

May 18, 2007

**"WELCOME HOME" EVENT FOR OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) AND
OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) ACTIVE DUTY
SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS**

1. PURPOSE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes requirements for an annual "Welcome Home" event(s) for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) active duty service members and veterans and their families and/or significant others.

2. BACKGROUND: The number of OEF and OIF service members and veterans continues to increase, and VHA has an obligation to offer all necessary health and mental health services. Many of these service members and veterans are unaware of VHA health care services and may be confused about eligibility for services. It is imperative that these services members 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 and OIF service members, 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 and OIF service members, veterans, and their families and/or significant others.

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

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

(2) VHA Health care services;

(3) Supportive services for families and/or significant others; and

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

b. Any costs associated with "Welcome Home" events are to be funded locally.

5. REFERENCE: VHA Handbook 1010.01

THIS VHA DIRECTIVE EXPIRES MAY 31, 2012

VHA DIRECTIVE 2007-017

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6. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES: The Office of Patient Care Services, Social Work Service (11CCSW) is responsible for the contents of this Directive. Questions are to be referred to (202) 273-8549.

7. RESCISSION: None. This VHA Directive expires on May 31, 2012.

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