

WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

*You served, you deserve
★ the best care anywhere.*



Caring For Our Military Members, Veterans, & Their Families

“You Served, You Deserve the Best Care Anywhere”

Healthcare Services, Challenges, and Improvements for Women

Veterans

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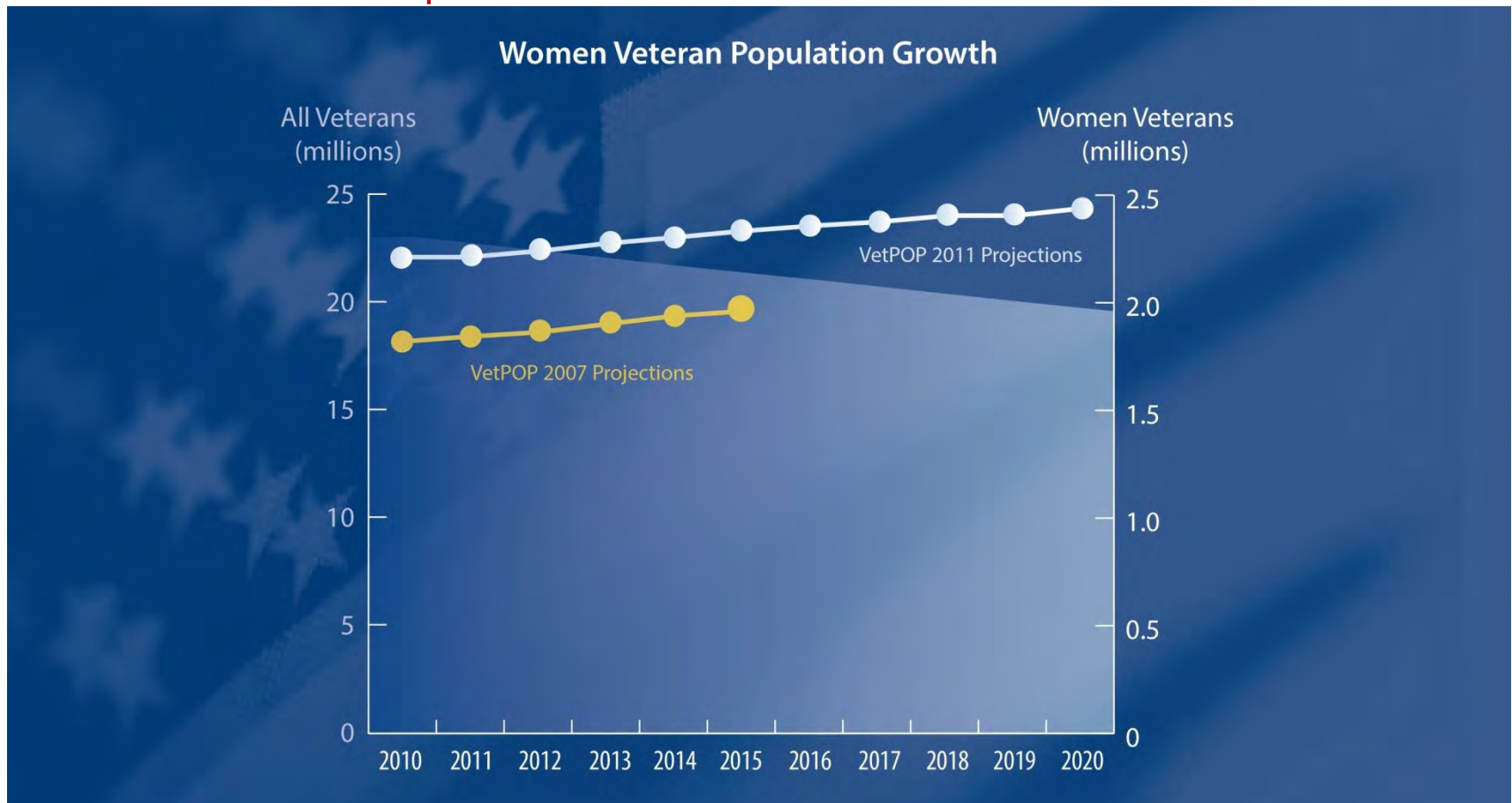
and Patricia M. Hayes, PhD, Chief Consultant, Office of Patient Care Services, VHA

