

Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act Update Veterans Choice Program

General Information (background)

- ❑ Veterans Access Choice and Accountability Act (VACAA) went into effect November 5, 2014
- ❑ Choice Program is **not** managed locally
- ❑ VA has contracted with a Third Party Administrator (TPA) to manage overall operations of the program: Includes mailing of cards, authorization for care and claims processing.
- ❑ The TPA for New England States is Health Net Federal Services

General Information (Choice Card)

- ❑ In order to be eligible to receive a Choice Card you must:
 - ❑ Veteran must have been enrolled by August 1, 2014, **or**
 - ❑ Have served in a theater of combat operation, and applied within 5 years of deployment
- ❑ Approximately 9M Eligible Veterans will or has received a Veterans Choice Card by the end of Feb 15.
- ❑ Choice Cards are being mailed out in phases over the next several months.
- ❑ **Veterans can still choose to receive their care from the VA**

General Information (Choice Card)

- ❑ Receiving a Veterans Choice Card **is not** authorization to use the Veterans Choice Card
- ❑ Local VA Facilities **do not** determine eligibility to receive a Veterans Choice Card
- ❑ Only the TPA can authorize use of the Choice Program.
- ❑ Choice program covers hospital care and medical services under the Medical Benefits Package, which includes pharmacy and beneficiary travel.
- ❑ Choice “**does not**” cover Nursing Home Care or emergency non-VA Care

Use of Veterans Choice Card (eligibility requirements)

- ❑ Based on Wait Time
 - Has a scheduled appointment, with a VA healthcare provider and is unable to receive an appointment within 30 days of the date that an appointment is deemed clinically appropriate by a VA health care provider, or if no such clinical determination has been made, the date a Veteran prefers to be seen.

- ❑ Based on Geographic Distance
 - Reside more than 40 miles from the closest VA facility or
 - Reside less than 40 miles from a VA medical facility, but must travel by air, boat, or ferry to reach a facility,
 - Reside less than 40 miles from a VA medical facility, but must face an unusual or excessive burden in accessing such a facility due to geographic challenges. NOTE: Geographic challenges include a body of water (including moving and still water) or geologic formation that cannot be crossed by road OR
 - **Reside in a State without a full-service VA medical facility that provides hospital care, emergency services and surgical care and reside, MORE than 20 miles from such a facility. NOTE: This criterion only applies to Veterans residing in three states: Alaska, Hawaii, and New Hampshire. Please note that those Veterans in New Hampshire who reside within 20 miles of a full service VA Medical Facility such as White River Junction in a bordering state are not eligible.**

Use of Veterans Choice Card (based on Residence)

- ❑ Choice Card program allows Veteran to receive care based on residence or when wait times for VA health care exceed the standards established in law.
- ❑ For purposes of this program, a “residence” is defined as legal residence or personal domicile. A residence cannot be a post office box or non-residential point of delivery.
- ❑ To have your eligibility for Choice Card determined based on your residence, select one of the following convenient ways to submit your home address information:
 - ❑ Call Department of Veteran Affairs at 877-222 -(VETS) (8387) and provide SSN
 - ❑ Submit your information on line at www.ebenefist.va.gov and select the “Apply for VA Health Care” link under Recommended Resources.
 - ❑ Return Health Benefits Update form to Health Eligibility Center, 2957 Claremont Road, Atlanta, Georgia, 30329 OR
 - ❑ Contact your local VA Medical Center Veterans Choice Champion for assistance.
- ❑ Only after you have provided VA with your residence, will you receive a Choice Card and then should call the 1-866-606-8198 TPA Call center to get approval to use the Choice Program. You must have a Choice Card when you call to request care.

