



MILITARY CAREGIVING GUIDE

FOR VETERANS, SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES





In a team conversation, decide who is going to be the primary caregiver. In most instances, one person assumes the main role because he or she lives nearby or has a close relationship with the person being cared for. It is important for all team members to acknowledge that the primary caregiver and wounded warrior are in charge. Expect that conflicts may arise, and don't be afraid to talk them through. It's better to talk before a time of crisis.

If a problem does arise, it may be helpful to use an outside facilitator, such as a trusted social worker or minister, to help everyone stay focused, manage potential disagreements and effectively discuss difficult subjects during a caregiving meeting.

MANAGE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS. When you broach tough subjects, your veteran might say, "I just don't want to talk about it." It's also hard for some to admit they need help. If your first conversation doesn't go well, try again. Start small by discussing just one aspect of your concerns. If your veteran shuts you out, ask a trusted member of your support system, a prior service member or military unit member, a doctor or a faith leader to approach your loved one about his or her unease.

WHERE TO FIND HELP

Department of Veterans Affairs:
va.gov or 800-827-1000

The national agency responsible for providing health care services and other vital benefits to eligible U.S. military veterans, as well as a Caregiver Support Program that offers peer support mentoring, caregiver training programs and a support line.

Military OneSource:
militaryonesource.mil or 800-342-9647

A Department of Defense (DOD)-funded program that provides resources and support to active-duty, National Guard and Reserve service members and their families.

Office of Warrior Care Policy (WCP): warriorcare.dodlive.mil

The DOD proactively supports wounded, ill and injured service members in their recovery and reintegration or transition to civilian life. Visit its website to find its Caregiver Resource Directory.