History of Women in the U.S. Military



Source: America's Women Veterans: Military Service History and VA Benefits Utilization Statistics, Department of Veterans Affairs, National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, Nov. 23, 2011; http://www.va.gov/VETDATA/docs/SpecialReports/Final_Womens_Report_3_2_12_v_7.pdf

As Women Veteran Population Increases, Total Vet Population Declines



Women VA Users Doubled Since 2000



Sources: Women's Health Evaluation Initiative (WHEI) and the Women Veterans Health Strategic Health Care Group. *Sourcebook: Women Veterans in the Veterans Health Administration V1: Sociodemographic Characteristics and Use of VHA Care*, 2011. VHA Office of Finance Allocation Resource Center (ARC).

Growth Expected to Double Again Soon

- 12%** of Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn(OEF/OIF/OND) Veterans
- 18%** of National Guard/Reserves
- 6%** of VA health care users

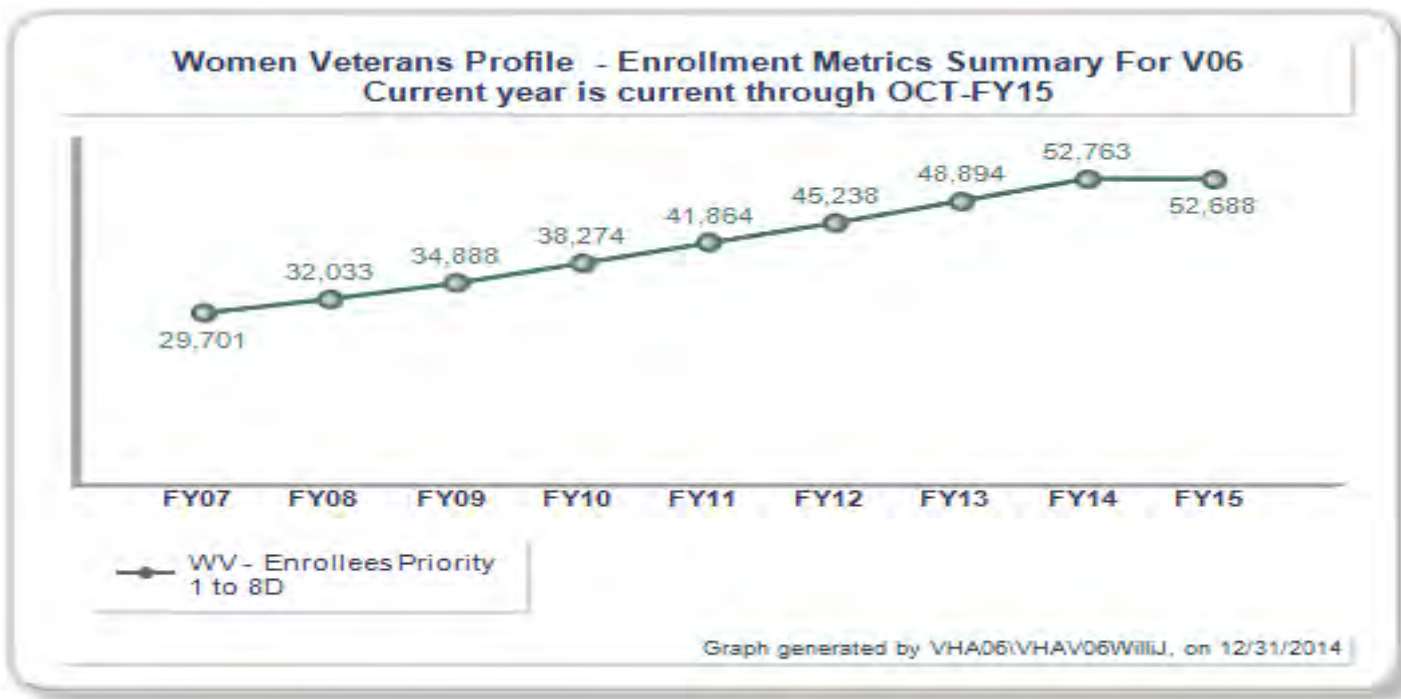
Women Veteran enrollment outpacing that of **men—21% increase since 2009**

