

# Rural Veterans Coordination Pilot



**The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) created the Rural Veterans Coordination Pilot (RVCP) grant program to support Veterans and their families who reside in rural and/or underserved areas of the country. Grantees are expected to use the funds to aid Veterans with the transition to civilian life in one or more of the following areas:**

1. Increase coordination of health care and benefits for Veterans;
2. Increase availability of high quality medical and mental health services;
3. Provide assistance to families of transitioning Veterans; and
4. Outreach to Veterans and their families.

RVCP was created in accordance with Section 506, Public Law 111-163, The Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010. Eligible grant recipients are either community based organizations and/or local, state or tribal government entities.

This pilot enables each grant recipient to support local Veterans in unique ways that will be suitable for the challenges faced by these locations. Additionally, it will seek to determine if there is an effective model in which state and local entities are able to successfully coordinate multi-sector benefits for Veterans and their families who reside in rural or underserved communities.

VA's Office of Rural Health (ORH) is responsible for providing oversight, guidance and evaluation of RVCP. Starting September 2014, ORH will administer \$10 million in grants to assist Veterans and their families who reside in rural and/or underserved areas of the country. Grantees are responsible for day-to-day management and reporting on the types of services provided and numbers of Veterans served. At the end of the two-year pilot, ORH will compile a report to Congress on the impact of RVCP. It will also identify best practices in delivery of Veteran transition services coordinated by community-based organizations and/or local, state and tribal government entities.

## **RVCP Across the Country**

The Maine Department of Labor connects Veterans with career counselors who help identify opportunities, arrange training and translate military skills to civilian jobs—especially for thousands of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom Veterans returning home. A portion of the funding also helps Easter Seals expand their Veteran outreach services deeper into rural Maine.

The Nebraska Association of Local Health Directors trains local health departments and community organizations to address Veteran-specific needs, so they can provide more comprehensive, patient-centered care to Veterans and their families. Project coordinators also link Veterans to other benefits.

This growing network of VA and community partners means more access points for Veterans to connect with health care and services.

