

**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 18, 2002

From: Acting Chief Consultant, Geriatrics and Extended Care SHG, Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington, DC

Subj: Hospice – Veterans Partnerships

To: VISN Directors, Clinical Managers, Facility Directors and Chiefs of Staff

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to inform VISN and facility leadership of a national strategy to facilitate veterans' access to community hospice services. Hospice-Veterans Partnerships (HVP) is a program of the VA Hospice and Palliative Care Initiative (VAHPC), a two-year project launched by Geriatrics and Extended Care Strategic Healthcare Group and the Office of Academic Affiliations. A primary goal of HVP is to facilitate veterans' access to community hospice services by:

- Creating continuity across settings of care for seriously ill and dying veterans;
- Addressing local cultural and procedural barriers and misperceptions that exist between VA facilities and community hospices; and
- Identifying and honoring the preferences of veterans who want to be cared for at home in the last phase of their lives.

2. State hospice organizations from around the country are planning to contact the Hospice and Palliative Care (HPC) Points of Contact that have been identified in each VA facility. They will be asking the HPC Points of Contact to help locate the best person in the VA facility with whom community hospice providers can work.

3. Because Secretary Anthony Principi and Under Secretary for Health Robert Roswell have indicated their desire for VA to work more closely with community providers, Geriatrics and Extended Care SHG would appreciate your support of these activities by giving the HPC Points of Contact or their designees encouragement and time to work with community hospices.

4. Attached is information regarding HVP and the VA Hospice and Palliative Care Initiative, including:

- Hospice-Veterans Partnerships Fact Sheet
- VA Hospice and Palliative Care Initiative Fact Sheet

5. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Tom Edes, M.D., Chief, Home and Community Based Care, at (202) 273-8543 or Thomas.Edes@hq.med.va.gov.

/s/

Marsha Goodwin, RN, MSN

Attachments