5 years' free VA health care for OEF/OIF/OND Veterans
with service-related issues

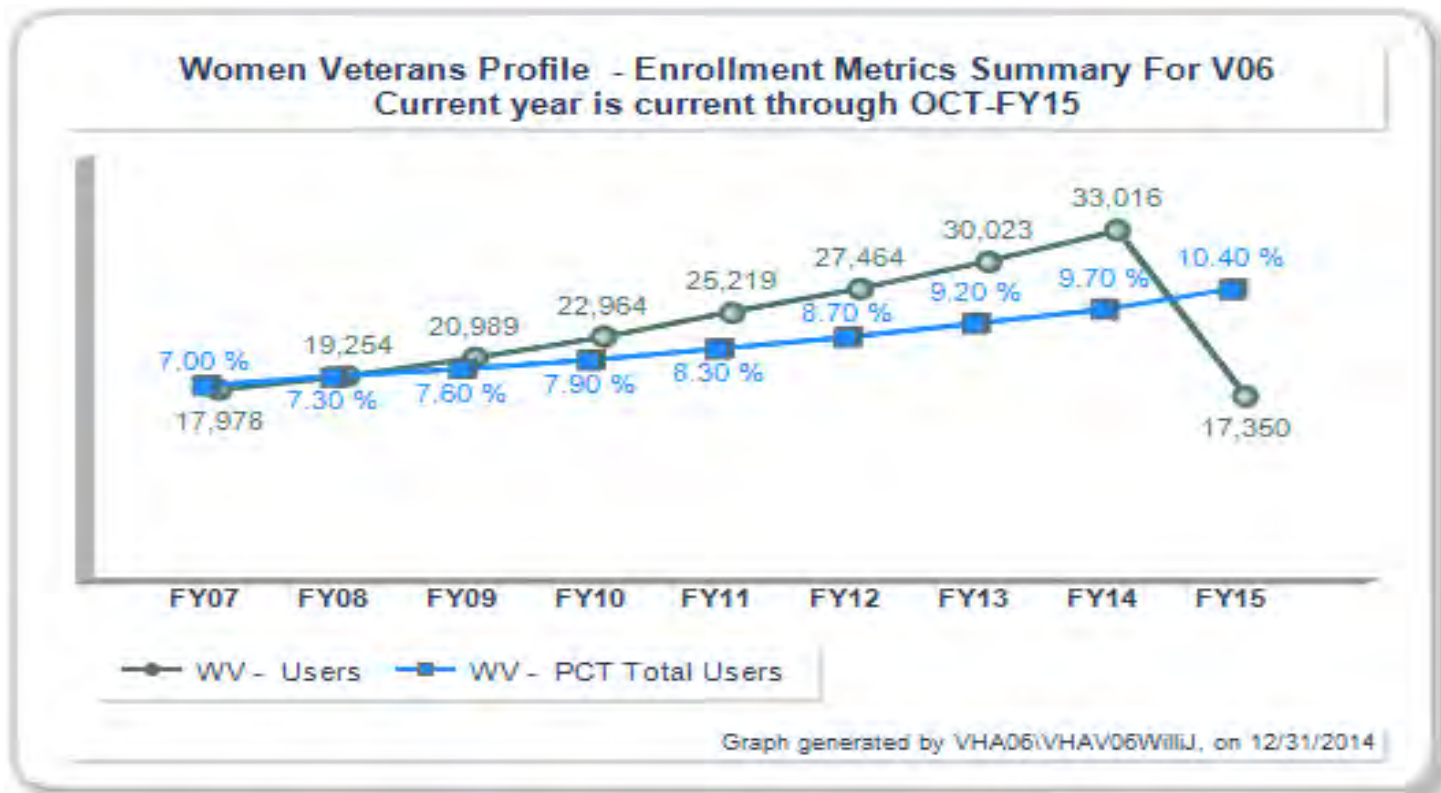


59.7% of OEF/OIF/OND women