



**Department of
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News Release

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VA and Easter Seals Open First Round of Caregiver Training

WASHINGTON – More than 500 Family Caregivers who applied for new services offered to Post 9/11 Veterans and their caregivers through a program of comprehensive assistance for Family Caregivers by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) started their care-giving training June 9 and 10.

“There is no more valuable tool we can provide Family Caregivers than the knowledge and training needed to perform this highly demanding labor of love,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “This training we provided in partnership with Easter Seals will meet this need and support Veterans and their Family Caregivers with services and benefits they have earned.”

The core training, which was developed in collaboration with Easter Seals, is offered in traditional classroom settings, online or through home study with a DVD and workbook. The modules focus on the health and well-being of both the Veteran and the Family Caregiver. The training includes information on Caregiver self-care, home safety, practical caregiving skills, providing personal care services to the Veteran, managing challenging behaviors and locating additional resources.

Family Caregivers attending the Easter Seals training will receive respite care for the Veteran under their care, as well as mileage reimbursement and lodging, if needed. A Spanish version of the training materials will also be available.

Since May 9, more than 1,000 Family Caregivers have applied for the new services. The training program was developed by the Easter Seals in collaboration with VA clinical experts as part of a package of new services. The package also includes a stipend, mental health services and access to health care insurance, if they are not already entitled to care or services under a health plan.

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Family Caregivers 2/2/2/2

Veterans may review the criteria for eligibility and download the Family Caregiver program application (VA CG 10-10) at www.caregiver.va.gov. The application enables the Veteran to designate a primary Family Caregiver and secondary Family Caregivers. Caregiver support coordinators are stationed at every VA medical center to assist with coordinating the training or assist caregivers in locating available services.

Support for all caregivers is also available via the National Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274. Caregivers of Veterans from all eras are also encouraged to use the Website (www.caregiver.va.gov) and support line to explore more than two dozen other services VA provides caregivers for their service.

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About Easter Seals

Easter Seals is a non-profit provider of services for individuals with autism, developmental disabilities, physical disabilities and other special needs. For more than 90 years, it has been offering help to children and adults living with disabilities and to the families who love them. Through therapy, training, education and support services, Easter Seals assists people with disabilities to live, learn, work and play. If you would like more information on Easter Seals, visit the Easter Seals website at www.easterseals.com.