

# Homeless Services for Women Veterans

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## Overview of Homeless Services for Women Veterans\*

Women comprise roughly 5% of the 107,000 homeless Veterans\*\*

#### **HUD-VASH** program:

- HUD Housing Choice vouchers with VA supportive services
- Provides for permanent housing for homeless Veterans and their families
- Currently, 11% of HUD-VASH Veterans are women
- Nearly 30,000 Housing Choice vouchers are currently allocated for homeless Veterans

#### **Homeless Grant & Per Diem program:**

- Funds grants to community agencies to offer transition housing and supportive services for homeless Veterans
- 7 programs provide specific enhanced services for homeless women and women with dependent children
- More than 200 GPD programs have the capacity to serve women

#### Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program:

- Provide a 24-hour, 7 days per week, supervised therapeutic milieu for Veterans with multiple and severe psychosocial deficits.
- Deliver specific treatment for mental illnesses and addictive disorders



### Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Programs (MH RRTP)

#### Safety and Security of Women Veterans in MH RRTPs:

- January 2008: Field mandated to implement:
  - Keyless entry for all MH RRTPs
  - Locks for female bedrooms and bathrooms
  - Use of closed circuit monitoring of public areas
  - \$2.7 million allocated to the field for implementation
- Staffing must provide 24/7 on-site supervision of MH RRTPs
- Separate and secure sleeping and bathroom arrangements
- Annual Safety and Security Assessment in all MH RRTPs will be conducted jointly with the Women Veteran Program Manager (WVPM) and will focus on the needs of women veterans

#### MH RRTP Handbook (May 2009)

- All MH RRTPs must maintain environments to support women Veterans' dignity, respect and safety
- Gender-specific treatment and rehabilitation services must be available
- Services provided to women Veteran must be on par with services for male Veterans



### Focusing on the Needs of Homeless Veterans and Families

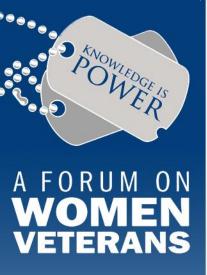
- 131,000 Veterans are estimated to be homeless on any given night.
- Women comprise roughly 5% of the homeless Veteran population
- VA has initiated programs to address the prevention of homelessness among Veterans with families including,
- HUD- VASH:
  - Provides for permanent housing for homeless Veterans and their families with VA supportive services
  - Currently, 11% of HUD-VASH Veterans are women
  - 20,000 Housing Choice vouchers are currently allocated for homeless Veterans
- Supportive Services for Low Income Veterans in Permanent Housing\*
  - Provides grants and technical assistance to community non-profit organizations to work with Veterans and their families in order to maintain them in their current housing and prevent homelessness
- At-Risk Pilot with HUD for Veteran Families\*
  - A multi-site three-year pilot project designed to provide early intervention to recently discharged Veterans and their families to prevent homelessness.



#### **Homeless Women Veterans**

- 5% of homeless Veterans are women
- Risk factors for homelessness among women include:
  - Trauma
    - Combat
    - Sexual
  - Poverty
  - Lack of affordable housing
  - Limited child care support

VA offers an extensive, specialized continuum of care to address the unique needs of homeless women Veterans.



#### **Stand Downs**

- Stand Downs are events held by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in conjunction with many community agencies in an effort to reach and provide service to homeless Veterans.
- During calendar year 2009, there were 190 Stand Down events held (a 21% increase) from the previous year.
- 48,805 Veterans and Families were served a( 40% increase) from the previous year at events in 46 states, DC, and Puerto Rico.
- 3,028 female Veterans were served
- 4,653 spouses of Veterans were served
- 1,770 children of Veterans were served



## 2009 CHALENG Estimate Homeless Veterans with Families

- CHALENG VA Medical Center Point of Contacts (POC) report an increase in the number of homeless Veterans with families(i.e., dependent children) being served. POCs reported seeing a total of 2,368 homeless Veteran families.
- CHALENG report estimated serving 1,282 homeless Veterans' families. Some of this increase may reflect the impact of HUD-VASH expansion, which allows VA staff to work with Veterans and their families in HUD-VASH housing.