



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

**CCD Veterans Task Force
2017 Priorities & Activities**

The CCD Veterans Task Force advocates for policies and follows issues of concern to veterans with disabilities (service connected and non-service connected). The Task Force is open to all CCD members and meets on the second Thursday of each month.

During 2017, the Task Force plans to focus on the following areas:

- Serve as a forum to learn from and share ideas with task force members and key stakeholders, including Administration officials, congressional leaders, and veteran organizations, on issues impacting veterans with disabilities.
- Ensure high quality health care for veterans with disabilities by maintaining the integrity of the VA system and investing in VA infrastructure, research, and health care programs, including those that provide specialized access to community-based care and supports. In particular, the task force will focus on:
 - Expanding the VA's comprehensive family caregiver program to eligible veterans of all-eras;
 - Including post-9/11 veteran caregivers (who receive a VA caregiver stipend) in proposed Social Security Caregiver Credit legislation; and
 - Ensuring dependent children, up to age 26, can benefit from health care coverage under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) program.
 - Protecting access to VA's specialized health care services, such as spinal cord injury/disease case, blinded care, poly-trauma care, and mental health care.
- Increase employment opportunities and supports for veterans with disabilities by enhancing military to civilian transition programs, encouraging federal contractor hiring of veterans with disabilities through existing and new laws and executive orders, and submitting annual federal budgets that invest in job training and supports for veterans with disabilities available through America's public workforce system. In particular, the task force will focus on:
 - Monitoring implementation of key employment policy and initiatives (such as Section 503/VEVRAA; WOTC) aimed at increasing employment of veterans with disabilities.
 - Expanding the use of and funding for community partners to provide employment services through the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) and other employment programs such as the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program.

- Encouraging the Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service to prioritize employment for veterans with disabilities through a dedicated staff member or specialized outreach.
- Improve access to the supports that allow veterans with disabilities to successfully reintegrate into their families and communities by supporting tax credits for housing adaptations and investing in affordable housing, transportation services, and public-private partnerships. In particular, the task force will focus on:
 - Making protection and advocacy services available to veterans with disabilities to ensure they receive proper VA support in the areas of mental health and substance use.
 - Using expanded care coordination provided by community partners to connect at-risk veterans, including veterans with disabilities, with coordinated access to VA and non-VA supports and services that can improve reintegration.
- Serve as a bridge to the broader veterans and military service organization community through invitations to task force meetings and forums and through collaborations on areas of shared interest.

In addition, the Task Force will plan for and engage in other activities as needs and opportunities arise.

Adopted March 16, 2017