



HEALTH PROVIDERS PARTNERSHIP FORUM (HPPF) MEETING SUMMARY - 22 November 2023

Agenda Item	Discussion
<p>1. Open meeting; Action Items Update</p>	<p>HPPF Chair opened the meeting and noted all action items from the previous meeting have been closed out.</p>
<p>2. Navigating transitioning from the Australian Defence Force</p>	<p>Director General Joint Transition Authority, presented on Navigating Transition from the Australian Defence Force, and what the Joint Transition Authority is doing to help Defence members and families manage each stage of their transition from service. The Veteran Transition Strategy identifies six priority areas focusing on Veterans and their families to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan and prepare for transition early • access a range of needs-based support programs across the ecosystem • engage family and other significant support people in the transition process • access employment and skill-based training • achieve a sense of financial wellbeing • feel that their service is formally recognised and valued. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition Transformation – Access to services now offered throughout a member’s career and for up to 24 months after transition. • Aligned Defence/DVA Wellbeing Factors; the program focuses on the individuals personal wellbeing inclusive of their health, social connectivity, meaningful engagement or employment, education, accommodation, finances and transport. • Transition coaches facilitate the members’ transition, by assisting them to develop the skills and capabilities they will need to establish themselves in the civilian community. <p>Questions/Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Australian Medical Association noted that transitioning member’s health records should be in a format compatible with General Practice software. Director General Joint Transition Authority advised that the documents



	<p>are not currently compatible and they are working towards a format compatible with My Health Record, however this will take time.</p>
<p>3. HPPF representative in profile: Australian Rehabilitation Providers Association (APRA)</p>	<p>Two representatives from the Australian Rehabilitation Providers Association (APRA) provided an overview of the role of the Association.</p> <p>APRA is the industry voice for the Australian workplace rehabilitation industry, committed to facilitating the personal, social, occupational and economic independence of individuals with injuries or disabilities. The organisation employs tertiary qualified health professionals, specialising in the complex needs of workers and employers to achieve timely and sustainable Return to Work outcomes following injury or illness, whether a physical or psychological injury or illness.</p>
<p>4. Veterans Medicine Advice and Therapeutic Education Services</p>	<p>A guest speaker from the University of South Australia presented on Veterans' Medicine Advice and Therapeutic Education Services (Veterans' MATES).</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MATES is a data driven health promotion program, funded by the DVA since 2004 with the aim to improve the use of medicines and related health services in the veteran community.• The program provides up-to-date health and medicines information specifically tailored for members of the veteran community and their healthcare team.• It focuses on four health topics each year utilising DVA's administrative claims data to pinpoint members of the veteran community who would benefit.• MATES endeavours to match the needs of Veterans to the distributed health topics• Provides individually tailored recommendations and supportive evidence based educational material for health professionals, and supportive evidence based educational material for Veterans'. <p>Questions/Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Australian College of Nursing asked whether consideration had been given to including Nurses in consultation. It was advised that they are part of the practitioner's group and involved in topic selection and materials development.• The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists suggested Anxiety and Insomnia as potential future topics.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As a cost-effective measure, the Australian Medical Association, suggested considering having a grant for a pharmacist to work in a General Practice that provides high volume of Veteran care.
5. Open Arms Model of Care	<p>DVA Acting First Assistant Secretary, Open Arms presented on the Open Arms Model of Care, clarifying their scope of services and how they're connecting with General Practice about care and support of the veteran community.</p> <p>Feedback was sort from attendees about their experience engaging with Open Arms. Representative from the Australian Association of Psychologists Inc. reflected on the mixed level of experience, noting that there are challenges with the referral process.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <p>Model of Care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defines the remit of Open Arms as a specialist service, focusing on delivery of military aware and trauma informed care.• Is seeking to align Open Arms' services with the broader health sector to enable more contemporary approaches, including communication with colleagues and measuring outcomes. <p>Open Arms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Episodes of care begin with the setting of goals for the support, counselling or treatment and the defining of outcomes from the client's perspective.• Through integrated care pathways, can provide assessment and referral support, including care coordination.• Counselling services are also available to family members• Continues to increase support in other areas, including to younger and older cohorts, having a trans-diagnostic approach providing support to families while the client is undergoing their treatment.• Recruitment is underway to support the work of the Lived Experience area.
6. Policy and Programs Division update	<p>DVA Assistant Secretary, Health and Wellbeing Policy, presented on behalf of Deputy Secretary Policy & Programs and provided the following update:</p> <p>A range of important work across Government is ongoing, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint Mental Health Strategy, encompassing Veterans and families• strengthening Medicare and increasing Veterans' access to payments; and• ongoing aged care reforms.



