



Veteran Warriors

One Family,  One Fight!



(727) 247-8141

info@veteran-warriors.org

www.veteran-warriors.org

Veteran Warriors Summary of PCAFC Updates and Status

June 30, 2023

Highlights:

- ★ **Rulemaking is necessary to align the language and will be done as expeditiously as possible.**
- ★ No **current** participant (legacy **or** post-expansion) will be discharged **during** the rulemaking process **unless** due to cause. *Participants **may** need to qualify under a new regulation once published.
- ★ **New** PCAFC applications are being processed in real-time; decisions in less than 90 days.
- ★ Artificial Intelligence (AI) is now being used to increase intake procedures for appeals.
- ★ Respite Champions - VA has 18 approved and 12 hired, increasing respite use and services.
- ★ Mental Health Hubs are now providing services to Caregivers.
- ★ Program leadership continues to improve communication with the community via virtual and on-site listening sessions (80-90 visits completed) to seek consistency and best practices.

Program Status:

- ↪ New regulation info has **not** been disclosed.
- ↪ **Initial** home visits and **once-a-year** Wellness visits will now resume in person.
- ↪ All eras are currently eligible to apply for PCAFC.
- ↪ Staffing has been aggressive, 2,300 were hired; all but one VISN is at ~91% funded and in place.
- ↪ Open CEAT Review/Consult are resolving in less than 30 days, except VISN 8 -still actively hiring staff

Mental Health Services for Caregivers:

- ↪ Mental Health (MH) Access to High-Quality Care and Caregiver Support, supported by Executive Order 14095, hopes to fully staff MH Hubs by the end of the calendar year 2023.
 - Two hubs are set up, 82 Caregivers were enrolled within 2 months. **←This is POSITIVE!**
 - 54% of Caregivers requested telehealth counseling: marriage counseling, depression, and more.

Respite Services for Caregivers:

- ↪ Respite Champions - VA has 18 approved and 12 hired, increasing respite use from 4% to 31%.
- ↪ There has been a 200% increase in VA Caregiver Program's respite "use" budget. **←This is POSITIVE!**

Approved applications VISNs:

- ↪ National average for application disposition within 90 days is 97%

Appeals:

- ↪ **Submitting appeals more than once slows down the process; please only submit once.**
- ↪ Legacy¹ Notice of Disagreement (Board) pending = 1,247 Dispositioned = 637 Granted = 21%
- ↪ Higher Level Review Appeals pending = 1,123 Dispositioned = 379 Granted = 11%
- ↪ Supplemental Claim Appeals pending = 1,659 Dispositioned = 619 Granted = 13%
- ↪ AMA² Appeals Process Board pending = 3,892
- ❖ The Board has not received any perfected legacy³ appeals relating to a PCAFC decision.

Survey (VSignal):

- ↪ All scores above 90% except "Quality," noting Caregivers would like more inclusion by CEAT.

Improvements:

- ☑ Timelines for **intake procedures** as of today are 1-2 days for Higher Level Review, Supplemental Claims, and Board Appeals; see June 26, 2023 notice: <https://bit.ly/pcafc-2023june-update-appeals>

Opinions:

- Dr. Richardson's primary goal **still appears to be to "do the right thing" by the community, all eras, without division.** Still room for improvement, but **we remain cautiously optimistic** the right person/people look to be in place to **help** the program get where it needs to be **if** given the reigns.

¹ PCAFC decision issued prior to February 19, 2019

² PCAFC decision issued on or after to February 19, 2019

³ All decisions prior to February 19, 2019 are legacy claims, this is not the same as legacy participants.