

VETERANS COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Program Overview

Veterans are recognized as being at high risk for mental illness, without adequate access to necessary care. While there are efforts on a Federal level to address this need, there is much that can be done on a local level to prevent prolonged suffering, as well as a need for more intensive services. In FY2014-15, MHSA PEI began funding the Marin County Veterans' Service Office, within the Department of Health and Human Services, to provide supportive services for veterans with a mental illness.

Target Population

The target population is United States veterans involved in the criminal justice system who have a treatment plan for mental illness developed by Veterans' Affairs (VA) or who are exhibiting symptoms of mental illness. Most of the target population may be experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), while some may experience depression or other concerns.

Program Description

- Access and Linkage to Treatment for those with Serious Mental Illness

This program does active outreach and support for Veterans, particularly those who are homeless or involved in the criminal justice system, to link them to medically necessary mental health services. Many of the Veterans are provided the support they need, such as transportation and entry into housing and Veterans Administration (VA) benefits, to access needed mental health services. Some are already connected to the VA and have a mental health treatment plan. The VA usually covers clinical treatment costs associated with the plan, but there are many barriers to a veteran completing their treatment. When they do not complete their treatment, they are at high risk for escalating mental health needs, as well as recidivism.

A part-time case manager is dedicated to this program. Clients are identified through outreach, in-reach and referrals from the VA. The case manager provides:

- Outreach and engagement.
- Case management, linking clients to housing, behavioral health services, and more.

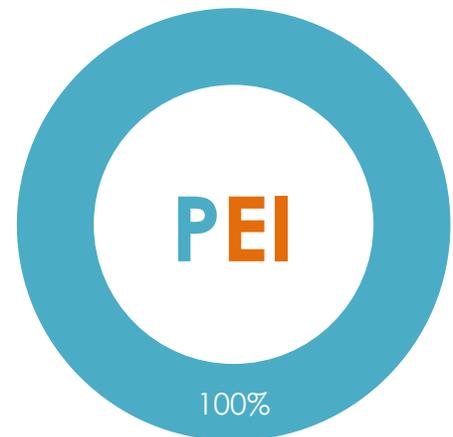
PEI

Veterans' Community Connection

Clients Served: FY 14/15

36 Individuals

10 Families



■ Prevention ■ Early Intervention

- Assistance with logistical barriers to completing a treatment plan.
- Ongoing contact to increase likelihood of engaging with services.
- Services for significant support people, such as family.
- Assistance with obtaining other forms of support available to the veterans and their families, such as financial benefits or community resources.

The program will improve timely access to services for underserved populations by providing the support services needed to access treatment that is available, and required. These support services are provided by a veteran who can meet the client where they are literally and figuratively, and can help to de-stigmatize the situation. Access and linkage to treatment will be provided by the case manager or the VA.

Expected Outcomes

Veteran's Community Connection is intended to achieve the following outcomes:

- Reduce Prolonged Suffering by ensuring veterans experiencing symptoms of mental illness engage in services expected to reduce their symptoms and increase their functioning.
The Veterans' Services case manager will maintain records on contacts with participating veterans, engagement with behavioral health services, and rate of completion of treatment plans.

This data, and client/family demographics, are reported annually to assist with an analysis of whether the target population and outcomes are being reached, and how to improve the program on an ongoing basis.

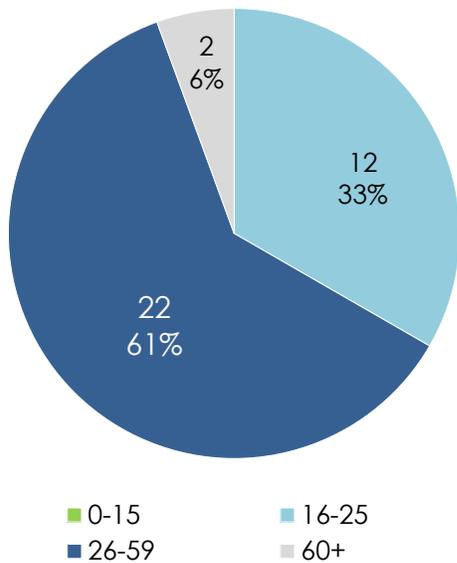
The program is expected to achieve the intended results by providing case management and increasing completion of treatment plans developed by the VA.

