

June 23, 2016

**PROJECT ACCESS RECEIVED CLOSER TO HOME (ARCH) TRANSITION TO THE
VETERANS ACCESS, CHOICE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2014**

1. In order to ensure continuity of care for ARCH Veterans when the statutory authority for the ARCH program expires on August 7, 2016, the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has determined that ARCH Veterans are eligible for the Veterans Choice Program (VCP) under the unusual or excessive burden provision contained in the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act (VACAA) of 2014 (P.L.113-46, as amended). This makes all ARCH Veterans who still reside in the ARCH geographic areas eligible for VCP based on residence. All primary and specialty care services will be available to ARCH Veterans under VCP.
2. Staff at each ARCH VA Medical Center (VAMC) shall encourage providers who are currently furnishing care through ARCH to either join the VCP network or enter into VCP Provider Agreements. This will ensure continuity of care for ARCH Veterans.
3. Each site is directed to make every effort to ensure that ARCH Veterans are able to continue to receive care from their current provider, if that is the Veteran's choice.
4. Requests authorizing primary or specialty care services for the ARCH Veterans can utilize the VCP Provider Agreements through the Choice First consult process.
5. If an ARCH Veteran has an authorized episode of care at the time the ARCH authority expires, VAMC care coordination staff will coordinate the Veteran's care with the ARCH provider to ensure there is not a disruption of care. After August 7, 2016, to the extent possible, community care for ARCH Veterans will be provided via VCP Provider Agreements with the Veteran's ARCH provider if the ARCH provider has not signed an agreement with either of the VCP contractors.
6. In situations where an ARCH provider will not enter into a VCP Provider Agreement, and is not a Choice network provider, the ARCH sites will transition the care of ARCH Veterans to other providers available via VCP.
7. The Veteran may select any provider that meets the eligibility requirements of the VCP; the Veteran is not required to continue receiving care from the ARCH provider. If the Veteran selects an eligible provider who is not the ARCH provider or a Choice network provider, the ARCH site should attempt to use a VCP Provider Agreement to ensure the Veteran receives eligible care from his or her preferred provider.
8. Each VAMC is directed to ensure all previous and current ARCH Veterans who still reside in the ARCH geographic area are entered into a new Veterans Choice Listing (VCL) clinic named VCL-GEOARCH. The use of this VCL clinic will allow ARCH Veterans to be identified by the VCP contractors as eligible for VCP based on their residence. In the event that an ARCH Veteran contacts the VCP contractor directly to

request care, they will be properly recognized by the contractor as residence eligible Veterans.

9. Each VAMC is directed to remove any ARCH Veteran from the VCL clinic named VCL-GEOARCH upon notification that the Veteran has moved to an area outside an ARCH geographic area.

10. All inquiries concerning this action should be addressed to the Office of Community Care (10D) at 303-372-4629.

11. This VHA Notice will be archived as of June 30, 2017. However, the information will remain in effect.

David J. Shulkin, M.D.
Under Secretary for Health

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