

# HVRP COLLABORATION WITH VAMCs AND THEIR COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT COORDINATORS

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John Rio  
ADVOCATES FOR  
HUMAN  
POTENTIAL

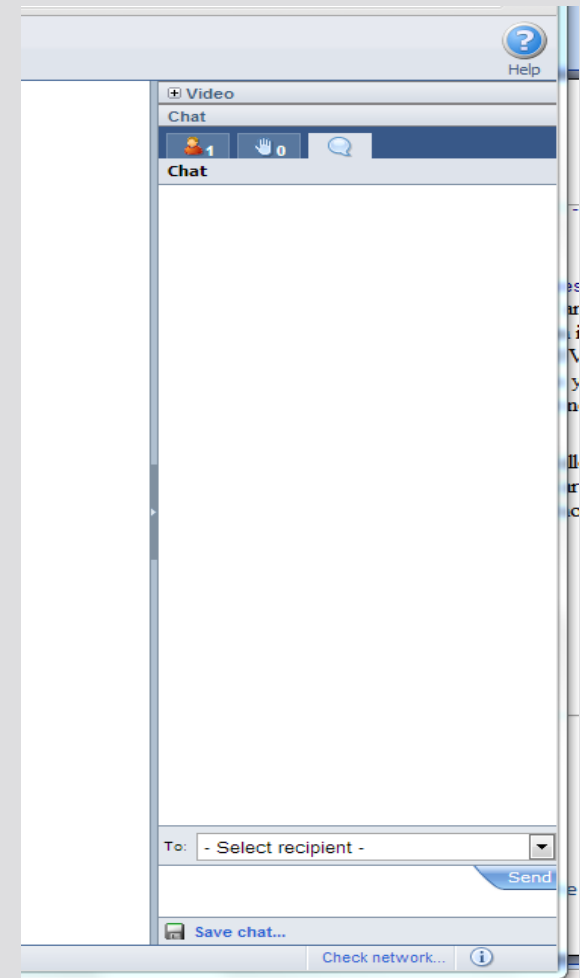


# LOGISTICS

- Asking questions during the webinar
  - All participant phone lines are muted
- You'll be unable to ask questions by phone
  - Please type your question in the on screen chat box
- There will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the webinar
  - Post-webinar survey
  - Michael Holzer, TA Program Assistant (NCHV), [mholzer@nchv.org](mailto:mholzer@nchv.org)

# ASKING QUESTIONS DURING THE TRAINING

- Submit questions in the chat box on the webinar
- E-mail questions to Michael Holzer at [mholzer@nchv.org](mailto:mholzer@nchv.org)
- Submit questions through the post-training survey



**VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION  
(VHA)**

**HOMELESS VETERANS COMMUNITY  
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (HVCES)**

**The Role of the Community Employment Coordinator (CEC)**

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# THE ROLE OF EMPLOYMENT IN ENDING VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

- VA has made ending Veteran homelessness a top priority, undertaking an unprecedented campaign to dramatically increase resources as well as awareness of VA services available for homeless Veterans and Veterans at risk of homelessness.
- While permanent, stable housing is the benchmark of these efforts, housing alone may not be sufficient to mitigate a current episode of homelessness or prevent future episodes.
- Employment is one of the key elements in helping Veterans climb out of homelessness permanently or avoid it all together.

# COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT COORDINATORS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS (CECs)

- Despite the critical role of community-based employment in ending Veteran homelessness, unemployment rates among Veterans exiting VHA homeless programs have remained high.
- In FY 2013, less than 40 percent of Veterans exited specialized homeless programs with employment.
- In May 2014, Community Employment Coordinators (CECs) were funded at all VAMCs.
- Total of 152 funded positions/ Over 80% have been filled

# CEC ROLES

- Provide guidance, training and oversight regarding employment options for Veterans receiving Homeless Services across the VAMC.
- Works with VA and non-VA partners to identify local gaps in current competitive employment services targeting homeless Veterans.
- Coordinates with homeless, CWT and community program managers to develop strategies to augment existing services and reduce barriers as needed.
- Partner with DOL, State Vocational Rehabilitation, Chambers of Commerce, SSVF grantees, GPD grantees, employers etc.
- Insure that competitive employment resources of varying levels of intensity are currently available for homeless and chronically homeless Veterans both at the medical center and in the community.