Actual Outcomes

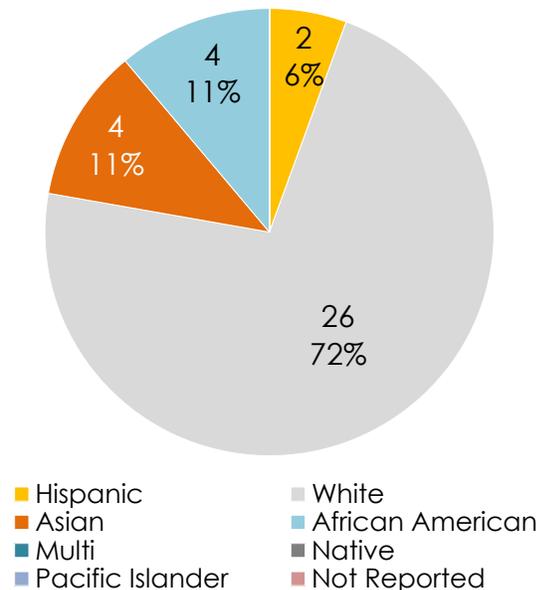
This program began later than expected, impacting the total number of clients served. Since starting in February 2015, the program has worked with many veterans with mental illness ensuring they completed mental health treatment plans and linking them to other support services to reduce prolonged suffering. In particular, clients were successfully linked to housing, employment assistance, and substance use services.

Outcome	Goal	Actual FY2014-15
Prevention		
Number of veterans that received support services to increase likelihood of completing the veteran’s mental health treatment plan. (Average number of services: 8)	40	36
Number of family members that received services to increase their capacity to support the client.	7	10
Percent of veterans receiving support that complied with their mental health treatment plan.	80%	94% N=36
Satisfaction		
Clients receiving support services reporting satisfaction with the services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> would use the services again in the future would be very or somewhat likely to recommend the services agree or strongly agree staff were culturally sensitive report services were very or somewhat helpful in addressing their problems 	75%	75% 86% 86% 75% N=36