Veterans have used VA care

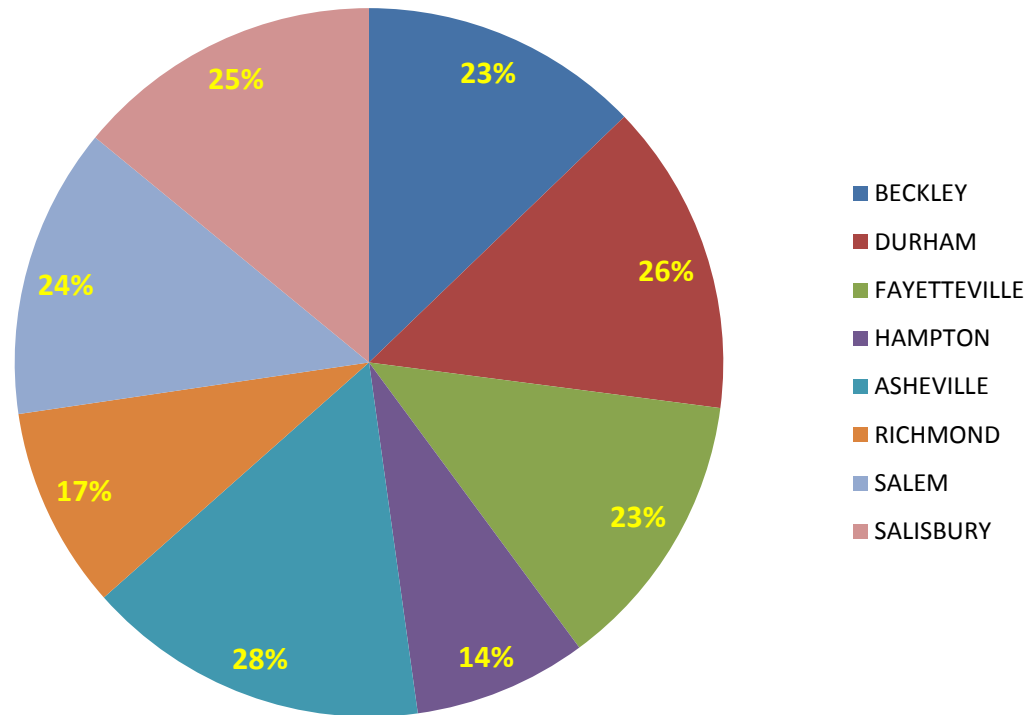
VISN 6 Female Enrollees



VISN 6 Female Users



VISN 6 Market Penetration (FY14)



