

December 12, 2012

**"WELCOME HOME" EVENT FOR OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF),
OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF), AND OPERATION NEW DAWN (OND)
SERVICEMEMBERS AND VETERANS**

1. PURPOSE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes requirements for an annual "Welcome Home" event(s) for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) Servicemembers, Veterans and their families and/or significant others.

2. BACKGROUND: The number of OEF, OIF, and OND Servicemembers and Veterans continues to increase, and VHA has an obligation to offer all necessary health care and mental health services. Many of these Servicemembers and Veterans are unaware of VHA health care services and may be confused about their eligibility for services. It is imperative that these Servicemembers and Veterans are fully educated about VHA health care services and eligibility and that they are made aware that their service to the United States is appreciated.

3. POLICY: It is VHA policy that, at least annually, each facility must provide a "Welcome Home" event for OEF, OIF, and OND Servicemembers, Veterans, and their families and/or significant others.

4. ACTIONS: The facility Director, or designee, is responsible for ensuring that a "Welcome Home" event(s) is held at least annually for OEF, OIF, and OND Servicemembers, Veterans, and their families and/or significant others.

a. The event(s) must provide information on:

(1) Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits and must include participation by Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) staff;

(2) VHA health care and Vet Center services for male and female Veterans of OEF, OIF, and OND;

(3) VHA Homeless Programs for information and prevention of homelessness;

(4) Services of the Women Veteran Program Managers;

(5) Supportive services for families, Caregivers and/or significant others; and

(6) Services of the OEF, OIF, and OND Program Manager, OEF, OIF, and OND Case Managers, and Transition Patient Advocates.

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b. VHA health care facilities are encouraged to invite local community and military partners to participate in the event.

c. Any costs associated with “Welcome Home” events are to be funded locally.

d. Notify Care Management and Social Work Services, VA Central Office, of the dates of the event as soon as they are finalized so VA Central Office can assist in publicizing the event to National Guard and Reserve members and community Veterans.

e. Document the event in the Veterans Outreach Reporting System (VORS) so effectiveness and cost of the outreach event can be tracked, analyzed, and monitored.

5. REFERENCE: VHA Handbook 1010.01, Care Management of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Veterans.

6. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES: The Office of Patient Care Services, Care Management and Social Work Service (10P4C), is responsible for the contents of this Directive. Questions may be addressed at 202-461-6780.

7. RESCISSION: VHA Directive 2007-017, “Welcome Home” Event for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Active Duty Service Members, and Veterans, is rescinded. This VHA Directive expires on December 31, 2017.

Robert A. Petzel, M.D.
Under Secretary for Health

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