

# Clinical Resource Hubs

Veterans living in rural communities often face unique challenges that limit access to health care. Two of the most significant barriers include long distances to clinical facilities and a shortage of qualified providers. Studies have shown that transportation was the top challenge identified by Veterans and of the main reasons for missed appointments.

To overcome these challenges, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) established Clinical Resource Hubs (CRH) – a network of solutions that combines in-person care and telehealth to support underserved medical facilities. This allows rural Veterans to get the care they need, when they need it, regardless of location.

## Hubs and Spokes

The CRH is a Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) level resource that provides primary care, mental health, surgical, rehabilitation, and specialty care services to Veterans in areas experiencing gaps in access to care.

These gaps may be due to VHA facility staff attrition, extended leave, clinical services not offered or planned at a facility, or an expanding Veteran population.

The CRH is a unique VHA solution for VHA clinics when challenges disrupt Veteran access to care.



## Different Ways to Access Care

The CRH include a variety of staff who provide clinical services to identified facilities in each VISN. These teams help CRHs increase access to quality health care for the nation's nearly 5 million rural Veterans in several ways, including:



**Telehealth:** Care is provided to Veterans using Veteran Video Connect (VVC) at a local VHA Community Based Outpatient Clinic or in Veterans' homes via video or telephone. VVC is the telehealth platform supporting two-way interactive video.



**In-Person Visits:** When needed, mobile deployment teams can provide face-to-face care for rural Veterans at local VHA health care facilities.

## Impact

In fiscal year (FY) 2020, the Office of Rural Health and its clinical partners launched Clinical Resource Hubs. In FY23, these efforts resulted in:

**356,451**

encounters that provide services  
via CRH, including:

**70,657**

rural Veterans served by  
primary care services

**23,934**

rural Veterans served by  
mental health services

**47,610**

rural Veterans served by  
specialty care services

Over the next three years, ORH will build upon this success through partnerships with the VA Offices of Primary Care, Connected Care, Specialty Care, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, and health care operations to improve outcomes. ORH has committed funding for CRHs through fiscal year 2026, acknowledging that they will play a significant role in providing rural Veterans with faster, easier access to high-quality care.

The Office of Rural Health (ORH) works to see that America's Veterans thrive in rural communities. To support the health and well-being of rural Veterans, ORH and its Veterans Rural Health Resource Centers establish and disseminate initiatives that increase access to care for the 2.7 million rural Veterans enrolled in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' health care system. Key focus areas include programs that address workforce shortages, transportation, primary care, mental health, telehealth, and specialty care.