

The Radical Redesign of Healthcare to Promote One's Whole Health

An Overview

WHY

Health outcomes in our country are poor; the US is now ranked 37th in life expectancy, despite spending far more on healthcare than any other country. The costs are crippling our Nation. It is time to radically re-envision and redesign healthcare to create a health system, rather than a disease care system. In this redesign, we must start from a different place. We must expand our understanding of what defines healthcare, developing a Whole Health System model that empowers and equips Veterans to discover a path to health and well-being. The VA is uniquely positioned to make this a reality - for our Veterans, and for our Nation.

WHAT

Whole Health is an approach to healthcare that empowers and equips people to take charge of their health and well-being and to live their life to the fullest. VA facilities have been exploring what it takes to shift from a system designed around *points of medical care* primarily focused on disease management, to one that is based in a *partnership across time* focused on whole health. We have learned that clinical encounters are only one part of this equation. We need a health system focused not only on treatment but also on self-empowerment, self-healing, and self-care. Thus, the Whole Health System includes three components:

Empower: The Pathway - In a partnership with peers, Veterans and their family, explore their mission, aspiration, and purpose, and begin their overarching personal health plan.

Equip: Wellbeing Programs – With a focus on self-care, skill building and support, these programs are not diagnosis or disease based but support the personal health plan of each individual. Services include proactive, complementary and integrative health (CIH) approaches such as stress reduction, yoga, tai chi, mindfulness, nutrition, acupuncture, health coaching.

Treat: Whole Health Clinical Care - In the VA, community, or both, clinicians are trained in Whole Health and incorporate complementary and integrative health approaches based on that Veteran's personal health plan, grounded in the healing relationship.

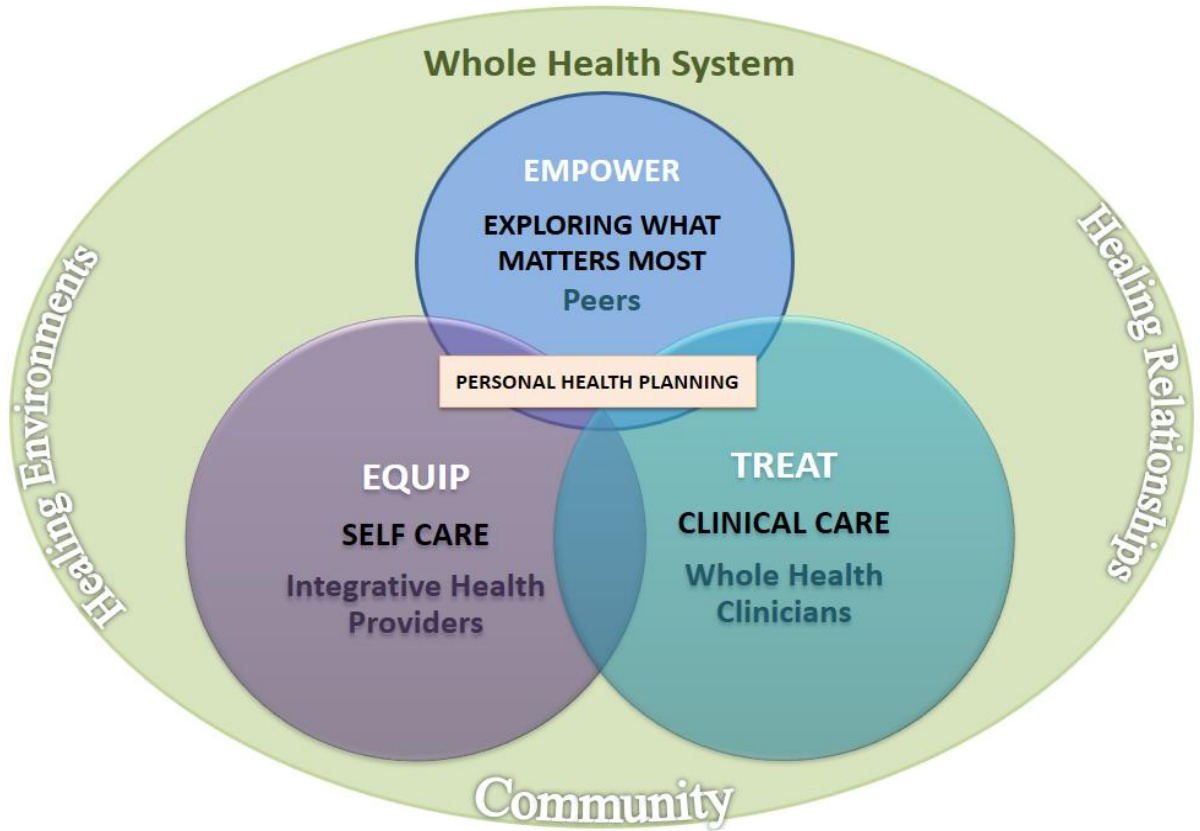
This approach not only partners with Veterans to improve their whole health, but is also critically important for Veterans with complex conditions, such as chronic pain and the invisible wounds of war. Additionally, the whole health approach improves access and reduces the burden on primary care.

