

**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Trauma Spectrum Disorders Conference**  
**VA's Changing Mission:**  
**Focusing on Families of Veterans**

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# Uniform Mental Health Services in VA Medical Centers and Clinics

## Family Services

### Minimum clinical requirements for VHA Mental Health Services:

- Providers discuss family involvement with patient at least yearly & at inpatient discharge
- Treatment plan to identify family contact or reason for lack of contact
- Providers must seek consent from Veterans to contact families in the future, as necessary

# Uniform Mental Health Services in VA Medical Centers and Clinics

- Family consultation, family education or family psychoeducation for Veterans with serious mental illness must be provided at VA Medical Centers and very large CBOCs
- Opportunities for these family services must be available to all Veterans with serious mental illness on site, by telemental health, or with community providers through sharing arrangements, contracting, or non-VA fee basis care

# Family Services

## Family Education (FE)

- Treatment team provides factual information necessary to support the Veteran and family
- Offered in many formats, regularly scheduled and conducted over time including:
  - By professionals (e.g., Support and Family Education (SAFE) Program)
  - By trained family members (e.g., National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Family-to-Family Education Program)
  - VA – NAMI Memorandum of Understanding

# Family Services

## Family Consultation (FC)

- Family meets with mental health professional as needed to resolve specific issues related to the Veteran's treatment and recovery
- Intervention is brief; typically 1 – 5 sessions for each consultation
- Provided on as needed or intermittent basis
- If more intensive ongoing effort is required, family can be referred to Family Psychoeducation

# Family Services

## Family Psychoeducation (FPE)

- Type of evidence-based Family Therapy
- Focuses on developing coping skills for handling problems posed by mental illness in a member of the family
- Can be used in single family format (e.g., Behavioral Family Therapy) or multi-family group (e.g., Multiple Family Group Therapy)

# PL 110-387 Veterans' Mental Health and Other Care Improvement Act of 2008

- Sec 301 amends 38 USC 1782
- Adds marriage and family counseling to services for family members of all Veterans eligible for VA care
- Rescinds prior stipulation that services which include family members for Veterans receiving non-service connected treatment are contingent on initiation during an inpatient stay

For additional information or questions

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