

November 2024

FOUNDATION

The VHWC brings together parties to build or expand pathways through which Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and their care partners optimize health and wellness outcomes.

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ADMINISTRATIVE CORE TEAM UPDATE

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Veteran Health and Wellness Collaborative's (VHWC) newsletter. Our goal is to provide timely updates to everyone following our initiative. You can look forward to information about upcoming opportunities and projects. We will also feature a section to highlight the organizations and individuals contributing their time on our Advisory Council. We are grateful for their engagement, and it is our pleasure to share their good works through the ***VHWC Advisory Council Spotlight***.

We want to take this opportunity to catch you up on the activities to establish the VHWC. The bulk of 2024 was focused on identifying the role the VHWC should play to support and not compete with the many organizations that are working on behalf of those who have served and their care partners. The concept of being an "organization that supports other organizations in carrying out their mission" was solidified over several meetings. In partnership with members of the Advisory Council, the VHWC is positioned to share information, discuss pertinent issues, and prioritize topics for advocacy and action. VHWC involvement could occur through Community Engagement, Education & Training, Advocacy, and Research & Evaluation activities and projects. The final meeting of the year will identify priority themes for 2025. Projects and activities will be developed in support of these thematic areas. We welcome specific project ideas as well as inquiries for administrative assistance with ongoing initiatives.

We are interested to expand the network of affiliated individuals and organizations. Stay tuned for future newsletter issues and check the website regularly for information on how to get involved. Make sure you subscribe for VHWC updates at our website. If you're interested

in serving on the Advisory Council, you can indicate that preference on the subscription as well. On behalf of the Advisory Council and Administrative Core Team, we honor all who have served and extend our gratitude for your dedication to our country.

VHWC ADVISORY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT:

Currently, 53 organizations are participating on the Advisory Council! This represents 7 of the 10 Prosperity Regions. We have gaps in Regions 2 and 3 (Northern Lower) and Region 8 (Southwest-most counties). The Council has representation from many types of agencies including county, state, federal and tribal organizations, military organizations, veteran support agencies, academia, hospitals, non-profit community organizations, healthcare clinics, insurers, professional associations and consultants. This breadth of representation can offer information and perspectives from those having direct experience. This input is critical to inform future projects and activities.



Future newsletter editions will focus on our partner organizations sharing their contributions in their own words. We look forward to learning more about their missions and supports of veterans and care partners.

Our goal is to have statewide representation and expand representation from related individuals and organizations. If you or anyone you know is interested to participate with the Advisory Council, you can email us at ihp.vhwc@msu.edu.

PROGRESS REPORT: 2025 PRIORITY THEME AFFINITY GROUPS

As we continue to define the role and impact of the VHWC, members have expressed interest in actively engaging with projects that align with our overall goals. These initiatives will help refine the scope of our involvement and ensure that VHWC's efforts directly address pressing needs within the Veteran community. The priority themes listed below in alphabetical order will be prioritized for specific projects.

- Connection to resources to support benefit navigation and maximization, support groups, and equity;
- Health-related social needs (e.g., housing insecurity, employment, and food insecurity);
- Physical and behavioral health (e.g., mental health, suicide prevention, substance use treatment and prevention, pain and chronic condition management, harm reduction, oral health, and access to health care); and
- Raising awareness on issues such as moral injury and trauma management

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

Sponsored Webinars: The VHWC is pleased to kick-off our series of [publicly available webinars](#) on Veterans Day, Monday, November 11, 2024 from 1100-1200 (EST). We plan to host 1-2 hour sessions every few months. Topics will vary and we hope to obtain continuing education approvals as content permits. Our inaugural webinar is **“Resilience in Service: Honoring the Strength of Our Veterans”** presented by Dr. Emre Umucu and Dr. Beatrice Lee. This virtual event will focus on the resilience and well-being of veterans, provide insight into the challenges they might face and identify strategies for supporting continued strength and well-being. You can register here: [Registration Link](#). We invite you to share this event through your networks and channels.



We are looking to build a speakers bureau to provide content for future webinars. Please contact us if you are interested to deliver online content on health and wellness topics of interest to veterans and/or care partners. Our goal will be to record these sessions and/or distribute session materials when feasible to maximize the availability of the information. You can contact us at ihp.vhwc@msu.edu to be included on the speakers bureau list. Please identify “Speakers Bureau” in the subject line and provide the topic/content that you are interested to present as well as your contact information.

Events: Events being hosted by VHWC stakeholders are publicized on the [Resources and Events tab](#) on our website. If organizations are looking to advertise an event or obtain assistance with hosting events, VHWC stakeholders may be able to help. Send your event information and/or requests about the nature of support or help needed to ihp.vhwc@msu.edu and we will share with stakeholders.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Are you passionate about improving veteran and care partner health outcomes and wellness in your community? The VHWC offers various ways to engage in our work:

- Subscribe at our website to make sure you receive the latest updates and information and share this content with your networks.
- Stay informed on the latest developments by participating with Advisory Council or subcommittee activities.
- Volunteer your expertise: Whether you have ever served in the military, are a health care professional, community leader, or advocate, your input can make a difference.

“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” John F. Kennedy
