



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HCC's Live Well Clinics Designated as Veterans Choice Program Providers

The Health Care Collaborative (HCC) of Rural Missouri recently announced that its Live Well Community Health Centers have received designation as Veterans Choice Program providers. The move comes after the federal government signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (VACAA). The goal is to make quality health care services accessible to veterans in a timelier fashion.

The HCC develops, implements and supports regional programs that help create access to health education, awareness, prevention and treatment services. HCC's Live Well Community Health Centers are located in Buckner, Carrollton, Concordia and Waverly. These Federally Qualified Health Centers operate as full-service health clinics that accept all insurances including Medicaid and Medicare, as well as sliding-fee scales based on income for the uninsured.

“We are so pleased to offer this program to the many veterans in our area who have sacrificed and served our armed forces,” said Cathy Wallace, HCC's vice president of operations. “We are honored to be among the community health centers in this nation to provide integrated health care to our veterans. They have served us well and now we can step in and serve them with quality, accessible primary care, dental and behavioral health services.”

The Veterans Choice Program is designed to help the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) deliver high-quality health care to eligible veterans and expand options for them to receive services close to home. The Live Well Community Health Centers of Buckner, Carrollton, Concordia and Waverly are now providing care for veterans who meet Veterans Choice Program's eligibility requirements.

Determining factors for eligibility

Eligible veterans must be enrolled in the VA health care system and must be facing one of the following circumstances:

- The veteran was told by their local VA medical facility that they will not be able to schedule an appointment for care within 30 days of the date the provider determines that he or she needs to be seen; or within 30 days of the date he or she wishes to be seen if there is no specific date from the provider.
- The veteran's current residence is more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest VA medical facility (including community-based outpatient clinics) that has a full-time primary care physician.

- The veteran faces an unusual or excessive burden to travel to the closest VA medical facility based on geographic challenges, environmental factors, or a medical condition. Staff at his or her local VA medical facility will help determine eligibility for any of these reasons.
- The veteran's specific health care needs, including the nature and frequency of the care needed, warrants participation in the program. Staff at his or her local VA medical facility will help determine eligibility for any of these reasons.

How to become eligible

Veterans may call the Choice Program at 866.606.8198 to verify eligibility. Veterans who are distance-eligible can also call this phone number to make a Veterans Choice Appointment. Those who are wait-list eligible will receive a phone call from a VA partner to help set up his or her Veteran Choice Program appointment.

As for those who do not receive approval for care under the Veterans Choice Program, they may be required to pay for some or all of the costs of the non-VA treatment received, as some providers will not be covered by the Veterans Choice Program.

Those who qualify for the Program will receive a Choice Card for Veterans. It allows veterans to choose to receive care outside of the VA. The Choice Card does not replace the identification card used to access other VA benefits. Any veteran who wishes to continue with their current VA care can do so and no action is required at this time. Any veteran who has been determined as eligible for the Program and did not receive their Choice Card can still participate in the Veterans Choice Program.

Interested veterans may call 866.606.8198 to get started or visit www.va.gov/opa/choiceact to learn more.

To learn more about HCC and its Live Well Community Health Centers, call 660.259.2440 or visit [*hccnetwork.org*](http://hccnetwork.org) and [*LiveWellCenters.org*](http://LiveWellCenters.org).