Use of Veterans Choice Card

Use of the card must be preauthorized

- ❑ Authorization is provided by Health Net Federal Services by calling 1-866-606-8198
- ❑ VA Medical Centers **are not** involved in the choice card authorization or approval process
- ❑ Care must be clinically necessary
- ❑ Eligible Veterans are authorized for a course of treatment, which must be considered medically necessary, for up to 60 days. The treatment will include any follow-up appointments, as well as any ancillary and specialty services.
- ❑ Exception to TPA Authorizations: TPA does not provide dental authorizations, VA Medical Centers continue to authorize Non-VA Care Dental Care, Dialysis and Prosthetics.
- ❑ Veterans requesting Dental Care should contact local VAMC

Use of Card based on Geographic Residence

- ❑ Veterans eligible based on geographic residence **are not** required to be seen by a VA Provider (including Primary Care or Mental Health Care)
- ❑ A referral from VAMC is not required
- ❑ Health Net Federal Services will determine clinical necessity
- ❑ Distance criteria Veterans are not required to come to the VA for care or to have been previously seen by the VA
- ❑ To be eligible, all Veterans who are covered by other health insurance (OHI) must provide that information upon request for care under the Choice Program.
- ❑ Eligible Veterans are responsible for any copayments, deductibles or cost shares as required by their other health insurance.

Use of Card Based on 30 Day Wait Criteria

- ❑ Veterans are eligible to use the Veterans Choice Card if their appointment can not be scheduled within 30 days of the clinically appropriate date.
- ❑ VA Provider determines the clinically appropriate date
- ❑ If the appointment is more than 30 days then the clinically appropriate date the MSA/clerk will:
 - schedule the appointment, and
 - inform the Veteran to contact Health Net 1-866-606-8198, if they want to try and schedule an appointment in community

Use of Card Based on 30 Day Wait Criteria (continued)

- ❑ **Veterans should** wait 72hrs to five business days before contacting Health Net Federal Services to schedule an appointment. This is necessary to allow time for the transfer of information between VHA and the TPA.
- ❑ If a Veteran accepts an appointment in the community using their Veterans Choice Card, Health Net Federal Services will notify the VA Medical Center
- ❑ The VA Medical Center will cancel the Veteran's VA appointment
- ❑ To be eligible, all Veterans who are covered by other health insurance (OHI) must provide that information upon request for care under the Choice Program.
- ❑ Eligible Veterans are responsible for any copayments, deductibles or cost shares as required by their other health insurance.

