As you have certainly noticed, things are changing in VA. And change is needed. In 2017, VA leadership outlined five priorities for sustainable change that VA must make to better serve Veterans. These priorities, which we will describe in the pages that follow, will modernize VA's culture, processes, and capabilities to put the needs and interests of Veterans and their families first.

And change is happening. I see it during my clinic at our local VA medical center, with shorter wait times, modern scheduling, and other ways we are making a trip to their health care provider easier for Veterans. The seeds of positive change have been planted, and they are taking root. Change for the better.

Things are also changing in our office, the VHA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP). We've seen familiar faces leave NCP to pursue other paths, and we miss them already. But we've also seen new faces arrive, bringing fresh perspective and skills to our team. And, of course, we update our health promotion and disease prevention guidance when research uncovers new evidence to support that change.

One thing that hasn't changed is our commitment to Veterans. I see that commitment every day in our staff at NCP as they work to provide VHA clinical staff with the latest in evidence-based programs to engage Veterans in healthy living. I see it in our facility-based Healthy Living Teams' efforts to support this mission, bringing health promotion and disease prevention education, tools, and resources directly to Veterans and the VHA care teams that serve them. To all our team members, your hard work and remarkable talents inspire me every day. Thank you for all you do! It is gratifying to know that your strong commitment to Veterans remains unchanged.

Finally, if you have read our Highlights report in the past, you will notice that it has changed as well. We've organized the heart of the report around VA's five priorities, telling our story with a few examples of how NCP's mission and accomplishments support each of the priorities. We hope you enjoy this fresh approach.

So, in these Highlights, we take a moment to look to the past. But, as President Kennedy advised, we will keep looking to the future as well, always striving to find new and better ways to serve Veterans every day.

Jane Kim, M.D., M.P.H.
Chief Consultant for Preventive Medicine

"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."

– John F. Kennedy
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The National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP) is VHA’s primary source for healthy living, disease prevention, and health education. NCP policy, guidance, training, and innovative resources and programs drive VHA’s health promotion and disease prevention efforts. To achieve its mission, NCP collaborates with other VA program offices, facility-based Healthy Living Teams, and other partners nationwide.

NCP’s mission aligns with VA’s Whole Health approach, empowering Veterans by ensuring they have access to exceptional evidence-based health education, health promotion, and preventive services and care—anytime and everywhere they need it. NCP helps VHA and VHA clinicians leverage proven approaches, as well as emerging technology and tools, to engage, empower, and equip Veterans to manage their health and health conditions.
NCP supports the work of **Healthy Living Teams**, facility-based experts located at VA medical centers and facilities nationwide. These dedicated health professionals support health education for Veterans, as well as health promotion and prevention policy, training, and resources across **VA**.

Together, NCP and the Healthy Living Teams promote positive health behaviors in Veterans. Research shows that **3 health behaviors** are closely linked to **4 major chronic diseases**, which together are responsible for **50 percent of global mortality**.

---

**What is 3-4-50?**

Research shows that 3 health behaviors contribute to the development of 4 major chronic diseases. Together, those diseases account for 50% of all deaths worldwide.
NCP’s Core Program Areas support VHA’s facility-based Healthy Living Teams. Each program offers policies, guidance, and resources to help clinicians address health promotion, disease prevention, and health education.

Clinical Preventive Services

Clinical Preventive Services are those evidence-based clinical services that have been shown to prevent illness or reduce morbidity, and in some cases mortality. These services fall into four categories:

- Immunizations
- Screening
- Health Behavior Counseling
- Preventive Medications

To help in these areas, CPS maintains and updates over 30 Clinical Preventive Services Guidance Statements. These Statements provide clinicians with recommendations based on the best available evidence on

- Disease-specific screening and immunizations
- Health behavior counseling
- Preventive medications

Veterans Health Education & Information

VHEI provides leadership and resources for patient health education and literacy in VHA. Health education programs and policies apply the principles of Veteran-centered health education: Respect, Engage, Tailor, and Support.

VHEI services provided include

- **Veterans Health Library**—comprehensive online resource of reliable, Veteran-focused health information
- **Veterans Health Education Coordinators**—present at every VA medical center, VHECs ensure that Veteran-centered health education programs and services are available for patients, family members, and caregivers
Infection: Don’t Pass It On

The IDPIO Campaign is an ongoing public health campaign to involve VA staff, Veterans, their families, and visitors in preventing the transmission of infection. IDPIO gives the VA community information on
- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Annual seasonal flu vaccination
- Use of personal protective equipment
- Pandemic flu preparedness and response
- Ways to prevent transmission of infection

MOVE! is an evidence-based weight management, health promotion program designed to improve the lives of Veterans.

The MOVE! Program reached about 120,000 participants in FY17. Read more about the MOVE! Program under “Greater Choice for Veterans” on page 9.

