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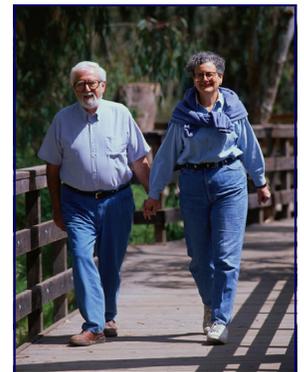
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Implementing the MOVE! Weight-Management Program in the Veterans Health Administration

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) administers the largest integrated health care system in the United States; which includes 152 medical centers and 804 community-based outpatient clinics. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) developed and issued a policy directing implementation of an evidence-based weight-management program, known as the MOVE!® Program, to assist in reducing obesity rates among Veterans receiving care from the VHA. MOVE!® is a comprehensive approach to weight loss and maintenance that supports and promotes behavior change, healthy nutrition, physical activity, and psychological well-being. The program provides direction and guidance on nutrition and physical activity and allows Veterans to set their own pace through a stepped level approach and goal setting. The MOVE!® Program eligibility criteria consists of: being younger than 70 years and having a body mass index (BMI, in kg/m²) of at least 30.0, or 25.0-29.9 with an obesity-related condition. Participants of the program lost approximately 1 to 2 pounds (0.2 to 0.3 kg/m²) during six to twelve months of follow-up. MOVE!® explains that increasing physical activity is a vital part of improving health and well being. The general recommendation is to engage in moderate physical activity for 30 minutes or more for 5 or more days per week or vigorous physical activity for 20 minutes or more 3 or more days a week. Almost all of the 155 Veteran Affairs Medical Centers (VAMCs) reported having MOVE!® programs in place. For more information on the MOVE!® Program, visit <http://www.move.va.gov>. *Citation:* Littman, A.J., Boyko, E.J., McDonnell, M.B., Finh, S.D. (2012). Evaluation of a Weight Management Program for Veterans. *Preventing Chronic Disease: Public Health Research, Practice, and Policy*. doi: 10.5888/pcd9.110267. ◆

Did You Know?

- Obesity is the #2 cause of preventable death in the United States.
- One-third of US Veterans who receive care at Veterans Health Administration (VHA) medical facilities are overweight or obese and are at higher risk for developing multiple chronic diseases.
- By state, obesity prevalence ranged from 21.0% in Colorado to 34.0% in Mississippi in 2010. There are no states that have a prevalence of obesity less than 20%. Thirty-six states had a prevalence of 25% or more; 12 of these states (Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia) had an obesity prevalence of 30% or more.
- Fat stored in the waist or abdomen can put individuals at risk for high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, type-2 diabetes, heart disease, cancer, gallstones, and stroke. This risk can increase with a waist size that is greater than 35 inches (88cm) for women or greater than 40 inches (102cm) for men.
- In 2009, among the 136,000 homeless Veterans, 53% had a chronic health condition.
- A group of at least 14,000 Veterans have been homeless for a year or more and suffer from at least one chronic health condition. ◆



Homelessness Among United States Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has estimated that 131,000 Veterans are homeless on any given night in the United States. Veterans make up one in four homeless people in the United States, though they are only 11% of the general adult population. The nation's homeless Veterans are normally male, with four percent being female Veterans. The vast majority is single, many come from poor, underprivileged communities, 45% suffer from mental illnesses, and half have substance abuse problems. The VA is a major service provider to homeless individuals and has created several very successful and innovative programs that have been effective in securing housing, economic stability and needed services for these individuals. The VA funds temporary housing for homeless Veterans including: (1) shelter and two-year transitional housing funded through the Grant and Per Diem Program; (2) long-term care through the Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans Program; and (3) skills programs such as the Compensated Work Therapy/ Veterans Industries Program. Many Veterans, particularly older Veterans, are usually vulnerable to homelessness and are at high risk for chronic medical conditions. *Citation:* Fargo, J., Metraux, S., Byrne, T., Munley, E., Montgomery, A.E., Jones, H., et al. (2012). Prevalence and Risk of Homelessness among US Veterans. *Preventing Chronic Disease: Public Health Research, Practice, and Policy*. doi: 10.5888/pcd9.110112. ◆

