

VA Maryland Health Care System

Virtual Town Hall, July 21, 2016

“Hot Topics”

1. Why is my private insurance billed for care that I receive from the VA?

VA is required by law to bill your private insurance provider for any care you receive from the VA that is not related to a service-connected condition.

2. How far in advance can I schedule an appointment?

Appointments can be made 90 days in advance. If you are due for a follow-up appointment, you will receive a post card 45 days in advance reminding you to call and schedule.

3. Can I receive my care at the Perry Point VA Medical Center if I live in another state?

Yes, you can. Call Eligibility and Enrollment at 1-800-463-6295, extension 7324 to enroll with the VA Maryland Health Care System.

4. What's being done with the empty buildings throughout the Perry Point campus? Why can't they be used for homeless Veterans?

We are, in fact, in the midst of a project to do just that. The HELP Veterans Village will involve renovations and new construction to create 75 units of affordable housing for at-risk and formerly homeless veterans in the village area at the Perry Point VA Medical Center. HELP USA, a national homeless service provider and nonprofit organization, has been selected to develop and run the housing. The housing will be backed by HUD-VASH vouchers, which were recently awarded to the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development to provide subsidized rent for homeless veterans in the village area.

5. Why is a means test required?

A means test determines if you are required to pay a copayment for health care visits and for prescriptions. It will also determine your eligibility if you are non-service connected.

6. I'm concerned that everything is going electronic. You won't be able to reach computer illiterate Veterans.

Some Veterans appreciate the ease and convenience of technology; others are intimidated by it. Because VA serves a wide range of Veterans, we have to offer multiple ways to communicate--electronically is just one of them. Staff are always happy to assist Veterans who don't or won't use computers.

7. Are specialty clinics excluded from the VA Choice Card Program?

There are a few specialty clinics that do not allow for scheduled appointments outside of our VA facilities. The best thing to do is contact our local Choice Champion for additional information regarding your specific case. Call 410-605-7349.

8. Where would a Veteran go to have their DD-214 changed?

A DD-214 can only be changed by the Department of Defense.

9. I've tried enrolling before, but was told I was not eligible for care because I make too much money.

Eligibility is determined by various factors, including income and service-connected disabilities. This is to ensure that VA services are available to serve those veterans needing it most. Criteria is updated annually, however, if you have been told in the past that you are not eligible, we encourage you to apply again so that you can be reevaluated.

10. How are priority levels determined?

Veterans who enroll for VA health care services are assigned to one of eight priority groups based on certain factors like service-connected disabilities and income level. This rating system helps ensure that VA resources are allocated to Veterans with the highest priority for VA care, with priority group 1 being the highest.

11. When is your next town hall? Will you be holding one at the VA soon?

We hold town halls quarterly. This one today is our 7th town hall. It's the first time we're holding it virtually through Facebook. The next town hall will be held this fall, likely at either our Baltimore or Perry Point facility. Be sure to sign up for our email updates to be notified of future events. Go to our homepage – Maryland.va.gov and enter your email address under “Subscribe to Receive Email Updates.”

12. I don't want to schedule another appointment with my doctor, but I have some questions for her after my last appointment. How can I get a hold of someone who can help?

Veterans can access the VA Maryland Health Care System's Telephone Care Line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-800-865-2441. You can call one of our registered nurses for medical advice, or to ask questions about your medications. The nurse can also answer questions about the various programs and services that are available throughout the VA Maryland Health Care System.

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13. Check-in Question: What's the kiosk for?

Appointment Check-In Kiosks are a fast, convenient way to check in for your appointment. You can also update your personal information, view upcoming appointments, review your insurance information, check your account balance, and submit a Beneficiary Travel request. We encourage you to try the kiosk, but you can always speak with a staff member if you prefer.

14. What's Beneficiary Travel? Who is eligible?

The Beneficiary Travel program provides eligible Veterans and other beneficiaries mileage reimbursement or transportation to and from VA health care or VA authorized non-VA health care for which the Veteran is eligible. Criteria include:

- A service-connected rating of 30 percent or more
- Traveling for treatment of a service-connected condition
- Receive a VA pensions or your income does not exceed the maximum annual VA pension rate
- Travelling for a scheduled compensation and pension exam

Need help with Beneficiary Travel? Call Baltimore- 410-605-7318 or Perry Point- 410-642-2411, ext. 2478 or 6895.

15. Direct Scheduling – Audiology and Optometry:- Did you know? You no longer need a referral from your primary care provider to schedule a routine Audiology (ear) or Optometry (eye) appointment.

You can now call the Appointment Call Center at 800-463-6295, ext. 7333 to schedule an appointment.

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