Health Promotion & Disease Prevention Program

The HPDP Program helps integrate health promotion and disease prevention into care, collaborating with VA Primary Care and Patient Aligned Care Teams, VA’s Mental Health and Specialty Care programs, and more.

The HPDP Program features staff training in Veteran-centered communication skills, including
- **Patient Education: TEACH for Success**—helps clinicians use patient-centered communication skills
- **Motivational Interviewing**—evidence-based clinical methods to build motivation when motivation for behavior change is low
- **Clinician Coaching**—helps clinicians use TEACH and MI skills in practice

HPDP also provides tools and resources to support the integration of HPDP into care, including
- **HealthyLiving Assessment**—provides Veterans with a confidential online assessment of the long-term impacts of their health habits and lifestyle choices
- **Healthy Living Messages**—nine evidence-based Messages containing concise information that can be shared with Veterans during a clinic visit

For more information about NCP and our programs, visit [prevention.va.gov](http://prevention.va.gov).

For more information about NCP and our programs, visit [prevention.va.gov](http://prevention.va.gov).
VA leadership has identified five Strategic Priorities to improve each Veteran’s experience with VA. These five priorities will help make VA more customer oriented, build trust, drive accountability, and allow us to continue to deliver services comparable to the private sector in quality and timeliness. To support these priorities, VA’s 2018-2024 Strategic Plan provides strategies to help make the five priorities a reality.

As we discuss on the upcoming pages, NCP’s core programs deliver across all five VA Strategic Priorities. What’s more, strategies outlined in the 2018-2024 Strategic Plan specifically mention programs and policies—including prevention, healthy living, and health education—already championed by NCP and facility-based Healthy Living Teams.
How Does NCP Support VA’s Five Priorities?

NCP programs shine across each of these five priority areas, as we highlight over the next several pages.

**Greater Choice for Veterans**—share expertise to ensure Community Care options provide access to evidence-based health education, health promotion, and disease prevention services

**Modernize Our Systems**—leverage information technology and tools that increase Veteran access to health education, health promotion, and disease prevention

**Focus Resources More Efficiently**—ensure clinical teams have training, skills, and resources to efficiently empower Veterans, increasing self-care and follow-through and reducing demand and drain on resources

**Improve Timeliness of Services**—increase access to innovations in health education, health promotion, and disease prevention programs and resources that proactively empower and engage Veterans in their own care

**Suicide Prevention**—ensure clinicians have the training and skills needed to build healing relationships that promote Veteran trust and willingness to disclose distress and suicidal thoughts and impulses
Greater Choice for Veterans

*NCP supports Greater Choice for Veterans by ensuring that Veterans can access evidence-based health education, health promotion, and disease prevention services in ways that fit their lifestyle.*

Veterans Health Education and Information

VHEI assesses and addresses Veterans health education and literacy. This includes educating Veterans in self-care and self-management needs. Tools such as the Veterans Health Library give Veterans “anytime, everywhere” access to reliable health information. VHEI-sponsored clinician coaching programs teach providers how to work with Veteran patients to create personalized health care plans. These innovations give Veterans more choice in how they receive and manage their health care.
Options of Care for Veterans

Some 80 percent of Veterans enrolled in VA care are overweight or obese. Evidence shows that even a 5% reduction in body weight creates a meaningful effect on overall health and reduces risk for chronic illnesses.

That’s where MOVE! comes in. Since its national inception in 2006, NCP’s MOVE! Weight Management Program for Veterans has helped close to 800,000 Veterans better manage their weight and reduce their risk of chronic disease. Veterans can choose among several ways to participate in the MOVE! Program:

**MOVE! Group Sessions** are the most common way Veterans achieve weight-loss success.

**MOVE! Telephone Lifestyle Coaching** offers one-on-one phone contact with a designated weight management coach.

**TeleMOVE!** helps Veterans stay on track through daily interaction using in-home messaging technologies.

**MOVE! Coach** is a free mobile app for Veterans who prefer to manage their weight on their own.

**Weight Loss Medications and Bariatric Surgery** may also be options for some Veterans.

IDPIO Flu Campaign

Infection: Don’t Pass It On, or IDPIO, is NCP’s ongoing public health campaign to help prevent the spread of infections.

A recent initiative partners VHA with Walgreens pharmacies, providing Veterans with free flu vaccinations. The number of Veterans receiving their flu shots at Walgreens soared to over 100,000 in 2017. By giving them a convenient way to get their seasonal flu shot, this innovative program isn’t just giving Veterans greater choice—it’s helping them stay healthy.
Modernize our Systems

NCP supports Modernization by leveraging information technology and tools that proactively empower and engage Veterans in their own care.

