

Jan Dils Veterans Disability Benefits Newsletter

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**PERSONAL INJURY  
VETERANS DISABILITY  
& SOCIAL SECURITY**  
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## VETERANS DISABILITY BENEFITS IN THE NEWS



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Many who think about disabled Veterans will automatically picture a male soldier with a physical disability. But there are other types of disabilities that aren't as easily seen, and they can strike both male and female Veterans. We are addressing two of those in this month's newsletter. Our first article focuses on mental health awareness, and the importance of encouraging our Veterans to speak up when they need treatment for mental health issues. Many people, not just Veterans, feel like they can't speak up on this important issue for fear of what others may think. As a result, a surprising number of Veterans don't receive the mental health care that they need.

And some good news: VA announced that it is adopting American Cancer Society (ACS) breast cancer screening [guidelines](#) that give women a choice to begin screening at

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age 40. This means that VA is consistent with or exceeds care provided in the private sector.

I hope you'll remember that nothing is more important than your health, and that you will speak up and make sure that you receive the care needed for you or a loved one. And, if you have questions about these or any other topics related to Veterans benefits, please don't hesitate to give us a call or send an email. Our team has experience in every aspect of applying for benefits, and we are always happy to help. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,



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**VA RECOGNIZES MENTAL  
HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH  
WITH PROMOTION OF  
'USE YOUR VOICE'**

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## **VA Recognizes Mental Health Awareness Month With Promotion of 'Use Your Voice' Awareness Program to Urge Veterans to Speak Up About Mental Illness**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently announced that, as part of its recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month in May, it is promoting "Use Your Voice," a national awareness program that encourages Veterans to seek mental health treatment if they need it.

The Use Your Voice program is designed to let not only Veterans, but all Americans know that reaching out for mental health information and support is just as important as talking to one's doctor about diet, blood pressure, joint pain and other health challenges.

"It's time to break down barriers and reverse the stigma of mental illness," said Dr. Poonam Alaigh, Acting VA Under Secretary for Health. "We want Veterans to know there are effective options available right now and reaching out for help is a sign of strength, resilience and courage."

Individuals and organizations can make a difference and get involved by downloading, sharing, tweeting or posting a variety of content located at [www.MakeTheConnection.net/UseYourVoice](http://www.MakeTheConnection.net/UseYourVoice).

While many Veterans do not experience mental health issues in their lifetime, it is critically important for those who do to know that support and treatment are available. By changing how people discuss mental health conditions and symptoms of mental illness, VA is making it easier for

Veterans who need support to feel comfortable reaching out.

For more information on mental health treatment, Veterans' personal stories of recovery and a locator tool to find Veterans' resources across the country, visit VA's Make the Connection website at <http://www.MakeTheConnection.net/UseYourVoice>.

Source: <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2897>



## VA ANNOUNCES ADOPTION OF AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY MAMMOGRAM SCREENING GUIDELINES



The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced it is adopting American Cancer Society (ACS) breast cancer screening [guidelines](#) that give women a choice to begin screening at age 40. The guidelines also recommend starting yearly mammograms by age 45 and then every other year from age 55. The guidelines apply to women at average risk for breast cancer and complement VA's already-extensive program for breast care for Veterans.

“It is important for our women Veterans to know that they are in control of their care and the care they receive from VA is consistent with or exceeds care in the private sector,” said VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. “Adopting American Cancer Society standards gives Veterans further assurances that their care aligns with other health-care systems.” Currently, 76 percent of women Veterans age 40-49 receive mammograms through VA.

In addition to adopting ACS guidelines for breast cancer screening, other notable achievements include:

- Expanded access to onsite mammograms by 62 percent;
- All eligible women Veterans have access to mammograms either onsite or through care in the community;
- VA quality scores from the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS), show that women Veterans are much more likely to receive age-appropriate breast cancer screening than women in private sector health care;
- In 2015, VA provided mammogram screenings to 86 percent of its women Veteran patients age 50-74, compared with the private sector at 73 percent; and
- VA has established a state-of-the-art information technology Breast Cancer Registry (BCR). The BCR integrates data from several VA sources to provide comprehensive patient specific information about breast cancer screening, test results, past and current breast cancer treatment, and population surveillance of breast care (both in the community and within VA).

“Engaging and better servicing the unique health-care needs of our women Veterans is one of VA's most important priorities,” said Dr. Poonam Alaigh, Acting Under Secretary for Health. “When it comes to their care, we want them to be in control of it every day and in every way.”

For more information about VA's commitment to women Veterans, visit <https://www.va.gov/womenvet/> or call 855-VA-WOMEN (855-829-6636) for information about VA services and resources.

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Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law, handles Personal Injury Claims, Social Security and Veterans Disability for clients throughout West Virginia with offices located in Parkersburg-Beckley-Charleston-Huntington-Logan as well as one additional office located in Charlotte, North Carolina. But regardless of where you are located we are able to serve you or a family member Nationwide.

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