

[Home Health Care Benefits for Veterans](#)

November 12th, 2008 | Published in [Veteran Benefits](#) | [26 Comments](#)



55Share

While most veteran benefits are geared toward combat veterans or service-related disabilities, health care is not one of those benefits. The Veterans Administration provides a Medical Benefits Package that applies to all veterans except those with a dishonorable discharge.

The Medical Benefits Package is based on active military service and not limited to combat service. There are more services available at more intensive levels for those with service-connected disabilities rated at 70% or more. Both men and women veterans are subject to the same levels of service which are described in the Medical Benefits Package available online or from the Veterans Administration.

Home Health Care

Home Health Care is professional medical or therapeutic services offered in the home of a veteran with chronic diseases or are homebound due to accident, injury or service-connected disability. Nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy or a range of social services are available through the Veterans Administration for eligible veterans. The VA will make the total, partial or marginal payment for the necessary services.

Some examples of needs that can be filled by home health care benefits include:

- ÉHomemaker services for grocery shopping, housecleaning or cooking
- ÉHome Health Aides will assist with personal care activities
- ÉNursing professionals to monitor medications or post-surgical dressing changes
- ÉPhysical therapists identify and assist with strength/mobility issues
- ÉOccupational therapists help with re-learning daily activities after stroke or neurological injury or disease
- ÉSpeech therapists identify and assist in issues where re-learning is necessary, both speaking and word identification

Any of these services are available to eligible veterans for intermittent, transitional or short-term on a needs-determined basis according to the Veterans Administration. Other health care programs which may be available to the veteran must be utilized first. Skilled home health care through the VA is available after any other health care program benefits have been exhausted and an on-going need is determined by the VA.

Outsourcing Care Where Necessary

The Veterans Healthcare Agency may find it necessary to seek services from state-licensed community resources for a time period not to exceed 30 days if that agency has the available staffing and the VA does not. A Determination of Need must be issued by the VA after evaluations are completed and the veteran is awarded and placed with the appropriate agency for service.

There are waiting lists, eligibility lists and enrollment lists. All of these are maintained in accordance with allotted annual budgetary monies available for these services. The Electronic Waiting List is for veterans in need, or are seeking, home health care and budget resources have been drained.

Purchased Home Health Care Services

When money is not available to provide home health care, the veteran is wait-listed. Priority in budgeting goes to eligible veterans who have, or are in need of, nursing home care due to a service-connected disability rated at 50% or more. Of course, any veteran who needs home health care and is willing to purchase all or part of the services will be accommodated. The veteran who is purchasing home health care is able to request specific resources which will be considered.

One-third of veterans receiving purchased home health care will be contacted to ensure that authorized services are being received as expected. This monitoring is part of the upgraded quality control put in place by the Veterans Administration.

Enrollment Restrictions

The past several years have brought an influx of combat veterans from Afghanistan and Iraq. As a result, certain eligibility restrictions for access to health care benefits have been implemented. The Secretary is required by law to make adjustments in eligibility. All veterans are still eligible for health care benefits, but for now they are wait-listed. This also means that specialized areas of health care, such as home health care requests, are going to be scrutinized more than any time in the past. Frequent changes in eligibility will be posted at www.va.gov/healtheligibility and all home health care information is located in publication 1140.6 which can be printed from http://www1.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=1139.