

# Helping Improve the Cancer Care Experience for Veteran Patients

## More Than 50,000 Cancer Cases Are Diagnosed Every Year in the VHA<sup>1</sup>

Risk factors may include<sup>2-7</sup>

- Chemical exposure<sup>2,3</sup>
- Cigarette smoking<sup>4,5</sup>
- Alcohol use<sup>6,7</sup>



## VETERANS WHO ACCESS THE VHA

Veterans who access health care in the VHA generally fall into one or more of these categories<sup>8-10</sup>



### MOSTLY MALE

90% of veterans are men<sup>8</sup>



### OLDER

52% of male veterans are 65 or older<sup>8</sup>



### EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS

5% of veterans compared to 0.2% of the total US population<sup>9</sup>



### HEALTH ISSUES

38% of veterans did not report being in good health<sup>8</sup>



### LIVE IN A RURAL AREA

One-third of veterans compared to one-fifth of the entire US population<sup>10</sup>

VHA = Veterans Health Administration.

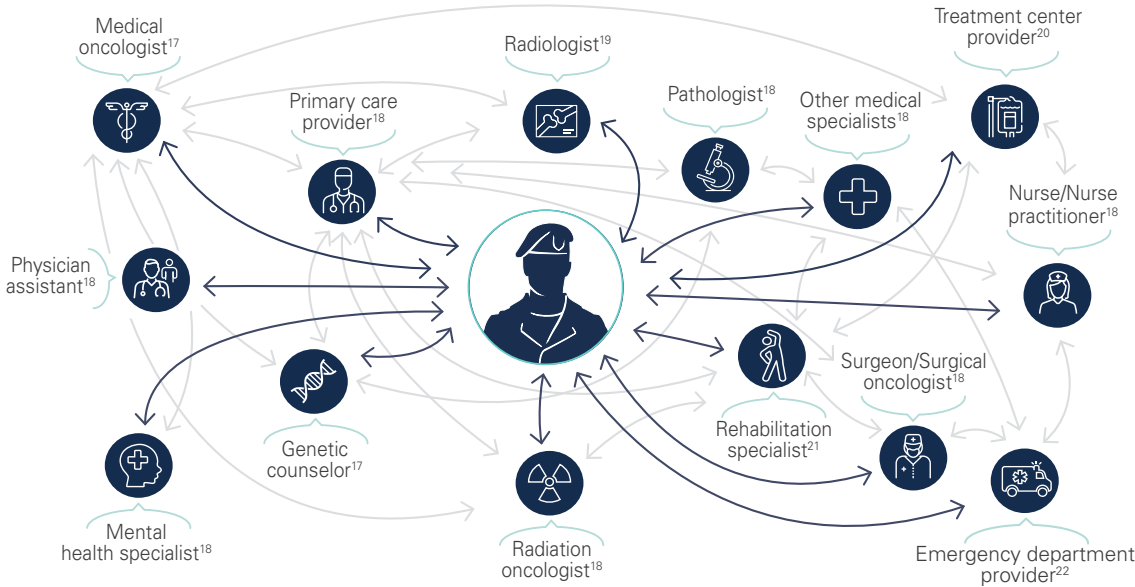
## COMPARED TO NONVETERANS, CERTAIN COMORBIDITIES ARE MORE COMMON IN VETERANS<sup>6,7,11-15</sup>



# Treatment For Veterans With Cancer May Involve Multiple Providers From Different Health Systems

Veteran patients may receive care from a primary care physician, a visiting nurse, or a range of specialists. Coordinating that care can be challenging for patients and caregivers alike.<sup>16</sup>

## A Veteran With Cancer May Need to Be Treated by a Number of Different Specialists



**Care coordination may be challenging**  
to manage for patients in the VHA<sup>16</sup>

## As a way to provide veteran patients with better care, the VHA's National Precision Oncology Program (NPOP) gives veterans access to genetic testing and new therapies based on biomarker information.<sup>23</sup>

Through NPOP, the VHA offers services by a multidisciplinary team that specializes in precision oncology to provide advanced molecular diagnostic services. Over 18,000 veterans have been cared for using this method.<sup>17,24</sup>

LEARN MORE ABOUT NPOP AND THE VHA AT [WWW.CANCER.VA.GOV/CANCER/NPOP.ASP](http://WWW.CANCER.VA.GOV/CANCER/NPOP.ASP)



### FOLLOW CARE COORDINATION BEST PRACTICES

- Referring patients to community resources<sup>25</sup>
- Monitoring and follow up, including responding to changes in patients' needs<sup>25</sup>
- Helping with transitions of care<sup>25</sup>
- Establishing accountability and agreeing on responsibility<sup>25</sup>
- Creating a proactive care plan<sup>25</sup>
- Working to align resources with patient and population needs<sup>25</sup>



### HELP ADDRESS KEY PATIENT NEEDS

- Supporting patients' self-management goals<sup>25</sup>
- Patient-centered medical home<sup>25</sup>
- My HealtheVet use<sup>26,27</sup>
- Convenient scheduling<sup>27</sup>
- Informed decision-making<sup>27</sup>

ENSURE YOU HAVE THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR PATIENTS' OVERALL CARE

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