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATIONS

- Training
- Funds for work-related clothing and equipment
- Transportation
- Sharing of Employment Opportunities
- VHA Health Care Services
- Housing Solutions



# CONCLUSIONS

- There are multiple examples of excellent collaborative relationships between VHA homeless /employment program staff and DOL/HVRP staff and grantees across the country.
- A major focus for the CECs is to maintain and improve these relationships where they already exist and to develop new partnerships where they don't.
- Working together we can end Veteran homelessness and improve employment outcomes for all those we serve.



# LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SYSTEMS AND HOMELESS VETERAN EMPLOYMENT

- Seem to work within their own silos
- Most think it a good idea to employ veterans
- Few targeting homeless veterans
- Staff may know each other, but not work collaboratively

# *HOW WE GET THERE FROM HERE*

- Acknowledging the current levels of systems fragmentation
- Recognizing that most of our clients are struggling with multiple problems that make providing treatment, housing and employment ALL significant challenges
- Changing the basic ways we do business
- Promoting systems integration as an alternative to fragmentation

# *SYSTEMS INTEGRATION: WHY BOTHER?*

The issues we are here to address are beyond the capacity of any single system to solve on its own

- No one system has the resources
- No one system has the expertise
- No one system has the person-power
- No one system has the complete solution

# *SYSTEMS INTEGRATION: THE MECHANIC'S PERSPECTIVE*



*SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION:  
MAKING INTEGRATION INVISIBLE TO THE “END USER”*



# *8 BUILDING BLOCKS OF SYSTEMS CHANGE & SERVICE INTEGRATION*

- Collaborative planning
- Building consensus and setting goals
- Investment and leveraging resources
- Coordination and streamlining of funding
- Building provider capacity
- Developing industry standards, quality assurance and monitoring
- Cultivating leaders and champions
- Data and communications to make the case



# *THE SYSTEMS CHANGE MECHANIC: “BOUNDARY SPANNING”*

- Span the gaps
- Operate at both the service and systems level
- Be open to input from all players
- Articulate a clear point of view that offers a way out of the woods.
- Be trustworthy, even when players have suspicion about the change process

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# SAN DIEGO HVRP GRANTEES

San Diego currently has 3 non-VA partners with HVRP Grants

- Interfaith Community Services -- North County Escondido
- PATH (People Assisting the Homeless – Downtown San Diego)
- Veterans Village of San Diego (VVSD)
  - Metro Site
  - North County Oceanside
- **VVSD also has a Recently Separated grant**

# COLLABORATION

- As the former Assistant Director of VVSD Metro Employment and Training Services I am familiar with HVRP grants as well as the grantees in San Diego County.
- This has allowed me to forge new relationships with PATH, while maintaining well established relationships with Interfaith and VVSD.
- As the CEC I am able to offer additional resources and services to the HVRP grantees as our services include follow along services for Veterans once they are employed in an effort to help them retain the job.
- HVCES participants also have the advantage of working with an assigned VRS who ensures the Veteran receives individualized services

# SUCCESS STORY

- Benny is a 55 year old, Post-Vietnam Era Veteran who had been homeless for more than 20 years.
- He is not service connected and therefore, had no income for many of those years.
- Sent to Armed Guard training
- Sent to drivers education to get a driver license for the first time in over 20 years
- Co-enrolled in a WIA funded OJT
- Got VASH Housing
- Got placed in an \$11.00 per hour job with benefits and career advancement potential

**EMMA ARMSTRONG**

**DENVER**

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# *QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION*



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