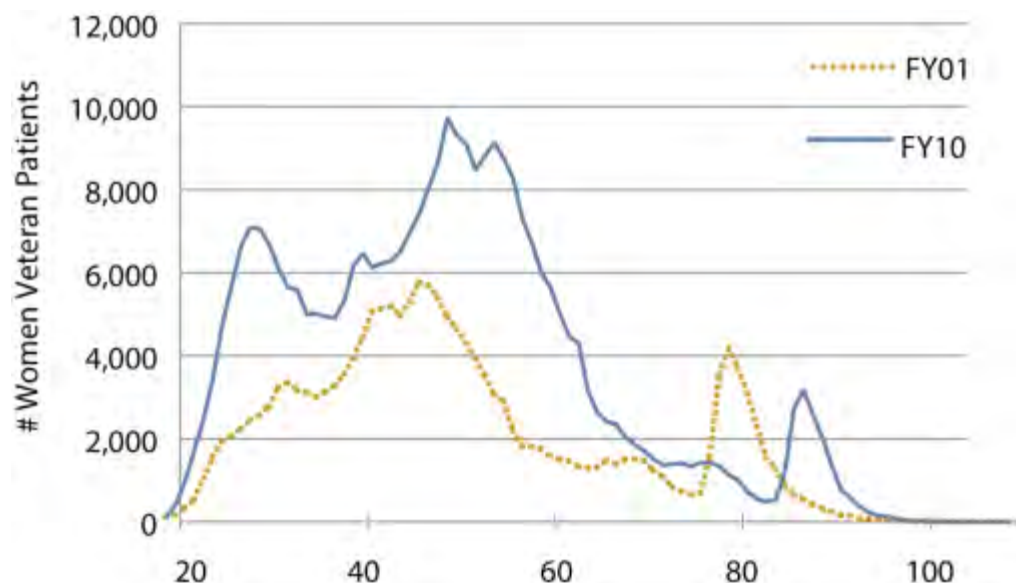
Aging Population

58% of women VA users are 45+

- ✓ Menopausal Needs
- ✓ Geriatric Care
- ✓ Inpatient/Extended Stays

Next 20 years ... more intensive health care services and support as caregivers

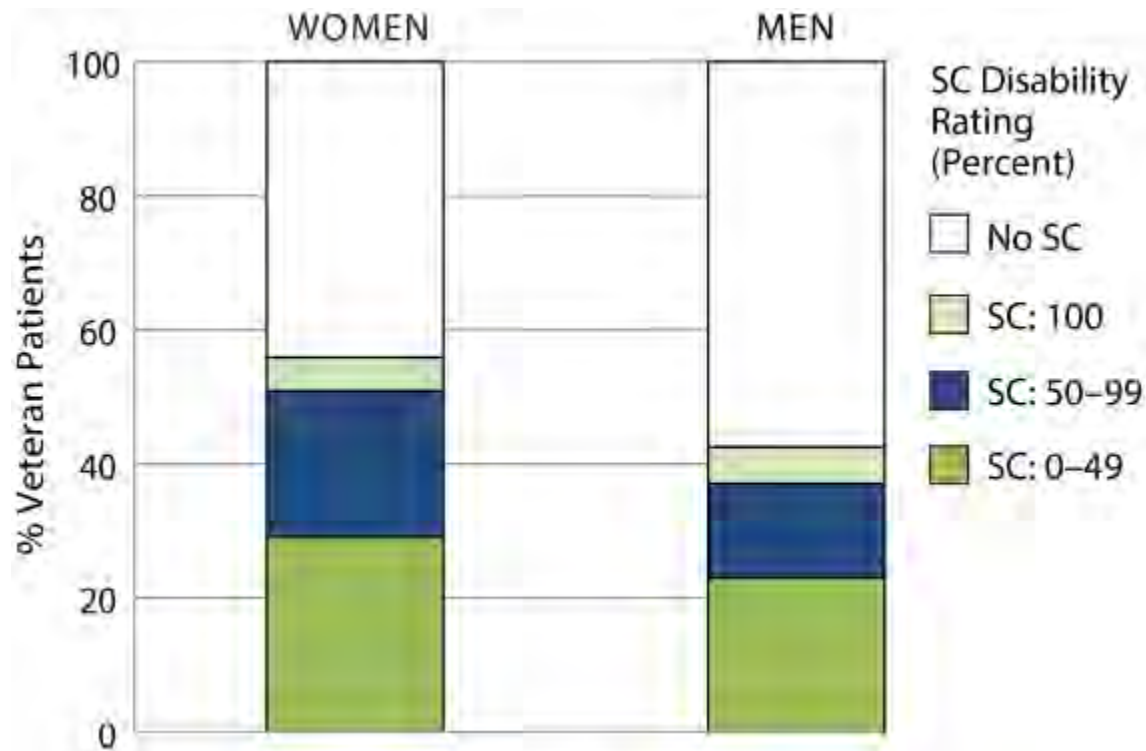
Age distribution of women Veteran patients, FY01 and FY10



Source: Women's Health Evaluation Initiative and VHA Women's Health Services.
Sourcebook: *Women Veterans in the Veterans Health Administration. Volume 2. Sociodemographics and Use of VHA and Non-VA Care Fee.* 2012 (in press).

Service Connections in Women Veterans

Service-connected disability status among Veteran patients, by gender, FY10



Source: Women's Health Evaluation Initiative and VHA Women's Health Services. *Sourcebook: Women Veterans in the Veterans Health Administration. Volume 2. Sociodemographics and Use of VHA and Non-VA Care Fee.* 2012 (in press).