	<p>The Deputy Secretary, Policy and Programs is aware of concerns about fee arrangements. DVA's role is to provide advice to Government on matters for consideration, noting the upcoming Royal Commission may provide some significant opportunities.</p> <p>DVA invites members to share their ideas for improving health care arrangements for Veteran Healthcare Card holders and providers. This could occur via circulation of questions to members prior to a future HPPF meeting for consideration and discussion.</p> <p>Questions/Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Australian Medical Association, raised the concern that there is a lack of mechanisms to provide direct feedback to DVA in relation to examples of treatment inefficiency and execution. HPPF Chair, encouraged ideas and feedback to be provided to DVA, noting careful consideration will be given to options for providers to submit direct feedback through a straightforward and accessible mechanism.
<p>7. Health Policy update</p>	<p>DVA Assistant Secretary, Health and Wellbeing Policy, provided the following Health Policy Update:</p> <p><u>Defence and Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defence and DVA currently have their own Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategies, which are both due to expire at the end of 2023 and are working together to develop a new joint strategy.• The plan for the joint strategy is to set broad goals and success factors, supported by a series of action plans developed in 2024.• Consultation on the strategy has been underway since end of July 2023, including with current serving and transitioning members, Veterans and families, and a range of subject matter experts. <p><u>MyMedicare</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On 1 October 2023, voluntary patient registration for MyMedicare was opened.• The system enables Veteran Healthcare cardholders or Medicare cardholders to register with a General Practice, bringing a range of benefits for the Veteran. <p><u>Tripled Veterans' Access Payment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Veterans' Access payment was tripled from 1 November 2023.• A measure which came out of the 2023/24 budget for Veteran Healthcare cardholders, as a bulk billing incentive.• Have decommissioned a range of DVA only item numbers, with standard access items to be used.



	<p><u>Medicare changes - Assignment of benefits</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Practices have to seek written consent from the patients to assign their Medicare benefit to the Practice. It was noted that this is not a requirement for DVA patients, as falls under different legislation. <p><u>Evaluation of the Coordinated Veterans' Care (CVC) Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the CVC Program is currently underway to gauge effectiveness of implementation, stakeholder engagement, achieving intended outcomes and options to redesign the program to meet current and future needs of Veterans and families. • An evaluation framework was recently delivered, and an ethics submission is currently being progressed. Stakeholder engagement is ongoing.
<p>8. Easier access to Continuous Glucose Monitors (CGMs) and DVA diabetes products</p>	<p>DVA Assistant Director Care and Assistance Programs provided an updated on improved arrangements for accessing CGMs for eligible DVA clients with diabetes.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 1 November 2023, DVA-funded CGMs and other DVA-funded diabetes products became easier to access, now a wider range of health professionals can prescribe these items. • Eligibility criteria must be met; however it is important to note that DVA clients do not require a state or territory diabetes membership to access DVA-funded diabetes products. • Once eligible, the provider can complete the relevant form – www.dva.gov.au/DPOform. • Eligible clients can access the CGM consumables through a three monthly DVA subscription service.
<p>9. Primary Health Network update</p>	<p>CEO of the Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network (PHN) provided an update on DVA / PHN collaboration and other PHN focused initiatives.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PHN submission to the Royal Commission (RC) included key evidence of national PHN activities, outcomes and further proposed activities for consideration. • A formal Collaboration Agreement is in place between HNECC PHN and DVA, to work together on new activities and processes to support Veterans, their families, and health providers in the mainstream primary health care system. • The collaboration saw the development of two national Veteran HealthPathways focussed on supporting Veterans and their families in mainstream health care settings. • Introduction of <i>Veteran Connect</i>, a new service currently being piloted on the Central Coast of NSW, that connects veterans and their families to the right health and wellbeing support services. The early outcomes and feedback are



