THE RVHAP TOOLKIT

Barriers to Accessing Healthcare for Rural Wyoming Veterans

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WYOMING TELEHEALTH NETWORK WEBINAR
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INFIELD VECTOR AND THE WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

What is the Rural Veterans Health Access Program and how does it address healthcare and resource inequalities?
**BACKGROUND**

- Wyoming is home to approximately 47,000 Veterans, totaling roughly 11% of the population of Wyoming, compared to an average of only 6% of the population nationally.
- 43% of those Veterans are over 65 years of age.
- The rural nature of Wyoming presents unique challenges in providing healthcare services.
- In turn, many of those Veterans go underserved or unserved entirely for their healthcare needs.
VETERANS CHOICE ACT

- Passed in 2014
- Addresses gaps and shortfalls in VA Healthcare to allow for greater service to Veterans.
DEVELOPMENT OF RVHAP

- Survey presented online and in-person to Veterans accessing healthcare.
- Results found that Veterans in Wyoming:
  - Do not have much concern regarding traveling to seek VA Healthcare.
  - Do not feel it is overwhelmingly more difficult to get a doctor's appointment, fill a prescription, or seek surgical services at a VA Facility compared to a Non-VA Facility.
BARRIERS IDENTIFIED

• Finding physicians who understand military cultures.
• An overall lack of knowledge regarding available services was identified.
• Difficulty in navigating the complex processes or finding physicians willing to navigate the processes.
THE RVHAP TOOLKIT

- Provides access to Veteran patient populations and Physicians looking to serve the Veteran communities.
- Provides resources for Veterans to access resources, navigate paperwork, access housing resources, and more.
- Provides physicians the tools to establish telehealth network sites, train physicians on understanding and supporting veteran cultures, and more.