HOW

VA staff have been working with Veterans around the country to bring this approach to life. In addition to seven funded design sites in FY16 and eleven more funded in FY17, many facilities are advancing this approach. In conjunction with the Comprehensive Recovery and Addition Act (CARA) legislation, VA will now launch the full Whole Health System in 18 Flagship Facilities in FY18, the first wave of facilities in the national deployment of Whole Health. In addition to an implementation guide, the Flagship Facilities will receive education and training, resources and tools, and onsite support. Veteran outcomes and satisfaction will

be tracked, as well as the interface with opioid safety and suicide prevention. This redesign of healthcare will model the future for the VA, and for the Nation.

Page 2



- **The Pathway (Peers):** VA will partner with Veterans at the point of enrollment and throughout their relationship with VA, facilitating Veterans' exploration of their mission, aspiration, and purpose, and helping create an overarching personal health plan that integrates care both in the VA and the community. The Pathway can be offered in the VA or the community and can be inclusive of family and caregivers. To facilitate the Pathway, VA is creating a new role for peers to partner with Veterans across time. The Pathway programming may include:
 - a. **Whole Health Orientation** is offered at point of entry to VA healthcare and provides connection to pathway options.
 - b. **Core Program** has an emphasis on exploring what matters most to the Veteran, identifying avenues for self-care, and creating a personal health plan. This may include:
 - i. Whole Health Group programs – Taking Charge of My Life & Health (virtual or in person; in VA or community settings), and/or
 - ii. Online Pathway options
 - c. **Ongoing support may include:**
 - i. Peer Support & Whole Health Partners (individual or group), and/or
 - ii. Health Coaches (individual or group)

- **Wellbeing Programs (Integrative Health Providers):** The core offerings teach new skills to support self-care and include complementary and integrative health (CIH) approaches, self-care classes, and health coaching. These offerings will be easily accessible to Veterans throughout the nation either within the VA setting or in the community.
 - a. Wellbeing Programs will not be disease focused but rather focused on self-care and CIH approaches to optimize health and wellbeing.
 - b. Teams may include an integrative nutritionist, movement therapists and teachers (e.g., yoga, tai chi, qi gong), licensed acupuncturists, mind-body therapists (e.g., stress reduction, guided imagery, clinical hypnosis), health coaches, and others.
 - c. Veterans will be able to be seen individually in support of their personal health plan, but most services will be focused on self-care skills and ongoing classes and support.
 - d. These programs will have strong relationships with Whole Health clinical care and Pathway programming, including referrals to and from primary care, other service lines, and Whole Health Partners.

- **Whole Health Clinical Care (Clinicians):** Clinical care will be provided in outpatient and inpatient settings which are attentive to healing environments and healing relationships and integrate holistic approaches into the Veteran's treatment plan.
 - a. Whole Health clinical care builds upon the PACT model.

- b. Whole Health clinical care (VA or non-VA/community) will work seamlessly with the Wellbeing Programs and the Pathway, rely on their expertise, and recognize that the Veteran is the captain of their health team.

Page 4

Flow Diagram: An overview of a Veteran’s journey through the Whole Health System. Veterans can begin their whole health journey in any area of the system, accessing each component as desired and needed. The Veteran is the driver of their path through the model.

