Merging Information Resources for Military Members Living with Paralysis
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Objectives of this Presentation

• Recognize the importance of disability criteria
• Modify intake forms to include military and veterans
• Describe how an individual may qualify for Veteran Administration services
• Identify 3 referral sources for assistance
Introduction

- How the Paralysis Resource Center Came to Be
- The beginnings of the Military and Veteran Program
  - *The early years*
  - *Evolving the Program: Where we are today*
The Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation is dedicated to curing spinal cord injury by funding innovative research, and improving the quality of life for people living with paralysis through grants, information and advocacy.
The PRC is a comprehensive national source for free paralysis information, services and programs for individuals with paralysis as well as their families and caregivers.
Over 5.5 million Americans are Living with Paralysis

- Spinal Cord Injury 1,275,000 23%
- Multiple Sclerosis 939,000 17%
- Traumatic Brain Injury 242,000 4%
- Neurofibromatosis 212,000 4%
- Cerebral Palsy 412,000 7%
- Post-Polio Syndrome 272,000 5%
- Other 526,000 9%
- Stroke 1,608,000 29%
- Unspecified Birth Defect 110,000 2%
Veterans Living with Spinal Cord Injury/ Disease

- Total U.S. veteran population is 19 million.
- There are 3.8 million American veterans collecting disability compensation as of 10/2014.
- There are 18,148 Paralyzed Veterans of America members, and their eras of service breakdown is as follows:
  - WWII: 255
  - Korean Conflict: 919
  - Vietnam Era: 9,085
  - Peacetime: 7,855
  - Gulf War: 4,549

Statistics courtesy of Paralyzed Veterans of America
Veterans Living with Spinal Cord Injury/ Disease

The Veterans Administration estimates the cumulative number of Veterans with SCI/D is approximately 30,395. This number reflects only veterans that received care at the VA. The actual number is much larger.
The Impact of Disabilities in America

People with Disabilities

Total U.S. population: 303.9 million
People with disabilities: 56.7 million

- People with disabilities are less likely to be employed:
  - With a disability: 33%
  - With no disability: 73%

- People with disabilities are more likely to be in poverty:
  - With a disability: 23%
  - With no disability: 12%

- People with disabilities are more likely to have health insurance:
  - With a disability: 90%
  - With no disability: 84%

- People with disabilities earn less:
  - Median earnings:
    - With a disability: $19,735
    - With no disability: $30,285

Source: Americans with Disabilities: 2010 report, data from Survey of Income and Program Participation, and American Community Survey
The unemployment rate for veterans who served since 2001 dipped slightly in 2013 to 9 percent (Labor Department).

That’s down from 9.9 percent the year before, but well above overall civilian unemployment levels of around 7 percent over the same period.


Veterans with the highest jobless numbers served in the military after Sept. 11, 2001.

For all veterans, the unemployment rate was 6.6 percent in 2013, down from 7 percent the year before.
First Key Point

It is important to identify disability criteria because there are many individuals living with disabilities. The veteran population comprises a significant number of these individuals; they experience disproportionate disparities.
Military & Veteran Program (MVP)

- Guides service members through the military and veterans health care systems
- Outreach to Military Treatment Facilities and VA Medical Centers
- Connects service men, women and their families with the Peer & Family Support Program, matching them to MVP Peer Mentors
MVP Mission

The Reeve Foundation’s Military & Veterans Program (MVP) extends expertise in spinal cord injury and paralysis to include resources and community connections for service men and women, as well as veterans living with paralysis, whether through combat-related, service-related, or non-service-related events.
Most Common Inquiries

- Access to medical care and equipment
- Caregiver support
- Accessible Housing
- Employment
- Food and Utilities
- Transportation
## Updated Intake Form (Military)

### Veteran Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Served or currently serving in the Armed Forces</td>
<td>Yes, No, Not Sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which branch of the Armed Forces did the person with paralysis serve in</td>
<td>Army, Navy, Marine, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marine, Not Sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(select all that apply)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would the person with paralysis like info on how to enroll with the</td>
<td>Yes, No, Not Sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Insurance Type