The MOVE! Coach mobile app lets Veterans manage their weight whenever and wherever they want. Since its 2015 launch, there have been nearly 35,000 downloads of the self-guided app, with over half of those in FY17 alone. In spring of 2018, a new Android version of MOVE! Coach will launch, more than doubling the number of Veterans able to access this weight management tool.
The HealtheLiving Assessment, or HLA, is VA’s online health risk assessment tool. Available on the My HealtheVet website, the HLA asks patients questions about their health history and habits. The HLA creates personalized reports with a health status, disease risks, and suggestions for healthy lifestyle changes. This interactive tool lets patients see the impact of their actions and suggests changes and resources to help them get healthier.

Some 30,000 new HealtheLiving Assessments were added to the HLA database in FY17 for a total of over 130,000 Assessments.

Quotes from Veterans who took the HealtheLiving Assessment…

“I was a little shocked [about my HLA Health Age]. I didn’t think that my little habits made me older than what I was.”

“It made me conscious of my diet.”

 “[The HLA Health Age] was pretty cool because it let me know where I was at as far as my eating habits. It’s definitely helped me learn a lot of things about diabetes and myself.”

NCP Communications

NCP delivers its Healthy Living Messages to Veterans and clinicians through the latest social media platforms.

For Veterans, up-to-date, engaging YouTube videos demonstrate the benefits of exercise and eating wisely, the dangers of smoking and alcohol abuse, and the keys to managing stress and losing weight, among other topics.

For clinicians, NCP places a variety of Healthy Living Message information on the VA Pulse communications website, including banners and graphics for use on medical centers’ electronic bulletin boards.
Focus Resources More Efficiently

*NCP helps VHA to Focus Resources More Efficiently by seeking new ways to help VHA clinicians keep Veterans healthy.*

**Clinician Training**

NCP truly “teaches the teachers” in the medical field. Innovative “TEACH for Success” and “Motivational Interviewing” instruction, coordinated through NCP, teaches VA clinicians how to build strong, trusting relationships with their Veteran patients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PATIENT EDUCATION: TEACH for Success (TEACH)</th>
<th>MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING: (MI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>TEACH facilitators trained in 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>649</td>
<td>Total TEACH facilitators trained since 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>380+</td>
<td>TEACH courses offered</td>
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<td>Participants in courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,000+</td>
<td>Total participants in local TEACH courses since 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>MI facilitators trained in 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>417</td>
<td>Total MI facilitators trained since 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>665</td>
<td>Courses offered in 2017 (Sessions 1 and 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,517+</td>
<td>Participants in the 2 sessions of local courses in 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28,375</td>
<td>Total participants in local courses (Sessions 1 and 2) since the mid-2013 launch of EES tracking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clinical Preventive Services

60% of Veterans are affected by preventable diseases and other preventable health conditions.

Clinical preventive services, such as disease screening and immunizations, are key to reducing premature death and disability and improving the health of our nation’s Veterans.

With NCP’s Clinical Preventive Services program leading the way, VHA has been widely recognized as the national leader in offering effective preventive services:

- In February 2017, VHA received the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable’s “80% by 2018” National Achievement Award. The organization honored VHA for raising colorectal cancer screening rates for Veterans to above 80% every year since 2009, calling this “a remarkable achievement.”

- NCP spearheaded a 3-year VHA Lung Cancer Screening Demonstration Project. In January 2017, project results were published in the American Medical Association’s JAMA Internal Medicine, highlighted in the National Academies of Sciences Proceedings www.nap.edu/. These results will help to drive VHA’s lung cancer screening recommendations for Veterans across the nation.

- NCP continued to be a leader in promoting breast cancer screening for women Veterans.

Healthy Living Messages

NCP’s Monthly Healthy Living Messages promote healthy lifestyles and disease prevention to Veterans and their family members. NCP provides a new Healthy Living Message—including topics such as Being Involved in Health Care, Tobacco Cessation, Being Physically Active, and Eating Wisely—to clinicians every month via social media. An average of nearly 200 VHA clinicians access these materials every month. These clinicians can then deliver NCP’s “Healthy Living Matters, Prevention Works” message directly to scores of Veterans every day.
Improve
Timeliness of Services

NCP Improves Timeliness of Services by increasing access to VHA-vetted, Veteran-focused health information and innovative health education on a variety of media and platforms available “anytime and everywhere.”
The online Veterans Health Library helps Veterans understand their conditions and treatment options and make healthy lifestyle choices. VHA subject matter experts regularly review and update the library’s Veteran-focused content and design. Most importantly, the Veterans Health Library’s content is available 24/7 via computer, tablet, or mobile device—anytime and everywhere Veterans need it.

**Telephone Lifestyle Coaching**

Following a successful two-year pilot, the Telephone Lifestyle Coaching, or TLC, program received new funding in 2017 and is set to roll out again in 2018. TLC will help Veterans and their care teams tackle the most difficult health behavior challenges—all at the touch of a telephone keypad.