Women Veterans Health Care



Younger Women's Needs



- ☑ Maternity Care
- ☑ Mental Health
- ☑ Service-Connected Disabilities
- ☑ Privacy, safety, convenience

Delivery of Comprehensive Primary Care

- ★ Complete primary care from one designated women's health provider at one site including CBOCs and HCCs
 - Care for acute and chronic illness
 - Gender-specific primary care
 - Preventive services
 - Mental Health services
 - Coordination of care
 - Reproductive Health Care



Role of the WVPM



- ★ Required full-time in every health care system
 - ★ Linchpin for improved Women's Health Services
 - ★ Leader of facility Women's Health Program
 - ★ Resource for women Veterans in the community
-

Role of the WHMD



- Serves as clinical leader for facility Women's Health Program
 - Works with WVPM to form the foundation of the WH team
 - Establishes priority and direction for clinical quality improvement
 - Oversees WH educational initiatives for providers and trainees
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Access

- ★ Women's Health is participating in the Choice Program
 - ★ All VISN 6 Medical Centers have WH Clinics including a WH Clinic at the Greenville HCC
 - ★ All Medical Centers offer Gynecology services
 - ★ Greenville HCC opened a GYN clinic in 9/14
 - ★ Mental Health Services for women Veterans include special women's groups for PTSD and MST.
 - ★ Durham has a PEC and Access Clinic to provide emergency access and rapid access to MH care
 - ★ All sites provide Primary Care Mental Health Integration – MH services provided in the PC clinics
-

Privacy, Environment of Care (EOC): Progress, Gaps

- ★ Privacy and EOC monitored monthly
- ★ Monies distributed to field to correct deficiencies (FY 13: \$41M; FY11: \$20M; FY12: \$400K)
- ★ 97% of bathroom/privacy curtain deficiencies corrected (old definition)
- ★ Broader issues of privacy remain a source of dissatisfaction for women Veterans and a barrier to their use of VA services

Research: Driving the Agenda

- Worked with VA Office of Research to define needs in women's health research in VA, enhance research on women Veterans
- Established Practice Based Research Network (PBRN) – Durham one of 4 initial sites
- Women's Health Evaluation Initiative (WHEI)
- More VA research on women Veterans published over 5-year period (2004-2008) than the preceding 25 years

Barriers to Care



Women Often Don't Identify Themselves as Veterans

“We don't know if it's because they had different roles, because they felt like they didn't do the same thing as some of our male Veterans ... whatever it is, they are still not self-identifying.”

General Allison Hickey
VA Under Secretary for Benefits
9/27/12



Lack of Knowledge of VA Services

- ★ 39% have zero or almost no knowledge of needed information about VA
- ★ Misperceptions in all cohorts about who is eligible for VA care
- ★ OEF/OIF/OND more knowledgeable than other cohorts about available women's health and readjustment services

