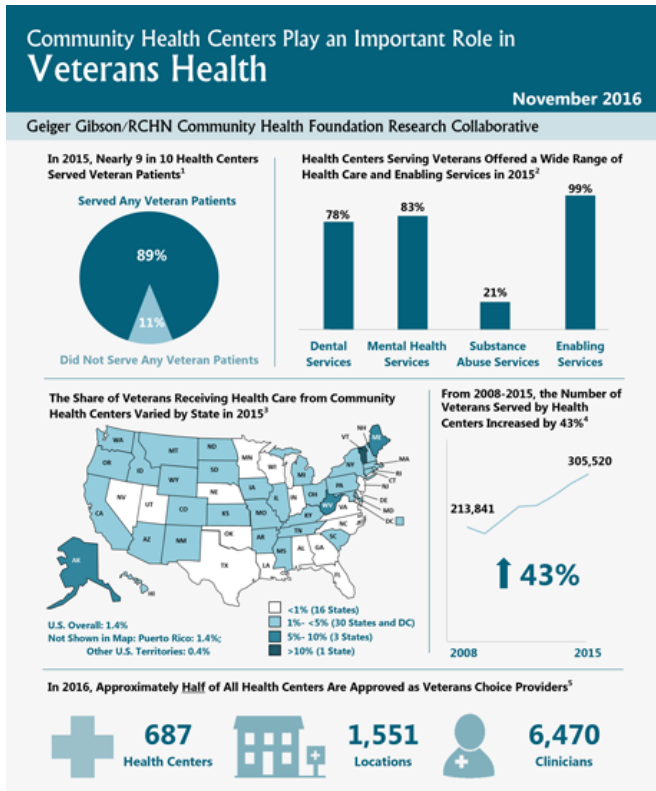


Veterans served by nation's community health centers increased by 43 percent

10 November 2016



Info-graphic capturing a 43 percent increase in the number of veterans served by community health centers over the last 10 years. Credit: Milken Institute School of Public Health and Community Health Foundation

The number of veterans served by community health centers has increased dramatically from 214,000 to more than 305,000, a 43 percent increase in less than 10 years, according to an infographic produced by researchers at the Geiger Gibson/RCHN Community Health Foundation Research Collaborative, which is based at the George Washington University's Milken Institute School of Public Health (Milken Institute SPH).

The research also reveals that in 2015, nearly 9

out of 10 health centers served [veterans](#), a finding that suggests improved access to care for many in this vulnerable population. In 3 states - West Virginia, Maine, and Alaska - health centers served 1 in 20 veterans or higher, while in Vermont, health centers served over 1 in 10 veterans. Health centers serving veterans offer a wide range of services; in addition to primary medical care, 78 percent offer dental care, 83 percent provide [mental health services](#), 21 percent offer [substance abuse treatment](#), and virtually all health centers offer services that improve access to healthcare.

Today half of all health centers are certified by the Veterans Administration (VA) as Veterans Choice providers under the special program established by Congress to improve access to community-based health care for veterans facing long wait times or travel distances for services at VA facilities.

"Community health centers have long and deep experience serving our nation's veterans. As the Veteran's Administration works to improve access to essential services through partnerships and collaborations, health centers are ready and able partners to meet the unique needs of those who have served our country," said Feygele Jacobs, CEO and President of the RCHN Community Health Foundation, which funded the infographic.

Dan Hawkins, Senior Vice President of Public Policy and Research at the National Association of Community Health Centers noted, "Veterans have given so much to their - and our - country, so [community health](#) centers are committed to providing the very best care to them every day. This has even more importance when you consider the fact that [health centers](#) are located in communities with many low-income vets but with few or no other care providers."

Provided by George Washington University

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