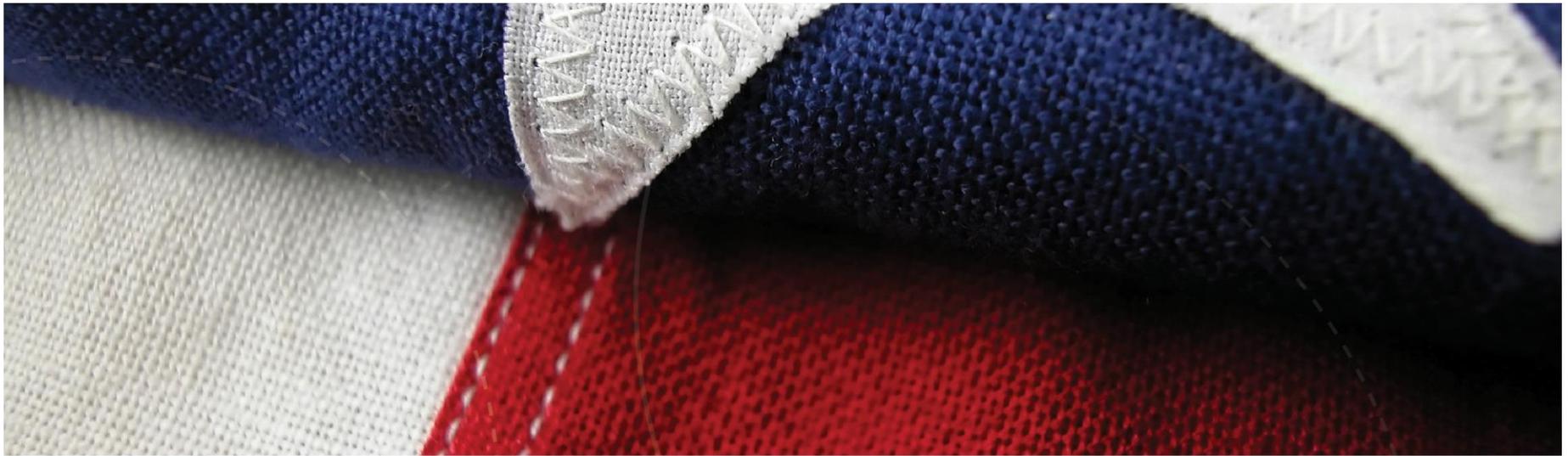
Veteran Choice Card non-VA Providers

- ❑ Veterans will be encouraged to use a Health Net network Provider, to ensure both cost and quality of care.
- ❑ Health Net has ability to negotiate out of Network Provider Agreements
- ❑ Out network non-VA providers must agree to enter into Provider Agreement and meet minimum federal qualification requirements such as:
 - accept Medicare rates
 - agree to provide VA with Medical Record Documentation
 - agree to prescribe medications based on VA formulary, and other provisions required by the act

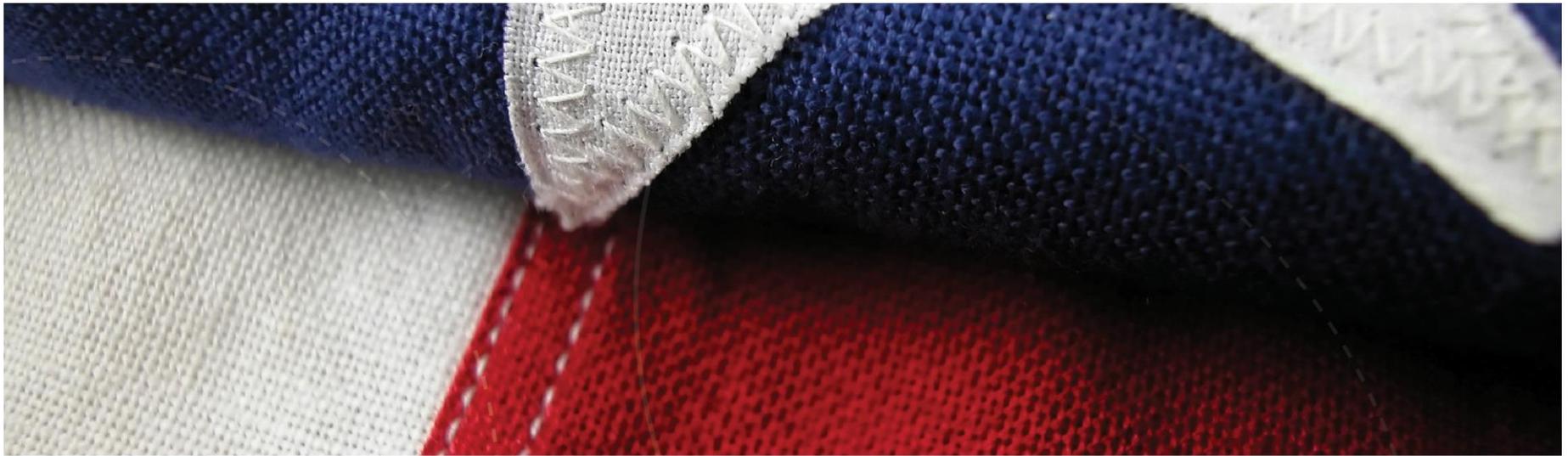
General Information continued...

- ❑ Prescriptions and prosthetic items will continue to be filled by the VA
 - Provisions have been made to fill emergent prescriptions in the community
 - Actual mechanism to accomplish are still being worked out
- ❑ Emergency Care and Community Nursing Home **is not** covered under Choice Program
 - Current non-VA care rules apply for emergency care

- ❑ Manchester will continue to use traditional non-VA Care for service previously sent to the community
 - Transfers from Urgent Care, EMG's, EEG's, etc.



Questions?



CHAMPION	VA EXTENSION	VA LOCATION
Karl Baldwin	6049	Room N135
David Morrall	5816	Off-Site
Muriel Stillman	5813	Off-Site
John Coburn	5842	Off-Site
Charleen Eaton	5830	Off-Site
Stephanie DeMattia	2565	Room N139
Gary Von George	2722	Room N137

Third Party
contact:
Health Net
1-866-606-8198