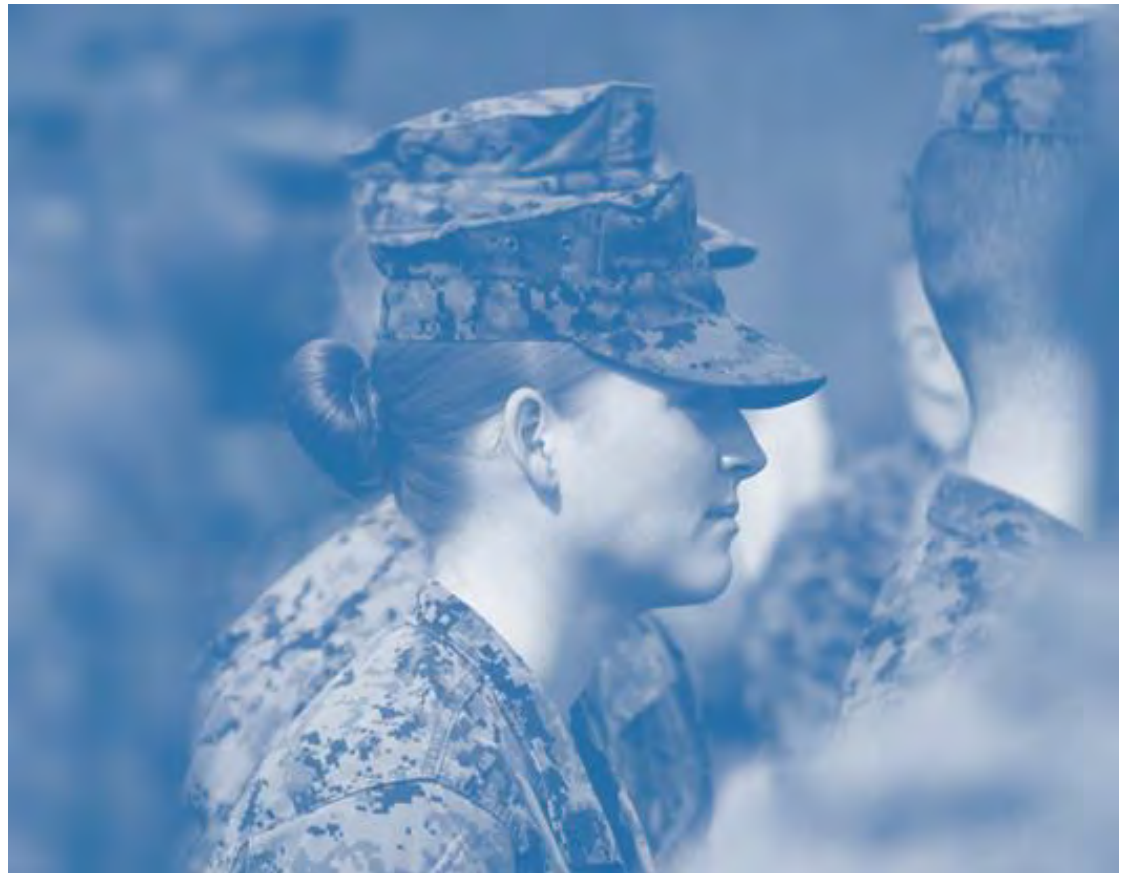
Barriers to using VA health care among Women Veterans who considered, but did not use, VA*

- ★ 31% didn't think they were eligible
- ★ 21% didn't know how to apply for benefits
- ★ 20% said closest VA is too far from home
- ★ Other challenges:
 - Difficulty getting time off for appointments
 - Child/eldercare responsibilities

**Not mutually exclusive*

Source: 2010 National Survey of Women Veterans, (D. Washington)

**Overarching
Goal:
Changing the
Culture**





- ★ VA-wide campaign to enhance the language, practice and culture of VA to be more inclusive of women Veterans
- ★ National Women Veterans Communications Workgroup:
 - Tasked with developing strategies to reach women Veterans (inside and outside VA) and VA employees

Outcome: Needs of women Veterans are always considered across program offices and in policy and key decisions

Culture Change

- ★ Present at New Employee Orientation
- ★ Content in New Patient Handbooks
- ★ Messaging as posted here
- ★ National Women's Call Center
- ★ WH Clinics
- ★ Attend varied outreach events

which one
is the
veteran?

Both.
It's **our job** to give **every vet**
the best care anywhere.

WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE  Department of Veterans Affairs

This advertisement features a young man and a young woman looking directly at the camera. The text asks 'which one is the veteran?' and answers 'Both.' with the tagline 'It's our job to give every vet the best care anywhere.' The bottom of the ad has a red banner with the text 'WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE' and the Department of Veterans Affairs logo.

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WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE  Department of Veterans Affairs

This advertisement features an older man in a wheelchair and an older woman standing behind him. The text asks 'which one is the veteran?' and answers 'Both.' with the tagline 'It's our job to give every vet the best care anywhere.' The bottom of the ad has a red banner with the text 'WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE' and the Department of Veterans Affairs logo.

Questions?

WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

**Mother, daughter,
sister, wife, partner ...
veteran.**

**VA cares for the
whole woman.**



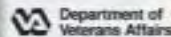
- Primary care
- Reproductive care
- Mental health care



- Sensitive to women veterans' needs and experiences



VA's national network ensures that your medical history goes where you go.



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www.womenshealth.va.gov