Built on the successful telephone-based component of the MOVE!® weight management program, TLC will offer evidence-based behavioral interventions. No time for an appointment, or is the nearest clinic miles away? No problem. TLC will give Veterans an “anytime and everywhere” alternative or supplement to traditional face-to-face care.
Suicide Prevention

*NCP supports Suicide Prevention by ensuring VHA clinicians have the training and resources needed to build collaborative, healing relationships with Veterans. NCP also provides resources to help Veterans cope with stress and know where to turn for help in a crisis.*

Manage Stress Workbook

One of the most popular NCP products is the “Manage Stress” workbook. Available in print and online, the workbook guides Veterans through a stress management strategy, including identifying and tracking their stress. The workbook also demonstrates a variety of relaxation exercises. NCP has distributed 87,000 of these workbooks since 2015.
NCP’s Veterans Health Library, which provides online access to reliable, Veteran-focused health information, includes content emphasizing suicide prevention and promoting the Veterans Crisis Line. Other Library resources include the topic “Getting Help for Veterans at Risk for Suicide” as well as information on depression, mental health, and more.

At the core of these resources are the Healthy Living Messages, evidence-based information tailored to Veterans. NCP has created two Messages designed to help Veterans in need.

The **“Be Safe: Prevent Self Harm”** Message describes the signs of a person in crisis; provides the phone number for the Veterans Crisis Line, a free service staffed 24/7 by trained VA responders; and lists other resources to help Veterans and their loved ones learn more about this important topic.

The **“Manage Stress”** Message provides stress management suggestions, tools, and resources for both Veterans and their care teams.
Other FY17 Accomplishments

Clinical Preventive Services

- Published updates to nine National VHA Clinical Preventive Services Guidance Statements:
  - Seasonal Influenza Immunization
  - Cervical Cancer Screening
  - Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Immunization
  - Screening for Cognitive Impairment
  - Screening for Hepatitis C
  - Colorectal Cancer Screening
  - Breast Cancer Screening
  - Pneumococcal Immunization
  - Meningococcal Immunization

- Produced the video “Clinical Preventive Services” (available on VA Pulse and YouTube), an overview of NCP’s work to provide VHA facilities with evidence-based guidelines for clinical prevention practice
• Championed inclusion of shared decision making in the VA-DoD “Management of Type 2 Diabetes in Primary Care” Clinical Practice Guideline, released April 2017

• Developed a VHEI Policy Toolkit to assist local Veterans Health Education Coordinators

• Collaborated with the VHA Employee Education System and VHA Specialty Care Services to create three videos on shared decision making, found in the Veterans Health Library and on YouTube

• Developed and uploaded the first VHL interactive shared decision-making tool on whether to add insulin to a patient’s diabetes care plan

**MOVE!® Weight Management Program for Veterans**

• Contributed papers to the *Supplement of the Journal of General Internal Medicine* with recommendations based on the latest research on weight management, April 2017

• Produced the MOVE! Weight Management Program for Veterans video (available on VA Pulse and YouTube) to educate Veterans and family members on the risks of obesity and the benefits of participating in the MOVE! Program

• Published over 20 “MOVE! Success Stories” to the MOVE! website, each featuring a Veteran who has achieved a weight-loss goal; over 160 of these Success Stories are now online
**Healthy Living**

**Health Promotion/Disease Prevention**

- Produced the video “Healthy Living Matters - Prevention Works” (available on VA Pulse and YouTube) to highlight NCP’s efforts in health promotion and disease prevention.

- Continued the successful Gateway to Healthy Living program designed to engage Veterans in health behavior change and help them link to evidence-based VHA information.

**Infection: Don’t Pass It On**

- Published the comprehensive “Men’s Health: A Guide to Preventing Infections” for male Veterans, with information on the most common infections in men, from colds and the flu to STDs such as gonorrhea and HIV.

- Published the VHA Seasonal Influenza Manual, providing current vaccine recommendations and policies, strategies to optimize vaccination rates, vaccine administration information, and resources and references.

- Developed a fact sheet for clinical staff and a poster for Veteran patients on the importance of flu vaccination for patients with heart disease and related conditions.
NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION
is a field-based national program office of the Office of Patient Care Services that strives to improve the quality of life for Veterans by providing VA clinicians evidence-based health care practices.

NCP VISION
An all-encompassing culture of health promotion and disease prevention throughout the continuum of care that supports Veterans in achieving optimal health and well-being.

NCP MISSION
NCP advocates for health promotion, disease prevention, and health education. NCP advises VHA leadership on evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention policy. NCP provides programs, education, resources, coordination, guidance, and oversight for the field to enhance health, well-being, and quality of life for Veterans.