*(select all that apply)*

- COBRA
- Medicaid
- Medicare
- Private Insurance
- TriCare
- Veterans Administration
- Workers’ Compensation
- No Insurance
Second Key Point

The Paralysis Resource Center modified our intake forms to capture veteran status. We identified a gap in our intake process. Over time we also added:

- Branch of service
- Desire for assistance to enroll in the VA System
- Type of health insurance
What we Offer:

Direct Services to Individuals With Paralysis

- Information Specialists
- Peer and Family Support Program
- Online Community
- Materials and Resources
- National Lending Library
- Community Outreach Program
- Quality of Life Program
Third Key Point

All PRC services and resources are **FREE**
Today’s Care: Information Services

The Information Specialists team provides support and responds to questions from individuals via telephone, email or in-person.

- Specialists can be reached at 800-539-7309
- 9 am – 5 pm Eastern, Monday-Friday
All materials and resources from the PRC are always free-of-charge.
A national peer mentoring program that provides support to people living with paralysis as well as their families and caregivers from the people who live with paralysis every day.
Online Community

A free social networking platform dedicated to the paralysis community.

• View on-demand videos and webcasts.
• Join the discussion in Facebook, Twitter, and our online forums.
• Read their blogs.

Reach out to our healthcare experts, Dr. Dan and Nurse Linda
Quality of Life Grants Program

The Grants program funds nonprofit initiatives that support people with paralysis.

Since 1999, 2,639 Quality of Life grants totaling $19.8 million have been awarded to nonprofit organizations throughout the U.S.

197 grants have been awarded to initiatives that serve military services & veterans and their families, totaling $1.5 million.
The Reeve library is a national clearinghouse of information on all subjects related to paralysis:

- 5,000+ books & videos available for free loan
- Items can be mailed to a person’s home with return postage
- Interlibrary loans state-wide and nationally
- Online catalog at Reeve website
The Reeve Foundation elevates the voices of people living with paralysis and their families through:

• Building coalitions with other disability organizations
• Informing policymakers on the issues important to people living with paralysis
• Analyzing new policy proposals and ways to improve existing policy
• Alerting advocates of opportunities to share their stories with Congress
Reeve-Sponsored Speakers Initiative

Our speakers program provides in person presentations that educates and supports the paralysis community.
Conference Outreach

Attending, exhibiting, and presenting at conferences offers us the opportunity to reach various audiences and inform them about the services and products of the PRC.
Community Outreach Program

The Community Outreach Program supports people with paralysis who are members of underserved communities such as rural populations, LGBT, older adults, limited English proficiency and low-income populations.
CRISIS HOTLINE  1.866.697.8394

Suicidal, feeling depressed, don’t see a reason to continue? Reach out and get the crisis help you need.

The Reeve Foundation Crisis Hotline in collaboration with Boys Town National Hotline is here to help 24/7.

Boys Town collaboration permits us to transfer troubled callers
Fourth Key Point

Veterans and Service members need to be referred to and use both military and civilian benefits.
How to Qualify for Veteran Administration Services

• Must have a DD2-14
• SCI/D
• Active duty injured
• Wartime era veteran
• Honorable discharge
• 90- days service
• Category IV, catastrophic injury
“When my husband was spinal cord injured, the MVP staff assisted me in getting my husband qualified for VA services. Being able to get his equipment and specialty care is a relief.”

- Linda and Dave T.
Resources for Veterans

• Paralyzed Veterans of America
• US Department of Veterans Affairs
• Military One Source
• eBenefits: National Resource Directory
• Veterans Benefit Administration: Locator
• Elizabeth Dole Foundation
Questions and/or Comments?
A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.
- Christopher Reeve
Contact the Military & Veteran Program

800-225-0292

www.christopherreeve.org

https://www.christopherreeve.org/mvp
Thank You!

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800-539-7309 ext. 8801
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NeuroRecovery Network

The NRN is a clinical research network of rehabilitation centers and community health and wellness facilities.

These facilities develop and deploy standardized, evidence-based, activity-based therapies to promote functional recovery and improved health and quality of life for people living with paralysis.