	<p>encouraging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PHN continue to consider areas of opportunity to support Veterans and their families in primary health care, including education for General Practitioners and Veterans; and developing place-based referral information at a local level. <p>Questions/Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Australian Association of Practice Management highlighted that when providing further support of Veterans and their families in primary health care, education for GPs and Veterans is extremely important.• Audiology Australia noted limited engagement can be a challenge to have right information to refer to. It was agreed this was the biggest challenge and HealthPathways are working through the best way to link with DVA, and having criteria for local services and contact details.
<p>10. Compensation Medical Form Review Project update</p>	<p>DVA Assistant Secretary, Business Improvement and Quality Assurance provided an update on the Compensation Medical Form Review Project.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Currently working with stakeholders to review 203 medical forms, to streamline and make easier for medical practitioners to read and use. The review will be completed by mid-2024.• Cross Government form review by Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet is ongoing, to ensure usability and a common approach to development.• Working towards digital form which will provide a range of benefits including improved decision making, reduction in need for follow up requests for additional information and faster access to information.• Feedback received to include access to supporting/explanatory material. Explanation within the forms or some short 3–5-minute training videos. This is currently in consideration.• They are reviewing whether there are options to include on provider software, or through Government portals. Considerations include security and privacy risks, integrating forms across platforms and that they are user friendly. <p>Questions/Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Australian Medical Association highlighted the importance of having the forms integrate with General Practitioner software, and suggested having the forms in a format that they can be readily imported, or have links for external access. He also suggested that healthcare providers have the ability to download or attach documents.



11. Closing comments	Participants' survey undertaken. Key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improving and having timely access to the Department to raise issues or to provide generic feedback is important.• Suggestion for the structure of the meetings be adapted to be more interactive rather than focussed on receiving updates, to enable the forum to be used as a resource, as opposed to using it as an information distribution tool.• Quarterly meetings work well, however if a particular topic involving a subset of providers is raised, consider if there is an opportunity for additional discussion.• Having capacity to present on external factors and impact to DVA would be welcomed.• Would welcome more sessions about patient reported outcome measures, and if facilitated or how to facilitate. It would be good to have greater understanding of how the measures are prioritised by DVA.
DVA Provider News articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PRS Services for DVA clients – new arrangements from 1 July 2023 Department of Veterans' Affairs• New DVA quick guide for GPs and specialists treating veterans with a cancer diagnosis Department of Veterans' Affairs• DVA Tender Open – Mental Health Literacy and Suicide Prevention Training for Veterans Department of Veterans' Affairs• Project to improve medical assessment forms Department of Veterans' Affairs (dva.gov.au)• Coordinated Veterans' Care Program participant survey – what you need to know Department of Veterans' Affairs (dva.gov.au)• Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Program now available for veterans and their families Department of Veterans' Affairs (dva.gov.au)• Your invitation to attend our Psychiatric Assistance Dog industry briefing Department of Veterans' Affairs (dva.gov.au)• Important information regarding Open Arms apps The Right Mix, PTSD Coach, High Res and Operation Life Department of Veterans' Affairs (dva.gov.au)• It is now easier to access Continuous Glucose Monitors for your patients with diabetes. Department of Veterans' Affairs (dva.gov.au)• Results are in - Complex Home Modification Specification Documents Survey Department of Veterans' Affairs (dva.gov.au)• Veteran Card Holders are eligible to register in MyMedicare Department of Veterans' Affairs (dva.gov.au)• Tripling of Veterans' Access Payments for GP's Department of Veterans' Affairs (dva.gov.au)
Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The next HPPF meeting is scheduled for 22 March 2024 and further information will be provided soon.