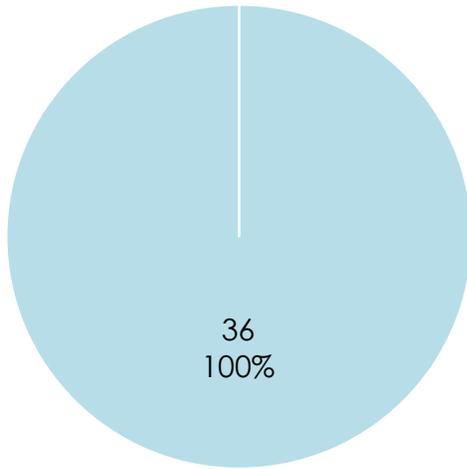
VETS 14/15: Age Group



VETS 14/15: Race/ Ethnicity

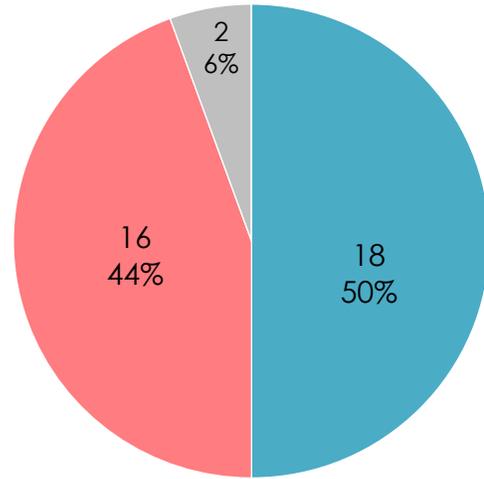


VETS 14/15: Primary Language

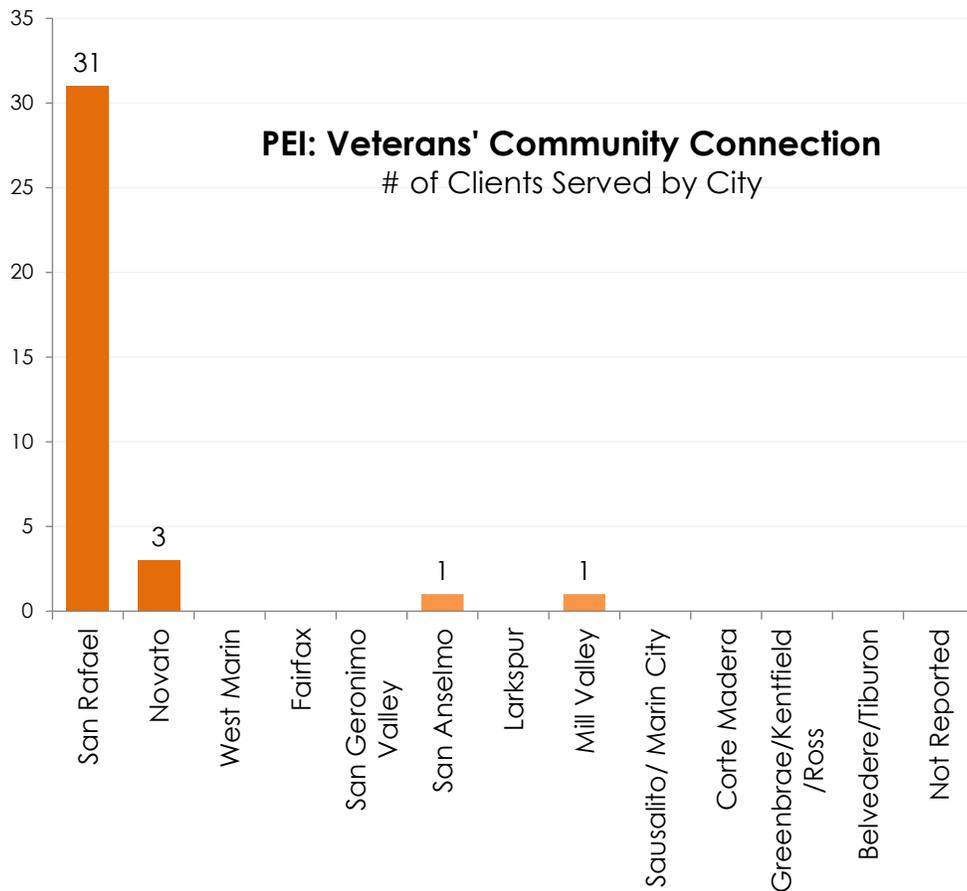


- Spanish
- English
- Not Reported
- Vietnamese
- Chinese

VETS 14/15: Gender



- Male
- Female
- Transgender/Other
- Not Reported



Challenges and Upcoming Changes

In FY2015-16, the program continues to serve individuals with complex conditions and situations, including serious mental illness, incarceration, chronic homelessness, and substance dependency. Through ongoing outreach within jails and prisons, on the street, and in homeless encampments, the case manager has been able to engage individuals in services who have previously refused services.

In FY2015-16, the Veterans Community Connection Program is expected to be implemented as described in the MHS A Three-Year Program and Expenditure Plan for FY2014-15 through FY2016-17, with a change in the target population to include individuals with mental illness not only on probation or parole, but also those with any criminal justice involvement.

VETERANS COMMUNITY CONNECTION – CLIENT STORIES

One Sunday our County Veterans Services Officer (VSO) received a phone call from Marin General Hospital because a young, post 911 veteran had tried to commit suicide by jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge. The VSO immediately went to the hospital to speak to the young veteran and assure him our office was there to help him. This veteran did not qualify for VA health benefits; which means he had to use Medi-Cal.

He had a bi-polar diagnosis and it was decided to release him to the Veterans Community Connection case manager on Tuesday. The case manager met the veteran at the hospital and he agreed to be medication compliant. The case manager immediately secured him temporary housing through the use of the REST Program administered by St. Vincent De Paul (at almost 5PM), ensured he had food, took him to pick up his medication at a pharmacy - as Marin General is not allowed to give needed mental health medications upon release - and introduced him to REST staff.

He stabilized with the PEI program, REST, and Marin General all playing a part in his success. The case manager wrote him a new resume and within two (2) months of his suicide attempt he started a full time job with a major corporation and is now seeking permanent housing.



On the case managers first day, the VSO informed her that he had a very tough case. A 100% service connected veteran with no limbs, who was a registered sexual predator, was living in an outhouse (the only one wheelchair accessible) a few feet from a public school with children in attendance (illegal by law). The case manager visited the veteran, who insisted he did not want housing. It took about 6 weeks, but through consistent engagement and extensive partnership with the VA and non-profit VA housing partners, he did move into legal housing - where he is to this day. He is still not exactly happy - but after being homeless for over five (5) years and living in an illegal status by the school - this is a huge success.