-6791

PVA SCI Center
Palo Alto, CA
Phone 650-493-5000
Ext 65046

PVA Regional Office
San Diego, CA
Phone 619-400-5320

PVA SCI Center
San Diego, CA
Phone 858-552-7519

PVA Regional Office
Denver, CO
Phone 303-914-5590

**PVA Medical & Regional
Office Center**
Wilmington, DE
Phone 302-993-7252

Lake City, Florida
Phone 386-755-3016
Ext 2236

PVA SCI Center
Miami, FL
Phone 305-575-7180

**PVA Health Care Center
Office**
Orlando, FL
Phone 407-629-1599 Ext
1125/1111

PVA Regional Office
St. Petersburg, FL
Phone 727-319-7470

PVA SCI Center
Tampa, FL
Phone 813-978-5841

PVA SCI Center
Augusta, GA
Phone 706-823-2219

PVA Regional Office
Decatur, GA
Phone 404-929-5333

PVA Regional Office
Chicago, IL
Phone 312-980-4278

PVA SCI Center
Hines, IL
Phone 708-202-5623

PVA Regional Office
Indianapolis, IN
Phone 317-916-3626

PVA Regional Office
Des Moines, IA
Phone 515-323-7544

**PVA Medical & Regional
Office Center**
Wichita, KS
Phone 316-688-6810

PVA Regional Office
Louisville, KY
V 502-566-4430

PVA Regional Office
New Orleans, LA
Phone 504-619-4380

**PVA Medical & Regional
Office Center**
Augusta, ME
207-621-7394

PVA Regional Office
Baltimore, MD
Phone 410-230-4470
Ext 1020

PVA Regional Office
Boston, MA
Phone 617-303-1395

PVA Medical Center Brockton
Phone 774-826-2219

PVA Regional Office
Detroit, MI
Phone 313-471-3996

PVA Regional Office
St. Paul, MN
Phone 612-970-5668

PVA SCI Center
Minneapolis, MN
612-629-7022

PVA Regional Office
Jackson, MS
Phone 601-364-7188

PVA Medical Center
Kansas City, MO
Phone 816-922-2882

PVA Regional Office
St. Louis, MO
Phone 314-552-9887

PVA SCI Center
St. Louis, MO
Phone 314-844-6467

PVA Regional Office
Lincoln, NE
Phone 402-420-4017

PVA Benefits Office
Las Vegas, NV
Phone 702-791-9000
Ext 14458

PVA Regional Office
Reno NV
Phone 775-321-4789

PVA Regional Office
Newark, NJ
Phone 973-297-3228

PVA Regional Office
Albuquerque, NM
Phone 505 -346-4896

PVA SCI Center
Bronx, NY
Phone 718-584-9000
Ext 6272

PVA Regional Office
Buffalo, NY
Phone 716-857-3353

PVA Regional Office
New York, NY
Phone 212-807-3114

PVA Benefits Office
Syracuse, NY
Phone 315-423-5013

PVA SCI Center
Syracuse, NY
315-425-4400
Ext 53317

PVA Regional Office
Winston-Salem, NC
Phone 336-251-0836

PVA Regional Office
Cleveland, OH
216-522-3214

PVA SCI Center
Cleveland, OH
Phone 216-791-3800
Ext 4159

PVA Regional Office
Muskogee, OK
Phone 918-781-7768

PVA Medical Center
Oklahoma, OK
Phone 405-456-5483

PVA Regional Office
Portland, OR
Phone 503-412-4762

PVA Regional Office
Philadelphia, PA
Phone 215-381-3057

PVA Regional Office
Pittsburgh, PA
Phone
412-395-6255

PVA SCI Center
San Juan, PR
Phone 787-641-7582
Ext 11564

PVA Regional Office
San Juan, PR
Phone 787-772-7384

PVA Regional Office
Columbia, SC
Phone 803-647-2432

**PVA Medical & Regional
Center Office**
Sioux Falls, SD
Phone 605-333-6801

PVA SCI Center
Memphis, TN
Phone 901-523-8990
Ext 7795

PVA Regional Office
Nashville, TN
Phone 615-695-6383

PVA SCI Center
Dallas, TX
Phone 214-857-0105

PVA SCI Center
Houston, TX
Phone 713-794-7993

PVA El Paso Office
Phone 915-564-6183

PVA Regional Office
Houston, TX
Phone 713-383-2727

PVA SCI Center
San Antonio, TX
Phone 210-617-5300
Ext 6819

PVA Regional Office
Waco, TX
Phone 254-299-9944

PVA SCI Center
Hampton, VA
Phone 757-722-9961
Ext 2943
Phone 804-675-5316

PVA SCI Center
Richmond VA
Phone 804-675-5316

PVA Regional Office
Roanoke, VA
Phone 540-597-1707

PVA Regional Office
Seattle, WA
206-220-6149

PVA SCI Center
Seattle, WA
Phone 206-768-5415

**PVA Regional Office
Huntington, WV**
VA Regional Office
Phone 304-399-9393

PVA Regional Office
Milwaukee WI
Phone 414-902-5655